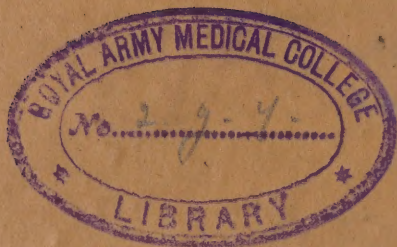




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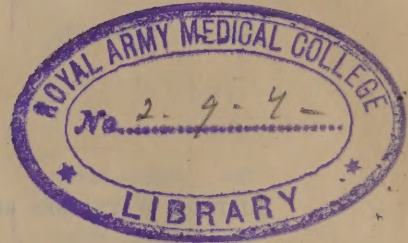
TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION

ON THE

WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

(VOLUME II.)



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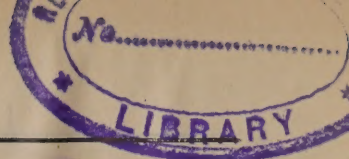
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
LIST OF WITNESSES arranged alphabetically	iii
LIST OF WITNESSES in order of Examination	vii
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	1
APPENDICES TO MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	573
INDEX (ACCORDING TO WITNESSES) TO MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	673



LIST OF WITNESSES ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED.

Name of Witness.	Designation.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Adey, Lieut.-Colonel John, C.B., R.A.	Late Assistant Adjutant-General for Colonial Forces, South Africa.	4 February 1903	12205—12373	10
Altham, Colonel E. A. C.M.G.	Assistant Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Division.	16 February 1903	14888—14962	143
Amery, Mr. L. S.	Sent out by the "Times" in August 1899; at front in Natal during November 1899, also with Lord Roberts during part of February 1900; returned to England in August 1900 to work on "Times History of the War."	24 March 1903	20416—20560	464
Armstrong, Major O., D.S.O.	Financial Adviser to Lord Kitchener after June 1901.	10 June 1903	22050—22200	567
Atkins, Mr. J. B.	Sent to South Africa by "Manchester Guardian" newspaper as a War Correspondent in October 1899; witnessed operations in Natal till the relief of Ladysmith; subsequently accompanied Lord Roberts' force up to Pretoria.	24 March 1903	20775—20827	480
Baden-Powell, Major-General R. S. S., C.B.	Commanded Troops, Mafeking; Commanded a Mobile Force in Western Transvaal; Inspector-General of South African Constabulary.	19 March 1903	19820—20020	423
Barton, Major-General G., C.B., C.M.G.	Commanded 6th Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force; Commanded Sixth Infantry Brigade in General Hunter's Command in Western Transvaal; Commanded Krugersdorp District; Commanded Pretoria District.	20 February 1903	16181—16395	248
Brodrick, The Right Hon. St. John, M.P.	Secretary of State for War	1 May 1903	21591—21852	539
v.C. Buller, General The Right Hon. Sir R. H., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa; General Officer Commanding, Natal.	17 February 1903	14963—15270	169
v.C. Buller, General The Right Hon. Sir R. H., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa; General Officer Commanding, Natal.	18 February 1903	15271—15651	199
Butler, Lieut.-General Sir W. F., K.C.B.	General Officer Commanding, South Africa, from November 1898 to August 1899; Acted as High Commissioner and Governor of Cape Colony during December 1898, January and part of February 1899, in absence of Sir A. Milner.	11 February 1903	13381—13635	72
Carr, Colonel E. E., C.B.	Commanded Second Royal Scots Fusiliers in Natal under Sir R. Buller, and subsequently in Orange River Colony and Transvaal till August, 1902.	17 March 1903	19145—19298	392
Clarke, General Sir C. M., Bart., G.C.B.	Quartermaster-General to the Forces	6 February 1903	12908—13015	36
Coke, Major-General J. Talbot	Commanded 10th Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force.	19 March 1903	20197—20273	441
Collen, Major-General Sir Edwin, G.C.I.E., C.B.	Military Member in Council, India, in 1899.	25 March 1903	20954—21072	495
Colville, Major-General Sir H. E., K.C.M.G., C.B.	Commanded Guards Brigade; Commanded 1st Division whilst Lord Methuen was on sick list; Commanded 9th Division.	26 February 1903	16970—17126	285
Crabbe, Colonel E. M. S., C.B.	Commanded the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards in South Africa till end of 1900; subsequently commanded a mounted column in Cape Colony.	18 March 1903	19735—19819	419
Davidson Colonel W. L., C.B.	Colonel on Staff, Royal Artillery, South Africa.	13 March 1903	18620—18721	367

LIST OF WITNESSES ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Designation.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Dawson, Lieutenant Arthur Trevor, R.N.	Director and Superintendent of Artillery with Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, Limited.	25 March 1903	20905—20953	490
Deane, Colonel T., C.B.	Late Director of the Army Remount Department, India; Chief Staff Officer Imperial Yeomanry, Home; and Special Service Imperial Yeomanry, South Africa.	6 February 1903	13043—13125	42
Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan	Head Physician in one of the Private Hospitals in South Africa; went through the great epidemic at Bloemfontein.	24 March 1903	20561—20629	472
Forestier-Walker, General Sir F. W. E. F., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.	Commanded troops, South Africa, from September 6th 1899 to April 1901; General Officer Commanding Lines of Communications during the War.	11 February 1903	13636—13838	93
French, Lieutenant-General Sir J. D., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding Cavalry Brigade, Natal; General Officer Commanding Northern Cape Colony; General Officer Commanding Cavalry Division; General Officer Commanding Johannesburg District; General Officer Commanding Mobile Columns, Cape Colony; now General Officer Commanding 1st Army Corps, Aldershot.	27 February 1903	17127—17447	300
Gatacre, Major-General Sir W. F., K.C.B., D.S.O.	Commanded a Force in North East Cape Colony; Commanded a Force in Southern Orange River Colony.	25 February 1903	16771—16917	272
Godley, Lieutenant-Colonel A. J.	Assisted to raise, train, and equip a regiment of Colonial Mounted Infantry before the War; in Command of Western Defences of Mafeking during siege; subsequently Staff Officer to Generals Baden-Powell and Plumer; in command of Brigade Colonial Mounted Infantry, and now training Mounted Infantry at Aldershot.	19 March 1903	20021—20196	434
Haig, Colonel D., C.B., A.D.C.	Chief Staff Officer to General French in Natal; subsequently during operations in Colesberg district; was on staff of Cavalry Division in Orange River Colony.	18 March 1903	19299—19554	401
Hamilton, Lieutenant-General, Sir I. S. M., K.C.B., D.S.O.	Assistant-Adjutant General, Natal; Commanded a Brigade in Ladysmith; Commanded Mounted Infantry Division, South Africa; Chief of Staff to Lord Kitchener; now Military Secretary, War Office.	12 February 1903	13839—14134	104
Hamilton, Major-General Sir B. M., K.C.B.	Assistant Adjutant-General 2nd Division, Natal Field force; Commanded 21st Infantry Brigade; Commanded a Mobile Force in Transvaal and Orange River Colony.	27 February 1903	17448—17548	312
Harris, Vice-Admiral Sir Robert, K.C.B.	Commanded Naval Station at Cape in 1899.	17 March 1903	18956—19095	382
Hildyard, Major-General Sir H. J. T., K.C.B.	Commanded 2nd Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force; Commanded 5th Division Natal Field Force; Commanded Natal District.	19 February 1903	15965—16180	238
Hippisley, Brevet-Colonel R. L., C.B., R.E.	Director of Telegraphs, South Africa	13 March 1903	18722—18833	371
Hunter, Lieutenant-General Sir A., K.C.B., D.S.O.	Chief of Staff to Sir George White, Ladysmith; (Appointed Chief of Staff to Sir Redvers Buller, but unable to join owing to being shut up in Ladysmith); Commanded Division, Western Transvaal and Orange River Colony; now Lieutenant-General, Scottish District.	13 February 1903	14470—14687	133
Kekewich, Major-General R. G., C.B.	Commanded troops Kimberley	10 June 1903	21853—22049	559
Kelly-Kenny, Lieut.-General Sir T., K.C.B.	Commanded 6th Infantry Division, Orange River Colony; now Adjutant-General to the Forces.	25 February 1903	16918—16969	279

LIST OF WITNESSES ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Designation.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Knox, Major-General Sir C. E., K.C.B.	Commanded 13th Infantry Brigade; Commanded a Mobile Force.	11 March 1903	17549—17768	318
Lambton, Rear-Admiral The Hon. Hedworth, C.V.O. C.B. A.D.C.	Commanded Naval Brigade in Lady- smith during siege.	17 March 1903	19096—19144	388
Lansdowne, Right Hon. The Marquis of, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I. G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.	Formerly Secretary of State for War, now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	26 & 27 March 1903	21073—21590	501
Lovat, Major, The Lord, C.B., D.S.O.	Commanding "Lovat's Scouts" in South Africa.	24 March 1903	20630—20774	474
Lucas, Colonel A. G., C.B., M.V.O.	Late Deputy Adjutant-General for Imperial Yeomanry.	6 February 1903	13016—13042	40
Macbean, Lieut. - Colonel Forbes, C.B.	Commanding 1st Battalion the Gordon Highlanders.	18 March 1903	19555—19734	413
Marshall, Major-General Sir G. H., K.C.B., R.A.	Commanding Royal Artillery, South Africa; now Officer Commanding Royal Artillery, First Army Corps, Aldershot.	13 March 1903	18491—18619	359
Methuen, Lieut.-General The Lord, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding First Divi- sion; General Officer Commanding, Western District, Transvaal.	13 February 1903	14135—14469	119
Morgan, Lieut.-Colonel H. G., C.B., D.S.O.	Director of Supplies, Natal Field Force; Director of Supplies, South Africa.	12 March 1903	18320—18490	351
Mortimer, Colonel W. H., C.B.	Chief Paymaster, Natal; Chief Pay- master, South Africa.	13 March 1903	18834—18955	376
Murray, Lieut.-Colonel A. J., D.S.O.	Attached to Staff of the late General Sir William Penn Symons at Dundee for Intelligence duties; shut up in Lady- smith during siege; took part in the Relief of Mafeking; now Assistant Adjutant-General, 1st Division and 1st Brigade, Aldershot.	11 March 1903	17769—17851	327
Nicholson, Lieutenant-General Sir W. G., K.C.B., R.E.	Military Secretary to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts; Director of Transport, South Africa; now Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, War Office.	12 March 1903	18133—18319	342
Noble, Sir Andrew, Bart., K.C.B.	Chairman of the Armstrong Company	25 March 1903	20828—20904	484
Paget, Major-General A. H., C.V.O.	Commanded Scots Guards; Commanded Twentieth Brigade; Latterly Com- manded a Mobile Force.	24 February 1903	16396—16539	258
Plumer, Major-General H. C.O., C.B.	Commanded Column detached from Rhodesia to relieve Mafeking; subse- quently Commanded Mobile Columns throughout the War; now Brigadier- General, 4th Brigade, Aldershot.	12 March 1903	17945—18132	334
Pole - Carew, Major-General Sir R., K.C.B., C.V.O.	Camp Commandant to General Sir Redvers Buller; Commanded Ninth Infantry Brigade; Commanded 11th Division.	24 February 1903	16540—16624	262
Rimington, Brigadier-General M. F., C.B.	Lately Commanding "Rimington's Guides."	5 February 1903	12608—12824	26
V.C. Roberts, Field-Marshal Right Hon. Earl, K.G., K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.	Commander-in-Chief	10 February 1903	13126—13380	46
Rundle, Major-General Sir H. M. L., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.	Commanded 8th Infantry Division; Commanded Harrismith District.	11 March 1903	17852—17944	330
Stopford, Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W., K.C.M.G., C.B.	Military Secretary to General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa (General Sir R. Buller); Military Secretary to General Officer Com- manding Natal (General Sir R. Buller.)	24 February 1903	16625—16770	266
Thornycroft, Colonel A. W., C.B.	Lately Commanding Thornycroft's Mounted Infantry.	5 February 1903	12374—12607	17
Treves, Sir Frederick, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O. F.R.C.S.	Civilian Surgeon with the Forces in South Africa.	4 February 1903	11966—12204	1

LIST OF WITNESSES ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED—*continued.*

Name of Witness.	Designation.	Date.	Question.	Page.
Trotter, Colonel J. K., C.B., C.M.G.	Assistant Quartermaster-General, In- telligence Division.	11 February 1903 -	13636—13838	93
Truman, Major-General W. R.	Inspector-General of Remounts - -	6 February 1903 -	12825—12907	34
Tullibardine, Major the Marquis of, M.V.O., D.S.O., Royal Horse Guards.	Late Lieut. - Colonel Commanding "Scottish Horse."	19 March 1903 -	20274—20415	446
Warren, Lieut.-General Sir C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.	Commanded 5th Division, Natal Field Force; Administrator, Kimberley District.	19 February 1903 -	15652—15964	223
V.C. White, General Sir G. S., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.	General Officer Commanding, Natal; now Governor and Commander-in- Chief, Gibraltar.	16 February 1903 -	14688—14962	143

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION.

Date.	Name.	Designation.	Question.	Page.
TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY :				
4 February 1903	Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S.	Civilian Surgeon with the Forces in South Africa.	11966-12204	1
	Lieut.-Colonel John Adye, C.B., R.A.	Late Assistant Adjutant-General for Colonial Forces, South Africa.	12205-12373	10
TWENTY-NINTH DAY :				
5 February 1903	Colonel A. W. Thorneycroft, C.B.	Lately Commanding Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry.	12374-12607	17
	Brigadier-General M. F. Rimington, C.B.	Lately Commanding "Rimington's Guides."	12608-12824	26
THIRTIETH DAY :				
6 February 1903	Major-General W. R. Truman	Inspector-General of Remounts	12825-12907	34
	General Sir C. M. Clarke, Bart., G.C.B.	Quartermaster-General to the Forces	12908-13015	36
	Colonel A. G. Lucas, C.B., M.V.O.	Late Deputy Adjutant-General for Im- perial Yeomanry.	13016-13042	40
	Colonel T. Deane, C.B.	Late Director of the Army Remount Department, India; Chief Staff Officer, Imperial Yeomanry, Home; and Special Service Imperial Yeomanry, South Africa.	13043-13125	42
THIRTY-FIRST DAY :				
10 February 1903	V.C. Field Marshal Right Hon. Earl Roberts, K.G., K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.	Commander-in-Chief	13126-13380	46
THIRTY-SECOND DAY :				
11 February 1903	Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B.	General Officer Commanding, South Africa, from November 1898 to August 1899; Acted as High Commissioner and Governor of Cape Colony during December 1898, January and part of February 1899, in absence of Sir A. Milner.	13381-13635	72
	General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.	Commanded troops, South Africa, from 6th September 1899 to April 1901; General Officer Commanding Lines of Communications during the War.	13636-13838	93
	Colonel J. K. Trotter, C.B., C.M.G.	Assistant Quartermaster-General, Intel- ligence Division.		
THIRTY-THIRD DAY :				
12 February 1903	Lieut.-General Sir I. S. M. Hamilton, K.C.B., D.S.O.	Assistant Adjutant General, Natal; commanded a Brigade in Ladysmith; commanded Mounted Infantry Divi- sion, South Africa; Chief of Staff to Lord Kitchener; now Military Secre- tary, War Office.	13839-14134	104
THIRTY-FOURTH DAY :				
13 February 1903	Lieut.-General The Lord Methuen, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding, First Divi- sion; General Officer Commanding, Western District, Transvaal.	14135-14469	119
	Lieut.-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O.	Chief of Staff to Sir George White, Ladysmith; (appointed Chief of Staff to Sir Redvers Buller, but unable to join owing to being shut up in Lady- smith); commanded Division, Western Transvaal and Orange River Colony; now Lieut.-General, Scottish District.	14470-14687	133
THIRTY-FIFTH DAY :				
16 February 1903	V.C. General Sir G. S. White, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.	General Officer Commanding, Natal; now Governor and Commander-in- Chief, Gibraltar.	14688-14962	143
	Colonel E. A. Altham, C.M.G.	Assistant Quartermaster-General Intelli- gence Division		

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION—*continued.*

Date.	Name.	Designation.	Question.	Page.
THIRTY-SIXTH DAY: 17 February 1903	v.c. General The Right Hon. Sir R. H. Buller, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa; General Officer Commanding, Natal.	14963-15270	169
THIRTY-SEVENTH DAY: 18 February 1903	v.c., General The Right Hon. Sir R. H. Buller, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa; General Officer Commanding, Natal.	15271-15651	199
THIRTY-EIGHTH DAY: 19 February 1903	Lieut.-General Sir C. Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.	Commanded 5th Division, Natal Field Force; Administrator, Kimberley District.	15652-15964	223
	Major-General Sir H. J. T. Hildyard, K.C.B.	Commanded 2nd Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force; commanded 5th Division, Natal Field Force; commanded Natal District.	15965-16180	238
THIRTY-NINTH DAY: 20 February 1903	Major-General G. Barton, C.B., C.M.G.	Commanded 6th Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force; commanded 6th Infantry Brigade in General Hunter's command in Western Transvaal; commanded Krugersdorp District; commanded Pretoria District.	16181-16395	248
FORTIETH DAY: 24 February 1903	Major-General A. H. Paget, C.V.O.	Commanded Scots Guards; commanded 20th Brigade; latterly commanded a Mobile Force.	16396-16539	258
	Major-General Sir R. Pole-Carew, K.C.B., C.V.O.	Camp Commandant to General Sir Redvers Buller; commanded 9th Infantry Brigade; commanded 11th Division.	16540-16624	262
	Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.	Military Secretary to General Officer Commanding in Chief, South Africa (General Sir R. Buller); Military Secretary to General Officer Commanding, Natal (General Sir R. Buller).	16625-16770	266
FORTY-FIRST DAY: 25 February 1903	Major-General Sir W. F. Gatacre, K.C.B., D.S.O.	Commanded a Force in North East Cape Colony; commanded a Force in Southern Orange River Colony.	16771-16917	272
	Lieut.-General Sir T. Kelly-Kenny, K.C.B.	Commanded 6th Infantry Division, Orange River Colony; now Adjutant-General to the Forces.	16918-16969	279
FORTY-SECOND DAY: 26 February 1903	Major-General Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B.	Commanded Guards Brigade; commanded First Division whilst Lord Methuen was on sick list; commanded 9th Division.	16970-17126	285
FORTY-THIRD DAY: 27 February 1903	Lieut. - General Sir J. D. French, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.	General Officer Commanding Cavalry Brigade, Natal; General Officer Commanding, Northern Cape Colony; General Officer Commanding Cavalry Division; General Officer Commanding, Johannesburg District; General Officer Commanding Mobile Columns Cape Colony; now General Officer Commanding 1st Army Corps, Aldershot.	17127-17447	300
	Major-General Sir B. M. Hamilton, K.C.B.	Assistant Adjutant-General, 2nd Division, Natal Field Force; commanded 21st Infantry Brigade; commanded a Mobile Force in Transvaal and Orange River Colony.	17448-17548	312
FORTY-FOURTH DAY: 11 March 1903	Major-General Sir C. E. Knox, K.C.B.	Commanded 13th Infantry Brigade; commanded a Mobile Force.	17549-17768	318
	Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Murray, D.S.O.	Attached to Staff of the late General Sir William Penn Symons at Dundee for Intelligence duties; shut up in Ladysmith during siege; took part in Relief of Mafeking; now Assistant Adjutant-General, 1st Division and 1st Brigade, Aldershot.	17769-17851	327
	Major-General Sir H. M. L. Rundle, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.	Commanded 8th Infantry Division; commanded Harrismith District.	17852-17944	330

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION—*continued.*

Date.	Name.	Designation.	Question.	Page.
FORTY-FIFTH DAY : 12 March 1903 -	Major-General H. C. O. Plumer, C.B.	Commanded Column detached from Rhodesia to relieve Mafeking; subsequently commanded Mobile Columns throughout the War; now Brigadier-General, 4th Brigade, Aldershot.	17945-18132	334
	Lieut.-General Sir W. G. Nicholson, K.C.B., R.E.	Military Secretary to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts; Director of Transport, South Africa; now Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, War Office.	18133-18319	342
	Lieut.-Colonel H. G. Morgan, C.B., D.S.O.	Director of Supplies, Natal Field Force; Director of Supplies, South Africa.	18320-18490	351
FORTY-SIXTH DAY : 13 March 1903 -	Major-General Sir G. H. Marshall, K.C.B., R.A.	Commanding Royal Artillery, South Africa; now Officer Commanding Royal Artillery, 1st Army Corps, Aldershot.	18491-18619	359
	Colonel W. L. Davidson, C.B.	Colonel on Staff, Royal Artillery, South Africa.	18620-18721	367
	Brevet-Colonel R. L. Hippisley, C.B., R.E.	Director of Telegraphs, South Africa	18722-18833	371
	Colonel W. H. Mortimer, C.B.	Chief Paymaster, Natal; Chief Paymaster, South Africa.	18834-18955	376
FORTY-SEVENTH DAY : 17 March 1903 -	Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Harris, K.C.B.	Commanded Naval Station at Cape in 1899.	18956-19095	382
	Rear-Admiral The Hon. Hedworth Lambton, C.V.O., C.B., A.D.C.	Commanded Naval Brigade in Ladysmith during siege.	19096-19144	388
	Colonel E. E. Carr, C.B.	Commanded 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers in Natal under Sir R. Buller, and subsequently in Orange River Colony and Transvaal till August, 1902.	19145-19298	392
FORTY-EIGHTH DAY : 18 March 1903 -	Colonel D. Haig, C.B., A.D.C.	Chief Staff Officer to General French in Natal, and subsequently during operations in Colesberg district; was on staff of Cavalry Division in Orange River Colony.	19299-19554	401
	Lieut.-Colonel Forbes Macbean, C.B.	Commanding 1st Battalion the Gordon Highlanders.	19555-19734	413
	Colonel E. M. S. Crabbe, C.B.	Commanding the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards in South Africa till end of 1900; subsequently commanded a mounted column in Cape Colony.	19735-19819	419
FORTY-NINTH DAY : 19 March 1903	Major-General R. S. S. Baden-Powell, C.B.	Commanded Troops, Mafeking; Commanded a Mobile Force in Western Transvaal; Inspector-General of South African Constabulary.	19820-20020	423
	Lieutenant-Colonel A. J. Godley.	Assisted to raise, train, and equip a regiment of Colonial Mounted Infantry before the War; in Command of Western Defences of Mafeking during siege; subsequently Staff Officer to Generals Baden-Powell and Plumer; in command of Brigade Colonial Mounted Infantry, and now training Mounted Infantry at Aldershot.	20021-20196	434
	Major-General J. Talbot Coke	Commanded 10th Infantry Brigade, Natal Field Force.	20197-20273	441
	Major the Marquis of Tullibardine, M.V.O., D.S.O., Royal Horse Guards.	Late Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding "Scottish Horse."	20274-20415	446
FIFTIETH DAY : 24 March 1903	Mr L. S. Amery	Sent out by the "Times" in August 1899; at front in Natal during November 1899, also with Lord Roberts during part of February 1900; returned to England in August 1900 to work on "Times History of the War."	20416-20560	464

LIST OF WITNESSES IN ORDER OF EXAMINATION—*continued.*

Date.	Name.	Designation.	Question.	Page.
FIFTIETH DAY— <i>continued.</i> 24 March 1903	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	Head Physician in one of the Private Hospitals in South Africa; went through the great epidemic at Bloemfontein.	20561—20629	472
	Major the Lord Lovat, C.B., D.S.O.	Commanding "Lovat's Scouts" in South Africa.	20630—20774	474
	Mr. J. B. Atkins	Sent to South Africa by "Manchester Guardian" newspaper as a War Correspondent in October 1899; witnessed operations in Natal till the relief of Ladysmith; subsequently accompanied Lord Roberts' Force up to Pretoria.	20775—20827	480
FIFTY-FIRST DAY: 25 March 1903	Sir Andrew Noble, Bart., K.C.B.	Chairman of the Armstrong Company	20828—20904	484
	Lieutenant Arthur Trevor Dawson, R.N.	Director and Superintendent of Artillery with Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, Limited.	20905—20953	490
	Major-General Sir Edwin Collen, G.C.I.E., C.B.	Military Member in Council, India, in 1899.	20954—21072	495
FIFTY-SECOND DAY and FIFTY-THIRD DAY: 26 March 1903, and 27 March 1903.	The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.	Formerly Secretary of State for War; now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	21073—21288	501
			21289—21590	521
FIFTY-FOURTH DAY: 1 May 1903	The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.	Secretary of State for War	21591—21852	539
FIFTY-FIFTH DAY: 10 June 1903	Major-General R. G. Keke-wich, C.B.	Commanded troops Kimberley	21853—22049	559
	Major O. Armstrong, D.S.O.	Financial Adviser to Lord Kitchener after June 1901.	22050—22200	567

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION

ON THE

WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA,

AT

ST. STEPHEN'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Wednesday, 4th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I. G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The VISCOUNT ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
 The Right Hon. The LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
 ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
 Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,
 C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
 Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
 Sir JOHN EDGE.
 Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Sir FREDERICK TREVES, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S., called and examined

*Sir Frederick
 Treves,
 Bart., C.B.,
 K.C.V.O.,
 F.R.C.S.*

4 Feb. 1903.

11966. (*Chairman*) You went to South Africa, I believe, at the time that Sir Redvers Buller went?—Yes, I was with the Ladysmith relief column from the time it started until the relief of Ladysmith.

11967. As consulting surgeon?—As consulting surgeon to the troops.

11968. And you were present with Sir Redvers Buller's army during the operations for the relief of Ladysmith?—Yes, at all of them.

11969. And after the relief of Ladysmith?—I was invalided home.

11970. Did you not go round to the Transvaal at all?—No, never.

11971. As you are aware—and I think you gave evidence before it—there was another Royal Commission (*the Royal Commission appointed to consider and report upon the care and treatment of the Sick and Wounded during the South African campaign*) which inquired into many matters concerning the medical work, and those of course we do not want to go into, but you have been good enough to give us certain heads of the points to which you wish to call our attention, and we are very much obliged to you for doing so. The first point you mention is that the Army Medical Service suffers from over-organisation?—Well, I think, that is perhaps the most striking fault in it. It is very elaborately over-organised. It is almost strangled by the mechanical elements introduced into it. Its administration has been elaborated to such a degree that it is almost unworkable as it stands on paper. I think the success of the work in Natal depended upon the fact that the military-medical organisation was entirely thrown aside.

11972. Would you explain exactly what you mean by its being so organised as to be practically strangled?—By the immense amount of detail to be carried out in obtaining transport and equipment and in moving, the enormous number of forms to be dealt with to obtain what was necessary to be obtained, and, in fact, if in the rapid moving of a column the positive instructions were carried out the hospital would be paralysed—it would be impossible to keep on its work. The length of time taken to obtain the supplies and transport and the like would be such as to paralyse its movement.

11973. But as a matter of fact were all those forms of organisation pressed?—I think I may say with regard to our particular column that they were suppressed, and the General simply said, "You want so many bearers, get them."

11974. They were "suppressed"?—Yes, they were practically done away with.

11975. Of course the organisation that may have been proper for an army at home, or for service at home, would not be applicable in the field?—No, it is not suitable for work in the field; it is no doubt admirable as it stands on paper. It is full of an enormous number of safeguards apparently based upon the impression that the officer put in charge of a hospital is likely to be incapable, and that his incapacity will be minimised by restrictions of all sorts.

11976. You mean principally financial?—No, it is more a question of supplies and the possibility of independent movement.

11977. But in an army on a peace footing at home that might be a suitable form of organisation?—I think so. It is, however, very laborious and puts an enormous

See Q. 13285.

Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S.
 4 Feb. 1903.
 amount of work upon men. It is an exceedingly extravagant service; it is worked in the most costly possible way. You obtain an officer who is supposed to be a specially qualified man who receives high pay, and charge pay, and then he is put to do work which is practically much better done by an ordinary clerk for a pound or so a week.

11978. That is rather another point?—That is another point. It is a costly administration, there is no doubt about it.

11979. But as regards the organisation of financial matters and otherwise those checks are a part of the system which prevails in a great many other Departments of the Government at home?—Yes, but I think they are excessive in a case of this sort. The Medical Department in the field deals with nothing but emergencies, and no kind of administration can possibly provide for every conceivable emergency that may be met with; it is not elastic enough.

11980. Excuse me, I was drawing the distinction between the service at home and in peace, and the service in the field. I understand that you admit for the service at home and in peace these regulations might work though you think them excessive?—Yes.

11981. But not in the field?—No, they may be good enough at home.

See Q. 3654.

11982. I asked the question because Sir William Wilson, when he was here, was asked with regard to the point, for instance, as to buying anything that was wanted, and he said, "I had no hesitation. At first I think medical officers were a little afraid to buy; you see we are never allowed to spend a penny at home, and we cannot do anything ourselves, but in a short time the medical officers turned out very well, and they purchased freely." That is the point you refer to?—That is one point, and a very important point.

11983. And I suppose what you would urge is that there ought to be some provision made in the service for that freedom being given to medical officers when they do go on service in the field?—Yes, I think it must be decentralised; that is really the essence of the whole business.

11984. In the field?—In the field.

11985. In financial, and in what other respects?—In practically every other respect. I would say this, that if a man is good enough to be put in charge of, say, a large mobile field hospital that man should be regarded as responsible, and should have to a very large extent perfectly free action. As a matter of fact he is not free in any particular. Of course his time of marching, and his route, and so on, must be determined by the General, but the place of pitching the tents, and the question of food, water, and other supplies, and his transport, and his general outfit depend upon conditions over which he practically has no control; he becomes a machine, and there is no credit in working the hospital well.

See Q. 13285.

11986. As to food, for instance, I suppose that is entirely under the Army Service Corps, is it not?—Yes, it is, but still there is the question of controlling supplies better than we could. For instance, after the battle of Spion Kop we had 715 wounded down after dark, and we had to pick out all the slightly-wounded cases next day and send them away, because we could not feed them; the seriously-injured people had to be left, they could not be looked at, and the little injuries to toes, fingers, and hands had to be got together to get them out of the place, because we had no means of feeding another 700 people. The answer to that would be that the officer in charge of the hospital was so hampered by the restrictions of the Service that he had no free hand in the matter.

11987. You do not suppose that if the officer had had a free hand he could have brought up the food?—There was a large food park close by, and there was no difficulty except in the process of getting it. Of course, it means not only food but the means of preparing it, and so on.

11988. (*Viscount Esher.*) He could not exercise any authority in order to get it; is that your point?—That is my point, and the practical outcome of it is this, that we had to spend one day in getting the trifling

cases away, not because they were trifling, but because we could not dispose of them.

11989. (*Chairman.*) But the supplies were well managed, were they not?—Admirably; I could not say too much for the most excellent way in which the supplies were managed—it was splendid.

11990. Would there not be a danger of interfering with that efficiency if you split up the responsibility?—I do not think it is so much a question of responsibility; it is a question of not being able to get things without an amount of form which is almost disastrous.

11991. Could you give us an indication of the way in which he could do it? Do you wish him to requisition the Army Service Corps people for stores?—Yes, in a much more direct way than is at present done.

11992. How is it done at present?—It is a very complicated business; the actual detail of it I am not precisely familiar with, but it is an elaborate form—it is a perpetual struggle. It comes to this, that the man who is put at the head of the field hospital practically can have nothing to do with the sick. You get a first-class surgeon or physician, supposed to be an able man to do this particular work, and he is put in charge of the field hospital, but he has nothing to do with the sick, as his time is spent in looking after accounts and tallies, and arrangements of that sort. We had an exceedingly good officer as the surgeon in charge of the hospital I was in, but he could have little to do with the sick. He was engaged as a superior kind of clerk looking after accounts. If we sent down 150 men with perhaps twelve bearers to each stretcher, and we had 26 miles of ground to cover, all those stretchers had to be accounted for, blankets and everything; and it is a very heavy piece of work.

11993. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you mean, for instance, that he had to sign a great many documents which could perfectly well have been signed by somebody else?—Certainly; in a civil hospital it would be preposterous to suggest that the senior surgeon of the hospital should be answerable for blankets and all those things; that is all done by the house steward, and this particular branch of the Service will never be better until all that work is put in the hands of proper people, namely, a proper quartermaster. At the great Hospital of Maritzburg at Fort Napier, one of the best medical officers as a medical man never saw a patient; he was entirely engaged in office work.

11994. And you mean that if you had been an Army surgeon, in all probability instead of being able to perform operations, your whole time would have been spent in signing documents?—Entirely—in seeing that everything tallied, and that each stretcher was accounted for. I should never have seen a patient, and it would have been impossible to do so.

11995. It would require a medical superintendent?—It requires an officer exactly equivalent to the house governor or house steward of a civil hospital, and it could be done in a minute by having a first-class quartermaster.

11996. (*Chairman.*) Does that cover what you wish to say about decentralisation?—Yes, and also about the next point, the officer who is put into a responsible position and cannot get that freedom of action which his status in the Service, and his pay, and so on, would lead one to think he ought to have.

11997. And also about the clerical work and the quartermaster?—Yes.

11998. Then as to the Field Hospital itself and its equipment, what have you to say?—Well, that is a serious matter as regards the efficiency of the hospital in the field. The equipment of the Field Hospital, of course, is based upon certain tabulated forms, and it is supposed to be quite complete in itself, and the result is this, that in the many journeys we had to make in Natal up to the Tugela and back again we were dragging with us, I suppose, what amounted to tons of useless material. Every Field Hospital is hampered by a theoretically complete outfit, which has to be dragged to and fro all over the country, and it is an immense burden. We were dragging about things that under no circumstances would have to be used in South Africa for example. The outfit of the Field Hospital is suitable

for any climate in the world, from the Polar regions to the Equator; it is an exceedingly elaborate outfit; it is complete on paper, and that has to be dragged all over the country.

11999. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Would it have been impossible for them, at the suggestion of the surgeon-in-charge, to have left many of these things behind?—He would have to account for them, and the question is, where are they to be left? To leave stores on the line of communications means a guard, and difficulties of that sort.

12000. (*Chairman.*) But they might have been eliminated from the beginning if they were intended for the Polar regions?—Well, there is a stereotyped outfit for a Field Hospital or for a Stationary Hospital, any kind of hospital, and that outfit has to be absolutely complete to the very smallest detail, and that has to be dragged all over the country from one place to another whether it is wanted or not. I suppose I should not be using any exaggeration if I said we could have thrown away quite a half of our outfit and not missed it.

12001. Of course, we must bear in mind that there is no more common accusation against a Government Department than that something is deficient which ought to have been there?—I know.

12002. Therefore they are naturally very chary in leaving out anything which is calculated to be part of the equipment under almost any circumstances?—I should have thought it would have been, from the Government point of view, better if a responsible man, having been put in charge of the Field Hospital, became the person who was absolutely responsible for seeing that the hospital was thoroughly well found for the work it had to undertake, and that he should not have to drag about a theoretically complete equipment.

12003. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Do you think any senior medical officer ever represented to a commanding officer in the field that it was his desire to leave certain things behind, and was told he must not?—I do not think so; I do not think such an idea would ever enter his mind.

12004. Could you indicate the particular things, or some of them, which you think could have been left behind without any risk?—There was a very large number of boxes of drugs which I do not say were obsolete, but they never could be required and were never opened, but had to be dragged about.

12005. (*Chairman.*) Ought that not to have been considered before the field hospital was sent from this country?—The equipment of every field hospital is exactly the same.

12006. I say, ought it not to have been considered before it left this country?—It would be a very big work certainly.

12007. If they were drugs which could not be used, surely there was no advantage in sending them all the way to South Africa?—That is my contention, but they were sent to South Africa, and more than that they were attached to the field hospital and we had to take them about.

12008. Then does it not come to this (apart from the responsibility of the medical officer in charge of any individual field hospital) that there is a responsibility with the Medical Department in this country not to send on a campaign drugs or other equipment which cannot be used in that particular campaign?—Well, I suppose that is so.

12009. That would eliminate a good part of the difficulty, would it not?—Yes, it would almost entirely eliminate it.

12010. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose it is all laid down by regulations what is to be sent and what is not?—Yes.

12011. They have printed regulations?—I do not know that they could very well depart from them; there is a certain outfit that the Government require to be attached to a stationary or field hospital, and that has to be found down to the very last possible safety-pin.

12012. (*Chairman.*) I quite understood that, but I understood your contention to be that that equipment was not suitable for all cases?—That is so.

12013. Then I say, if that is so, surely the proper thing to do would be that on the outbreak of a war the actual equipment to be sent on that war should be revised at home but not in the field, where, as you yourself pointed out, there would be difficulties in leaving the stores?—Yes. The suggestion I would venture to make is the one I have put down next on the list, and it is this: the whole difficulty could be got over by having advanced medical depôts. The advanced medical depôt is a well formulated thing, and it is in charge of a quartermaster, and if with every column there was an advanced medical depôt, and if the mobile field hospitals took from that depôt what supplies they wanted that would meet the difficulty. At present they have no choice in the matter whatever, they must take the whole complete outfit; but if the suggestion I have just made were carried out you could then say to the officer in charge of a hospital of 100 beds: "Take from this advanced medical depôt what things you want, and remember you are responsible for the efficiency of that hospital and if you are lacking in anything it is entirely your own fault."

12014. Then he would have an advanced medical depôt within reach to get the other equipment if he wanted it?—Yes, without dragging it all over the country, because as a matter of fact we went from Frere to Chieveley and from Chieveley to Colenso and back to Frere, from Frere to Spearman's Farm, then to Vaal Krantz and back again to Chieveley, in fact moving all over the country and having to drag every single pound of this the whole way with us. I daresay it may be a little exaggeration, but I should think half of it could have been disposed of or done without.

12015. They must have depôts in connection with a large army like Sir Redvers Buller's?—There was a very large depôt at Durban which was admirably administered, and we had an advanced medical depôt with us, but it was practically no use because we had a complete outfit. It would have been very much better if the depôt had been trebled and we could have been cut down by two-thirds. We had to move, and the depôt had not. When the depôt moved into Ladysmith of course it was of immense service.

12016. About collecting and dressing stations, what is your suggestion?—I would only say this, that I think this war has shown that the system of breaking up the collection of the sick into two stations, collecting and dressing stations, is no longer needed. It is cumbersome, and as a matter of fact it was not carried out.

12017. What does it exactly mean?—It means that the men, who are picked up from the firing line are brought down to the collecting station, which has a certain outfit, and from that collecting station they are taken by an arranged route to the dressing station where certain dressing operations and so on can be carried out. The dressing station is supposed to be out of the line of fire, but with the small bore bullets that means that it is a long way off. From the dressing station they are taken in the ambulances to the Field Hospitals, which will be certainly out of the line of fire. To individualise those two stations was next to impossible.

12018. You had to fall back on the dressing stations at once do you mean?—Yes, and the men who were put in charge of the collecting stations were either doing nothing, or anyhow that little piece of the arrangement was liable to be disorganised. It is not suited for a bullet carrying 2,200 yards as the small bore bullet does.

12019. And I suppose what you have suggested was practically done?—It was practically done, but still if a war took place to-morrow the outfit would include collecting and dressing stations, and men would be told off for those particular offices.

12020. Are Medical Officers told off, too?—Yes, for both.

12021. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Is that by stereotyped regulation?—Stereotyped regulation.

12022. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What is done by the Medical Officer at a collecting station?—At a collecting station he would deal with any extremely pressing thing, the putting on of a first dressing, which is inside the man's tunic, and tabulating the injury by means of a label. That is really essential, because in one or two

Sir Frederick Treves,
Bart., C.B.,
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F.R.C.S.

4 Feb. 1903.

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4 Feb. 1903.

instances the label was lost and a man died, and there were no means of finding out who he was as his clothes were all gone. Several men were buried, and nobody could identify them, and, besides, it saves the man from being pulled about twice. The dressing station may be spoken of as something a little more than first aid.

12023. (*Chairman.*) As to Bearer Companies?—The Bearer Company is separate from the Field Hospital; and that is another system which is a little cumbrous. It would be very much better if the Bearer Company were a part of the Field Hospital and could work under the instructions of the officer in charge of the Field Hospital.

12024. I think there was some difficulty in getting Bearer Companies in South Africa?—I am speaking of the Military Bearer Companies; there was difficulty in getting civilian bearers, but the Bearer Companies have a certain equipment of so many horses and so many wagons.

12025. But they had to raise Bearer Companies in South Africa itself because they had not enough?—Not Bearer Companies in the sense in which I am using the term now. I am speaking of it in the military sense, with an equipment of so many horses and carts, but we did, throughout the whole of Natal, organise an enormous Bearer Company, which has nothing to do with the Bearer Company in the military sense.

12026. And it is the Bearer Company in the military sense which you think ought to be attached to the Field Hospital?—Yes, the Bearer Company in the military service is a certain unit, so many men, so many horses or mules, and so many carts, a water cart, and a certain number of Army Service Corps men are attached to the Bearer Company.

12027. What is their duty?—Carrying the sick back from the dressing station to the Field Hospital, and also taking charge of a certain number of sick.

12028. Do they not go into the line and collect for the collecting station?—No, they do not do that.

12029. It is only from the dressing station to the hospital?—That is their primary duty, and a Bearer Company can pose as a little temporary hospital for a time.

12030. That you think ought to be part of the Field Hospital itself?—Yes, because in a big engagement the distribution was enormous. The line at Colenso was a very large line, and if we had crossed the river it would have been very complicated, all these different individual units working under their own commanders who had certain instructions to forward the sick by a certain route.

12031. Who gives orders to the Bearer Companies now?—That will be primarily the Principal Medical Officer who is in charge of the column.

12032. He does now?—He would.

12033. He cannot be present in all parts of the field?—He has a deputy; as a matter of fact, the Principal Medical Officer was present in all engagements in Natal. It would make it very simple if the Bearer Company were associated with the Field Hospital; they have to work together.

12034. And they would be controlled by the Medical Officer in charge of the Field Hospital?—Yes, who will be a man of the rank of a colonel.

12035. Your next point is that a large mobile Field Hospital should move with each column?—That point was simply this: the gravest thing in the treatment of the wounded in war, is the transport; the number of lives lost by unsuitable transport and the number of people crippled by it, is inevitably large. Say that a man is shot through the thigh: if that man could only lie where he was shot he would do very well, but if he has to be lifted into an ambulance and jolted 10 or 12 miles his prospects are very small. There is no doubt whatever that the mortality of a war is very largely increased by inefficient transport. The experiment was tried in Natal of having at the head of the column a large Field Hospital, to which I was attached, and it was an unqualified success. That was the first time it was ever employed.

12036. So that the cases could be treated as near the spot as possible?—They came straight from the very ground into our tents; we were always pitched as far up

as we could get, next to General Buller as a matter of fact; we could be present at an engagement; we knew where the different regiments were, and we often knew at what range the man was shot, and the man was brought into the tent direct. It was of immense service, and practically the whole of the wounded in Natal came through that Field Hospital, and therefore had first-class treatment as soon as it could possibly be got.

12037. When a column is distinctly on the march, would there not be difficulties as to what should be done with the worst cases?—There is no difficulty on a march; if it was on the gallop or trot it would be difficult. If you had a column moving at the rate of an ordinary Infantry column the Field Hospital could keep up with that.

12038. I was thinking more of the bad cases?—They, of course, must be left, and the point is this, that if you have a big Field Hospital such as we had you could keep them. We kept our very bad wounded after Spion Kop. If we had not had that big hospital those men would all have gone down, and I am certain that a good many limbs would have been lost by transporting them at an unfortunate time.

12039. What happened to them?—We kept them, and took them down ultimately. They were not taken down by any military unit; they were taken down by amateur bearer companies that had been organised from refugees from Johannesburg and the like.

12040. I was thinking more of cases like Lord Roberts' march; was it not necessary to send back the bad cases in that instance?—I need not say this, that sending back the bad cases renders the cases a great deal worse. The death-rate in war would be very small if a small tent could be built over every man where he fell; it is the dragging of the man about that kills him.

12041. But, as a matter of practical working, you could not leave a man with a tent over him where he fell?—No.

12042. In the case of a march like Lord Roberts', either to Bloemfontein or afterwards, it was surely a necessity to relieve the mobile field hospital of its bad cases?—That is true enough; but still it would have been better if there had been a large field hospital that was following the column at a reasonable distance.

12043. Larger than they had, as a matter of fact?—Larger than they did have at the beginning, so far as I know.

12044. The transport is a question of the ambulances?—Yes; the question of the ambulances is, of course, open to great improvement. The transport is the weakest thing in the Army Medical Service, it seems to me.

12045. Is that from the nature of the ambulance cart or in what way?—The nature of the ambulance cart. We did have in Natal a very fortunate arrangement in the large number of coolie bearers and the civilian bearer company; but the cases that went by ambulance fared badly.

12046. Have you any suggestions to make about the ambulances?—Yes; it is not a practical thing for a country without roads. The Boers had good ambulances, but an English ambulance is hardly fit to transport the sick; it is impossible for a well man to sit in it almost when it is moving rapidly.

12047. We have had some evidence about it; the authorities stick to their own ambulance, and give reasons for so doing?—If you want a wagon that can be driven at a trot over a series of walls, or practically over churchyards, and that will come out unbroken, the English ambulance will do it, but it is a rough affair. Given a good road, of course, it is all right, and it can carry a large number; but later on I think you will find that the evidence was given in favour of light carts, such as the Indian two-wheeled tonga.

12048. I think we had some evidence in favour of them for certain purposes, but not on the roads. They were the best for the rough ground of which you have been speaking?—Exactly.

12049. But when you get on to the road?—The ambulance is all right then. I have no fault to find with

it then, but I need not say there were no roads—practically there was a track.

12050. Of course, in many places there were no roads, even where they could use wagons?—That is so.

12051. But in those cases the evidence we have had, and which I have before me, was that the other wagons were either very heavy or broke and fell to pieces, while the wagon which was called Mark V. stood the work across country and was a good wagon?—I would rather urge this, that there is no other provision than this—an ambulance that can only go on a road. That is the point. In a war on the Continent the ambulance Mark V. would be admirable, because there there are proper roads; but there is no provision for an ambulance to go over a rough country.

12052. The evidence was that Mark V. stood the work across country?—Yes; the carts stood the work, but the patients did not; the cart is unbreakable, I should think, and would go over anything. It is the weight and rigidity of the cart which is the bad feature of it.

12053. Would you dissent from this question and answer: Q. You have said you would not use either the tongas or the Cape carts if you could get a wagon? A. Not on a roadway, but I would use them for following Cavalry, or for going light across the country. For preference, I would put a man lying down in a four-wheeled vehicle if the roads were good, but I think you want the two kinds of conveyance always; you want the light one to gallop across the country to pick up a man, where you could not take a heavy lumbering wagon with from six to eight mules, which was the general number. You could not take a heavy wagon of that kind across country for a wounded man, but you could send one of these two-wheeled carts, and they would bring him in equally well with a little care. I think every Bearer Company ought to have both kinds of vehicle?—I entirely agree with every word of that, and I wish to say we had nothing but this enormously heavy ambulance, which is not suited for a country without roads, and the tonga does not come into the Army outfit.

12054. No; they were sent from India?—Yes.

12055. Is that all you wish to say about the ambulances?—Yes, and the last point is simply this, that there is no equipment in the Service for following a Cavalry column.

12056. It must be a light cart, of course?—It must be a two-wheeled cart, and the orderlies must be mounted, and there ought to be a saddle provided, so that a sick man could be brought home on a horse. There is I believe such a thing used in India.

12057. Was there no equipment of that kind in South Africa?—No, not with us, and there is nothing in the Army Medical Service; there is no wagon equipment beyond the regulation ambulances. It is most desirable that there should be a recognised medical outfit for a rapidly-moving Cavalry column.

12058. These points which you have mentioned are matters on which you think amendments could be made?—I think so, and especially that last matter, but our Army has no provision of any sort for that particular requirement.

12059. But, generally speaking, you would say the medical work was well done?—Admirably done, and I should also add that Mr. Brodrick's Committee has rectified most of the faults that were apparent to us, and I think now the Service will be really admirable. These are comparatively small matters, of course.

12060. (*Viscount Esher.*) Mr. Brodrick's Committee appointed an Advisory Board, upon which you have served?—Yes.

12061. And are still serving?—I am.

12062. What sort of questions do you go into?—Well, we should go into all such questions as I have been indicating to day; these questions will all have to come up before the Board.

12063. The Board is presided over by the Surgeon-General?—Yes.

12064. Is it optional with him to accept the recom-

mendations of his Advisory Board?—Our communications go to the Secretary of State.

12065. What is your precise procedure; what do you do?—Practically any matter which is a question of opinion comes before the Advisory Board; for instance, the recommendations of all men for promotion come before the Advisory Board; that goes, as you know, before another Board, who may or may not accept this recommendation.

12066. And, then, as to such questions as to whether the equipment is satisfactory, or any of these points you have been referring to to-day, are all those questions which may be raised by any member of the Advisory Board to be discussed?—Yes, they will all come up before the Board in time. At present the work of the Board has been devoted mainly to improving the terms of the Service and obtaining men for it, because it has been so terribly undermanned, and in establishing a Medical Staff College in London, and the like.

12067. That is to say, you have been principally engaged up to the present time in dealing with the quality of the Army Medical Service?—Yes, and the terms of the Service.

12068. That practically comes to the same thing; you want a better class of men?—Yes, and we shall get them.

12069. Then you have not yet begun to deal with all these questions of administration?—No, all those matters will be dealt with by the Advisory Board in due course.

12070. Does it take up a great deal of your time?—A great deal of time with Committee meetings and Sub-committee meetings.

12071. Your services and those of Mr. Fripp and others are all given to the Secretary of State?—Yes. We have just inspected twenty-two military hospitals. Still, it is all coming, and I do not hesitate to say that it will be the finest Service in the world in time. It is too colossal a thing to deal with all at once; we are taking the big things, and these others are matters which will be dealt with in due course.

12072. Do you draw up reports after your meetings?—All our minutes go to the Secretary of State.

12073. I suppose you differ sometimes?—Yes.

12074. Do you express your differences on paper?—There never have been any gross differences.

12075. There has been no serious dispute?—No, never.

12076. Do you find that the Secretary of State carries out your recommendations?—Wonderfully well. I think the Advisory Board can say this, that the Secretary of State has supported them in every conceivable way. Mr. Brodrick has constantly expressed his wish at any sacrifice to get the best Medical Service that can be got.

12077. Whatever may have been the case during the war, at the present time everything is being done which is possible to remedy the defects which experience has shown existed?—That is quite right, and all these little points I have mentioned I am quite certain will be corrected.

12078. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Have you had any experience of the medical equipment of the Colonial Forces?—No, we had no such contingent with us.

12079. I suppose, as to any Colonial Forces raised in the Cape, their equipment was very much like the British?—So far as I know, it was exactly the same.

12080. Had you any experience of Civil surgeons sent out to supplement the men of the Army Medical Corps?—Yes. The Field Hospital I was attached to was worked mainly by Civil surgeons.

12081. Had you any fault to find with the way in which the Civil surgeons were selected in England?—So far as my own knowledge went, none; the men we had with us were splendid.

12082. And I suppose you had some local surgeons—men who were already in Africa?—No, in this particular hospital they all came out from England.

12083. Were there not Medical Officers residing at Durban and Pietermaritzburg, and so on?—I think

Sir Frederick Treves,
Bart., C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
F.R.C.S.
Feb. 1903

Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S. practically none of those joined, and they were men busily engaged in their own work; of course, the refugees from Johannesburg and the like who were turned out joined, but the men in Durban and Maritzburg were busy with their own practices.

4 Feb. 1903. 12084. Some joined you from Johannesburg?—A good many came down to Maritzburg and joined the Military Hospital at Fort Napier.

12085. And you employed in the Medical Department a large number of subordinates who were picked up on the spot, I suppose?—Bearers and, of course, conductors; the conductors were all local men.

12086. Had you any nurses with the force that was with you?—It was the only field hospital that took nurses. I obtained permission from General Buller to take out and up two nurses.

12087. Were those the only nurses with your force at Colenso, and in those operations?—At Colenso, but some others came up later. The idea was that a wounded man should have as good attention on the Veldt as he would have in London, and the War Office for that purpose gave me an exceedingly elaborate outfit; they gave me a couple of wagons, sixteen mules, a horse, a man, a conductor, and six Kaffir boys, so that in any case for any serious operation I could have been there.

12088. But there was not in that force a regular establishment of nurses?—No.

12089. And was your opinion of the nurses satisfactory?—All that I came across were excellent; I could not speak too highly of all the nurses I came across all down the line.

12090. Well instructed?—They were all carefully picked women, and no woman so far as I know was engaged who had had less than three years' training.

12091. With regard to the Bearer Company, which, as you say, is a military unit, being under the officer in charge of the Field Hospital, would not the duty of the Bearer Company very often be very far from the Field Hospital, and would the officer in charge of the Field Hospital, which presumably is in rear of the army, know exactly where to send them?—I think so. I know in one case the Bearer Company saw nothing, and no wounded came near them; they were badly placed, but it was a piece of fortune.

12092. Is there any officer of intelligence in charge of the Bearer Company who would quickly pick up the knowledge of which direction they should go to get wounded?—He would have to act on the Instructions. The man in charge of the Bearer Company would probably be a major.

12093. A good deal would have to be left to his discretion as to where he should go?—A good deal.

12094. I have no doubt you are aware that great efforts have been made for many years, both in India and England, to try to improve the ambulance carts, but I gather from you that these efforts have not, so far, been very successful, and you think they have not found a very efficient cart?—No; so far as we were concerned in Natal we had nothing but the English last-pattern ambulance, Mark V., I think, which is admirably suited for a road in England, but is not suitable for going over a donga and in and out of a spruit, and the like.

12095. But the tonga, you think, is much better suited, or something in the nature of the tonga?—Something in the nature of the tonga.

12096. Can a man lie down in a tonga?—Yes, two men can lie down in a tonga; it is possible to make a tonga for four men to lie down in it.

12097. Did they make any use of dhoolies in Natal?—Yes.

12098. I suppose there is no more comfortable thing, where you can use it, for a wounded man's accommodation than a dhooly, because a man can sleep in it?—There is nothing like it; there is nothing in the world like a hand-carriage for a wounded man, and nothing ever will be invented as good as that.

12099. That is a great advantage they have in India, but it involves an enormous number of men?—Yes, we had twelve men to a stretcher for the long distances; the weather was very hot, the distance was 26 miles, and the country rough.

12100. Then when they put the men down in the Field or Base Hospital they came back again, I suppose?—Yes, they had their own camp and their own officers.

12101. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I think I understand, from what you said, that the Bearer Companies were formed from the soldiers?—Entirely.

12102. Had they any training?—Oh, yes, they are all men of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

12103. The Bearer Companies belonged to the Army Medical Corps?—With the addition of a certain contingent of Army Service Corps men; they have their own transport.

12104. Were they trained how to lift a wounded man from the ground?—Well trained.

12105. So that in their hands a wounded man would not suffer any injury in being lifted from the ground?—No, they were well trained men, especially in that kind of work.

12106. I think you spoke of a mobile Field Hospital of a large class, but would not that necessitate moving the wounded with that hospital as the hospital moves?—Well the point is this, that an ordinary field hospital will have a maximum capacity for 100; after an engagement like Spion Kop a Field Hospital could not possibly deal with that number, and they would have to be sent down unless you multiplied field hospitals indefinitely. The hospital I speak of is a large mobile Field Hospital with a big equipment and capable of great expansion; for instance, before the battle of Spion Kop we had a direct instruction to put up 100 tents; that was the only hint that was given to us that there was to be an engagement, and that enabled us to take in 500 wounded men. Now a Field Hospital could hardly do that.

12107. My point is this; if the wounded men are to be moved, would it not be better to move them at once to the rear, where they would remain altogether without further movement?—No, I do not think so. I think we saved a good many lives on that particular occasion by keeping them until they were fit to move.

12108. Now, take the case of Lord Roberts' advance on Bloemfontein, or his advance on Pretoria afterwards, there the mobile Field Hospital would move as he moved?—Yes.

12109. That would necessitate the movement of the wounded, too?—Yes, but on such a long movement this bigger hospital I speak of would be very much nearer the head of the column than the next Base Hospital would be. The longer a man can be kept near where he is shot the better; the transport is bad, and the later that transport can be undertaken the better.

12110. The less he is moved from the time he is first brought to the hospital the better?—Yes, and the later he is moved the better, within reason.

12111. We heard from Dr. Fripp that the Advisory Board visited the military hospitals at Aldershot, Netley, York, Portsmouth, and Gosport. Did you visit those hospitals?—Yes, we visited twenty-two altogether.

12112. He seems to have found a great deal in those hospitals that required amendment, and he said that it would take a considerable sum of money to put those hospitals in the state they ought to be in; what amount do you think ought to be applied to that purpose?—I have really no means of forming an estimate beyond saying this, that there is a very obvious need of an immense outlay in connection with our military hospitals, which are not up to the mark in any way whatever.

12113. He instanced one case at Aldershot where the hospital was a portion on one side of the road and a portion on another?—That is the third station hospital; it is not fit to be a hospital. The military hospitals do not come up to the standard of a workhouse infirmary and they ought to be at least brought up to that level.

12114. That is one of the objects, I suppose, of this

Advisory Board you are sitting upon?—Yes; we will be sending in within a month our report to the Secretary of State on the 22 large military hospitals in this country, that is to say, hospitals of over 100 beds.

12115. We had a gentleman before us here who stated that in Russia they took into the large military hospitals such of the civil population as chose to go, in order that the medical men might really have sufficient practice to enable them to discharge their duties—in fact to teach them; would you approve of that being done here?—No, it would never do in this country, I am certain. We are making elaborate arrangements to keep the Military Medical Officer up to his work by a system of examinations, whereby a man can only get his advancement by professional ability, by establishing a military staff college, to which he will return from time to time to carry out special branches of the work, and by closely associating ourselves with the Civil Hospitals, by having civilian teachers, and endeavouring in every way to induce the military officer to go back to his Civilian Hospital from time to time, and special leave will be given for that purpose.

12116. To study in the hospitals?—Yes, under the supervision of the authorities—the Director-General and the Advisory Board.

12117. But you do not approve of admitting the civil population to the Military Hospitals?—I do not think it would answer. It opens up a series of complicated questions; it practically opens up the question of a State-supported hospital (and we have no such thing in this country) such as they have in Germany and other parts of Europe, and I think the difficulties would be very considerable.

12118. Is there any reason why a Military Hospital, a Base Hospital, during the time of war should not be conducted exactly on the same lines as a large London hospital?—It could be on the same lines if the question of discipline be introduced.

12119. I mean with respect to the work that the medical men have to do?—It should be exactly the same.

12120. Medical men in the large London hospitals have nothing to do with clerical work?—Nothing whatever.

12121. Whereas you say that even the head of one of these Military Hospitals has his whole time taken up with clerical work?—With administrative work. The point that strikes us is the extravagance of it.

12122. The whole of his skill and everything is thrown away?—Entirely.

12123. He is simply doing the work of a quartermaster, a clerk, or a house steward?—The work of a house steward; it is of course a very extravagant way of doing it.

12124. It is employing a skilled man to do unskilled work?—That is exactly the point.

12125. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Do I understand now that the idea is, under the advice of this Board, that army surgeons will get practical work in Civil Hospitals during peace time?—Do you mean that they will have actual charge of patients?

12126. Yes, or surgical work?—I do not think so as regards the actual charge of patients.

12127. It is merely that they will receive instructions through the civil surgeons?—Yes, and watch the practice.

12128. They would not perform operations?—No, that would not be possible.

12129. Your Army surgeon then during peace time gets no practical experience of operating, does he?—We are doing all we can to develop that in this way, that if the Military Hospitals are developed all the military sick will be treated, and none will be sent off to Civil Hospitals as they are now.

12130. Take the surgical cases, they will not have many surgical cases in the Military Hospitals?—Take a case of this sort: supposing a private in a cavalry regiment develops a rupture; if that youth is operated upon he can remain in the Service, and that operation ought to be done by the military surgeon, but he will

often not do it. He says, "I have got no outfit," and the man is sent off to the Civil Hospital, is operated upon, and then comes back to the Service again. Our contention is that if the military surgeon undertakes the surgical work that falls within his legitimate sphere, he will have quite enough to keep his hands well in training.

12131. Still, in the Civil Hospitals you get cases every day of broken limbs, accidents, and so forth, that you would not get in the ordinary way in the Army; where would your Army surgeons get their practical experience?—There really are more accidents than you would imagine in connection with military life. Take the Cavalry Hospital at Canterbury; the men under training are prone to get concussion of the brain, fractured skulls, and fractured limbs, and more than that, such practice as the officers lack would I hope be sufficiently made up by a period of study in a Civil Hospital.

12132. Do you see any particular objection to these Army surgeons having practical surgical experience in the Civil Hospitals for a certain time?—Do you mean to take charge of patients?

12133. Yes, and to perform surgical operations?—I do not think it is possible. I think there would be an immense difficulty in that. You see the hospital has got a certain reputation; the officers are selected with the very greatest care, and it practically comes to this, that when a patient comes in instead of having the operation done by the man who has been specially picked to do it the operation would be done by the first military officer whose turn it was, and I do not think that would be quite keeping faith with the public. I think the public would not like it, and I do not think the hospitals would meet with the support they at present meet with if that were done.

12134. In the civil hospitals at present your junior surgeons merely assist?—They never operate in any but minor cases.

12135. With regard to that reference you made to the complete outfits that were sent out under the present regulations, there were a great many things that were unnecessary for the campaign in South Africa, and I take it that there again under this Advisory Board that sort of thing will not be likely to occur in the future?—I do not think so.

12136. It really comes to be a point for the Surgeon General or the proper official at this end to decide what is necessary before the outfits are sent out?—The difficulty is this, that there is a certain stereotyped outfit for a field hospital, and the general in command requires so many field hospitals for his army corps.

12137. And whatever country it is that particular outfit has to be sent?—Yes.

12138. Would it not be practicable for the Surgeon-General, or some competent man at this end, when the time arrives, to fix what was necessary to be sent out, say to South Africa or wherever it might be?—Yes, but I do not know whether it would be within his power.

12139. Not at present, but I suggest would not that be the right thing to do for the future? Say that we were having a war in South Africa or anywhere else, does it not appear to you that the right plan would be for the head of the Army Medical Department, or a board, to meet and settle what the nature of the outfit should be?—Well, that is one way, but the suggestion I made is this: that with each column there should be an advanced medical dépôt, and the officer responsible for the administration of any individual hospital should get his outfit from there, and the whole test of the efficiency of that hospital would come on his shoulders.

12140. In the event of a war in South Africa, say the chief Army Medical men at this end ought to know quite well the nature of the outfit that would be required for South Africa, should they not?—They would, but there again there is risk of becoming centralised. The officer in charge of the hospital might say "Well, I think I ought to know better what I want, I have to run this hospital, I would sooner get my own outfit than get yours," and I think if the material is landed in South Africa, and the man gets his

*Sir Frederick Treves,
Bart., C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
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4 Feb. 1903.

Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S.
4 Feb. 1903.

supply from that base, that would be the more simple plan.

12141. I see, but still I take it that following out your suggestion a great many things might go to the base that would not be required?—That is certainly so.

12142. My suggestion is that the authority at this end should decide what things were necessary to be sent to the base?—I think that would be quite practicable.

12143. And following upon that your suggestion would then come in that the medical officer in charge should make his requisitions as he thought best for the particular case?—That would do very well.

12144. (*Sir John Hopkins*.) Have you had before you at the Advisory Board the question of providing sanitary officers?—Yes, that is now a matter under discussion. I think that is a matter on which many feel very strongly, and it is a most desirable feature.

See Q. 11027 &c.
12145. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) We have it in the evidence here that the supplies furnished for the Medical Department in Africa were of an entirely antiquated character, that they were not in keeping with the requirements of to-day, and with the advance in the science of surgery and medicine: did you find them to be so?—Well, it is true, but I do not know whether I should say entirely antiquated. They were certainly antiquated, and we were carrying about with us instruments which I should have thought would only be found in museums. I should not say the equipment was entirely antiquated.

12146. But at any rate it was not equal to what it might have been, looking to what could be procured and what is usual in civil life to-day?—No. I should say this in defence of the Army, that I have been asked to draw up a sketch of an instrument case, for example, and that means changing not one but many thousands through the length and breadth of this enormous Empire, and the outlay is colossal. As soon as those boxes are put all over the world, in India, and every other part where the British Army extends, there is a change in practice, and they become obsolete and have all to be changed again.

12147. (*Viscount Esher*.) What happens in civil life?—They are changed again.

12148. You mean that the cost there falls on individuals, and it does not apparently amount to so large a sum, but in reality it does although it is spread over a larger area?—Really to put the Army surgical outfit into first-class condition now, I think the sum would be positively staggering, and as soon as that expense had been met there would be the remark, "Oh, well, this kind of thing is obsolete, we must get another one."

See Q. 11051, &c.
12149. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) It has been said that the medicines were sent in a clumsy and bulky form, and not at all like those that are in use to-day, such as tabloids, and other concentrated preparations; many of them were sent in bottles and in liquid form, for instance?—Yes, we took about medicines that were in bottles in the most cumbersome form, and that had been in the bottles for 20 years possibly. It is really a serious complaint; we had to drag this useless chemist's shop all over the country, packed up in the most ludicrous and extravagant way. Tabloids, or any such concentrated preparations as are used now, would have put the whole outfit into a twelfth part of the space.

12150. (*Chairman*.) Did not that arise from just what you have been mentioning, that they had in store the medicines in the old form, and they naturally had to use up those?—Yes.

See Q. 11618.
12151. I cannot refer to the question on the spur of the moment, but I think we had it in evidence from one of the witnesses that that is what took place, and in the latter part of the war, as soon as they had exhausted their stocks, they were supplied with modern forms of medicine?—No doubt. The present outfit is, of course, cumbersome beyond expression.

12152. Even as it stands?—Yes. If you saw a medical

pannier put down there it would take two men to lift it, whereas an equal outfit of modern goods could be lifted by one hand.

12153. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) Would it not have been economy to have thrown away those things which were in stock at the beginning, and to have procured the modern articles?—I think there was a good deal lost. A good many boxes were lost, no doubt.

12154. It has also been said that the surgical instruments were very inferior in many cases to those used in civil life?—That is undoubted.

12155. We have also been told that the system of disinfection in several of the hospitals was very imperfect, and not equal to what it might have been?—That is true, too; sterilisers are not easy things to carry about, and methylated spirits are not easy to carry about. We were very short of fuel.

12156. It has also been mentioned and recommended that the officers of the Army should have an opportunity of practising in the civil hospitals in Great Britain and on the Continent also, where opportunity offered: do you think it is desirable that they should?—It is very desirable, but the difficulties are, as I have just mentioned, almost insuperable. We are building on the Embankment here a large Military Hospital, and associated with that Military Hospital will be a Medical Staff College equipped in the very best possible way that money can equip it, and we hope to keep the medical officer up to his work by passing him through that hospital and through that Military Staff College. The possibility is that we shall be able, or shall be allowed, to keep patients in that hospital longer than the Service would permit; as soon as a man is said to be unfit for service now he leaves it, but it would be very much better in the interests of the education of the medical officer if a certain number of these disqualified soldiers could be kept under care for a few extra months.

12157. (*Viscount Esher*.) Is it settled that the new college is to be built on the land at the back of the Tate Gallery?—It is, I think I may say, absolutely settled; I think permission has been given.

12158. Quite recently?—Yes, in the last week.

12159. But it is now definitely settled?—It is definitely settled.

12160. Where does your Advisory Board meet?—68, Victoria Street.

12161. Is that convenient?—Very convenient.

12162. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) The young surgeons in the hospitals now are accustomed to use the most modern instruments?—They are.

12163. And they see operations performed by the ablest men in the profession with the most modern instruments?—Yes.

12164. These young surgeons, if they go to a Military Hospital, have some antiquated instruments to use there?—Undoubtedly.

12165. Can they use them?—They have to be used; we had such weapons in South Africa.

12166. Do they not use them at the risk of the patient's life?—I do not know whether it would go as far as that. Men have often to do operations with curious instruments. Every one of us took out our own complete outfit.

12167. Yours, of course, was the most modern?—I took my own out.

12168. Looking at it from the point of view that having to use these antiquated instruments might cost life or limb, do you not think that it would be better that the most recent instruments should be supplied?—Beyond any question of a doubt, if the expense could be met, which I must confess would be enormous; and there are other things almost more pressing, namely, the state of the Military Hospitals in this country. No one could say that there is any Military Hospital in this country which can compare with a large workhouse infirmary, for instance, and that is a fairly low standard of comfort.

12169. Do you not think that is rather discreditable,

to say the least of it?—It is not creditable to the British Army, I must confess.

12170. (*Chairman.*) Although the instruments were antiquated, the work done was all right?—The work was very well done; it was a question of making the best of it, and it was really very well done. The instruments were obsolete; for instance, there was no such thing in the Army as a telephone probe, and to find out a modern bullet with anything else than a telephone is often not practicable. By the time the entire Service is fitted with telephone probes, something better will have come in, probably.

12171. (*Viscount Esher.*) You said just now that it was very difficult to carry a steriliser about in the field; do you know how the Austrian and Russian armies meet that particular difficulty?—No.

12172. Since you have been on the Advisory Board, have you found any evidence to show that here in England the Army Medical people know anything about the Army Medical Corps in Russia and Austria?—Unfortunately they do not, and we are making a special point of this, that before a man can be promoted to a colonel, he must profess a knowledge of the military service of certain countries. We are trying to provide that now. At the actual moment the subject for examination is an account of the military medical system in France, for example, and that will be further developed, I hope, in the course of twelve months, so that it will be possible to say we are prepared to examine the men on the military services in any European or well civilised country.

12173. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) In condemning all the military hospitals in the country, almost, that have been inspected as yet, I suppose it is understood that when those hospitals were constructed they were constructed according to the best knowledge of the day—take Aldershot and Netley, for instance, which were constructed about the time of the Crimean War, do you think they were defective, judged by the standard in force then?—Well, Netley undoubtedly is; it is faulty in construction, beyond a doubt, and some of these hospitals were built in 1783.

12174. And those that were built in more recent times, like 1856 and 1860?—The Herbert Hospital at Woolwich is very good indeed, and so is Hounslow in structure—perfect. A little hospital like Hounslow in structure is perfect.

12175. (*Viscount Esher.*) But you were not speaking about structure?—I was speaking of what might be called the general standard of comfort in the wards and general outfit. The public would scarcely credit that sick men were kept in casemates; at Chatham sick men are actually kept in old gun casemates.

12176. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) That was not built for a hospital, surely?—It was built as a fort, so that there is no hospital worth speaking of there.

12177. Are Netley and the hospitals at Aldershot very defective?—I think I am right in saying that out of 22 hospitals we looked at on what might be called the military standard, eight might be called good.

12178. (*Viscount Esher.*) But on the civil standard?—There is nothing approaching the civil hospital.

12179. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I suppose if we were to look very closely into workhouse hospitals we should find some rather antiquated?—Yes, but I think if you limit yourself to big cities the poor-law infirmary as at present administered is very good; I do not say the workhouse infirmary of a small town, but the poor-law infirmary in places as large as those we have been inspecting—the corresponding workhouse infirmary; for instance, it is a small matter, but the shirts and the sheets come back from the laundry dry and that is all; they are not touched, there is no question of ironing them or even putting them through a mangle, and they look like things that have been crumpled up in your hands; now, that would not be permitted in a poor-law infirmary.

12180. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Doctor Fripp told us there were no means of washing the utensils?—That matter is a long way behind. I had to report upon hospitals in which I myself actually witnessed the washing up of all the plates, dishes, knives and forks in the sink in which the bed-pans were washed out, many of the patients having typhoid fever. It is positively

incredible. That applies to two separate hospitals out of 22; that is a practice at which I happened to be present and witnessed on two occasions. All our inspections were carried out without notice. The matter you speak of, Sir, is therefore comparatively small. As to the temperature of these hospitals, during the cold weather we could not find a ward up to 50 deg., and that is hardly the temperature for a sick man to be living in.

12181. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I noted one case given of the inferiority of the surgical instruments used in South Africa. It was asked: "Q. I suppose civil consultants brought their instruments with them? A. They did. Q. And there was a very great contrast between the two sets? A. A very great contrast between the two sets. I remember one case on the Modder River of opening the skull, for which one nowadays requires a number of cutting forceps which rapidly divide the bone and enable the operation to be done quickly, accurately, and without shock, but there was nothing there but an old-fashioned amputation bone forceps such as was supplied in old-fashioned amputation cases?"—That is quite true.

12182. That sort of thing came within your knowledge?—Yes.

12183. (*Sir John Edge.*) Unfortunately I was not here while you were giving your evidence. Did you visit Haslar?—No.

12184. You have not visited any of the Naval hospitals?—No, that is outside our province.

12185. And you do not know anything about the supply of medicine and medical stores for those hospitals?—No, I do not.

12186. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Have you seen anything personally of the working of the Army Medical Departments in France or Germany?—No, not in any detail.

12187. Do you consider generally that their arrangements are materially superior to ours?—I think one service is, namely, in America.

12188. I was referring to Germany and France; are the German arrangements better?—I do not think they could be said to be better without qualifying the term in some way. I think perhaps their outfit might be better, but I do not think the system of the service is any better.

12189. What about France?—I should not think France would stand quite so high as Germany.

12190. But you think in the United States the service is better?—Their service is good unquestionably.

12191. (*Viscount Esher.*) In Germany and Russia the Army Medical Services have wider experiences in time of peace than ours?—The system is perfectly different; for instance, in Germany a military medical officer is put with his regiment at Bonn. That regiment stops at Bonn for possibly fifty years, and that man is allowed to practise; and in Russia the best surgeons are military surgeons. In England the military medical officer is not allowed to practise.

12192. In that respect they have an advantage in Germany and Russia?—They have that immense advantage which holds good in India, where the medical officer can practise. There is nothing that keeps a man better in form than the test of civil practise, which, of course, is denied to all the men in our service.

12193. (*Sir John Edge.*) When they are on the Staff in India they are allowed to practise. I think some years ago the army medical officer was allowed to practise, and then I think it was limited to the Staff. My experience is that in India the Army medical officer can attend a consultation?—There are two services in India, as you know, the Indian Medical Service and the other, and I do not quite know what mutual arrangement exists on that point between those two branches of the service.

12194. As a matter of fact, I have had an Army medical officer in consultation myself?—In England he is debarred any practice.

12195. Would you advocate allowing an Army medical officer to practise?—It is not possible, the amount of foreign service is so enormous and his stay in any town so very short.

12196. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) He is always moving about?—Yes.

Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S.

4 Feb. 1903.

See Q. 11034-5.

Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., C.B., K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S. 12197. (*Sir John Edge.*) He might be three years in a station in India, for instance?—In India it is a little different, but it would not apply to a place like Canterbury or Chatham.

4 Feb. 1903. 12198. In India is it your opinion that he ought to be allowed to practise? It would be for the benefit of the men and the Service also?—It rather suggests this, that he has not enough to do in the Service if he is allowed to practise. What would be the perfect development, if this country were rich enough, would be to allow the treatment of the women and children in the Army. That is not done, and that enormous advantage is lost to the Army medical officer.

12199. How are they treated?—By the civilian practitioners. Take any women's hospital you like, there are a number of cases requiring operation, and it would be of great service if those operations could be undertaken by the medical officer, but there is no accommodation, and they go to the civil hospital. The women and children attached to the British Army are looked after practically by civilians. The only women's hospitals are lying-in hospitals simply because no civil hospital will take in what is called a lying-in case. I think you would find if the women and children attached to the British Army and recognised as being on the strength were treated by the Army surgeons that view would have the equivalent of the civil practice you refer to, but as a matter of fact the moment a woman has anything the matter with her requiring definite treatment she is sent off to the civil hospital.

12200. I suppose there would be no objection to the officers of the Army Medical Corps having a consultative practice?—I do not think it is possible. I do not think their claim to special knowledge could be such as would

cause the public to consult them except in one matter, and that is in tropical diseases.

12201. (*Viscount Esher.*) If a soldier is going to be operated upon is it now optional for him to be operated upon in the Military Hospital or in the Civil Hospital?—It depends upon what the hospital is; there is a large hospital at Canterbury dealing with a number of cavalymen, and there is no surgical equipment in the place.

12202. Is it optional to the soldier?—No, for instance at Canterbury there is nothing to deal with him, there is no operating theatre, and there are no suitable instruments, and he is therefore sent away. Sometimes he is sent to a Military Hospital and sometimes to a Civil Hospital, but at a place like Canterbury, which is falling into the earth, there is nothing in the place at all except the four walls and the beds. If anything happens there, if a man meets with a bad accident, it is so much the worse for the man, as there is no proper outfit in the hospital. There are hospitals of over 200 beds with no surgical outfit, so that it cannot be said that the military surgeon is encouraged in the Service.

12203. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Are you certain that the women and children belonging to the regiments in India are not treated by the military surgeons?—I am not speaking of India, I am speaking of this country. We have examined all the women's hospitals in Great Britain, and in every one there is practically only provision for lying-in cases, and of the women and children some are treated as out patients; but all the rest are sent to civil hospitals.

12204. Has that always been the practice?—Always since we could find out.

Lt.-Colonel John Adye, C.B., R.A.

Lieutenant-Colonel JOHN ADYE, C.B., R.A., late Assistant Adjutant-General for Colonial Forces, South Africa, called and examined.

12205. (*Chairman.*) You were Assistant Adjutant-General for the Colonial Forces in South Africa?—Yes, during most of the campaign.

12206. From what date?—I was Staff Officer for the Colonial Forces at Cape Town from November, 1899, to February 1900; I was then appointed to a command in Cape Colony for some months, and I then became Assistant Adjutant-General for the whole of the Colonial Forces at Pretoria, in October, 1900, and continued until the end of the War.

12207. You went out to South Africa in November, 1899?—In October, 1899, at the beginning of the War.

12208. You have been good enough to give us some notes upon the Colonial Forces (*vide Appendix, page 576 post*). In what way would you like to deal with these?—In any way that is convenient. I submitted this Memorandum to the Secretary in case it should be of any use to the Commission, as I saw you were taking evidence about the Colonial Forces.

12209. Do you wish to put in the Memorandum as a whole?—It was not written with the idea of appearing in evidence; it was written rather as a rough memorandum.

12210. Then I can use it as a *précis*?—Yes.

12211. You draw attention in the first place to this being the first occasion on which we have employed Colonial forces on a large scale?—Yes, on a large scale.

12212. And you divide them between over-sea Colonials and South African Colonials?—Yes.

12213. The over-sea being all the other colonies?—The over-sea were all those raised outside South Africa; that was the division generally adopted in South Africa.

12214. We have had a good deal of evidence with regard to the over-sea corps, and the numbers of course we have had; with regard to the South African Corps, you are not able to give us accurate numbers?—I cannot give you accurate numbers, and I doubt if anybody can, because there was considerable irregularity in raising these corps at the start; some officers raised a few men, perhaps 25 scouts, and they did not report it until some time afterwards, and there are a great

number of different categories, some of which I have named here, and there were also others; for instance there were native levies and some bastard corps, half white and half black; again, some corps existed just a few weeks, and then went out and scarcely any record was kept of them. The fact that there was no staff officer right through the war on the Headquarters Staff dealing exclusively with all Colonial forces, rather caused that irregularity. Once I got to Pretoria I tried to get the matter more into shape for the whole of the Colonial forces. Some men also, undoubtedly, enlisted in various corps and obtained their discharge from them, and the war lasted so long that they entered other corps, and very often under different names, so that you may have a man counted several times over, and in that way it is impossible to give an absolutely correct statement. I should say from my own experience that from 50,000 to 60,000 men enlisted in South Africa under all the various categories, right down to the lowest.

12215. You put down the over-sea Colonials as a whole at 30,000?—I have seen two official statements of that since I have been home, and the one fixed it just below 30,000, and the other just over 30,000. The Adjutant-General's Department would have the figures.

12216. You think there were about double that number enlisted in South Africa?—I should say so, under all categories.

12217. There are some of those where the forces had been in existence before the war?—Yes.

12218. And continued after the War?—Yes, the Volunteer forces in Cape Colony and Natal.

12219. What sort of numbers did they consist of before the War?—I could not say exactly before the War, and also they were not all of them called out; some were called out and some were not; some were called out and returned at different times. They fluctuated a great deal.

12220. There were permanent forces in both colonies?—Yes, and their statistics before the War are known; the Intelligence Department would have them.

12221. As regards the irregular forces, you classify them under four heads, I think?—Yes.

12222. Will you give those heads?—There were those raised for general service in South Africa, and I give as examples the Imperial Light Horse and the South African Light Horse; there were a great many others, but I give those as examples. There were also those raised for service in certain colonies in South Africa; they were to serve in Cape Colony or Natal as the case might be, and they were not therefore used in the Transvaal. Then there were those for service in certain districts, which were called, as a rule, district mounted troops; they were chiefly confined to Cape Colony, and were largely raised by the Cape Colony Government, and to some extent paid by them at the end of the war—the last few months. Then, further, there were still more localised troops, the Town Guards, who were enrolled for the defence of a particular town, and who very often were not even embodied because their town was not attacked. Therefore there are a great number of categories, and besides these there were native levies to watch the natives, and one or two other small bodies.

12223. And I suppose the equipment of these different classes was different also?—The equipment of all those in the field I take it was the same.

12224. They were all mounted men?—Mostly mounted men.

12225. The equipment of the Town Guards would be different?—The Town Guards would not have saddlery, and in some cases they did not even have uniform.

12226. But they were all armed with rifles?—They were all armed.

12227. As to the recruiting of these forces, what have you to say?—The recruiting of the South African forces I can speak of; of course I cannot speak of the recruiting of the over-seas, because they were recruited in the distant Colonies. The recruiting was a matter of very great difficulty, because it was carried out as it were in the theatre of war itself, and the communications would be interrupted at times and so on. Also, of course, you had to beware of whom you admitted into these corps; a great many of the inhabitants had Dutch sympathies, and that made a great deal of difficulty.

12228. How did you deal with that difficulty?—Well, as far as possible we employed, specially at the beginning of the war, gentlemen who had Colonial experience, South African experience; for instance, Sir George Farrer, to superintend the raising of the South African Light Horse in Cape Colony.

12229. And see each man?—He, or somebody who had some experience associated with him, saw each man as he came in, made such inquiries as could be made into his antecedents, and either discarded him then and there or passed him. Then these men went out to a training camp outside Cape Town, and they were tested for riding, and if they passed the riding test they were generally admitted, but it was only on probation as a rule for a few days, and if they were not satisfactory, or anything turned up that made it better to get rid of them they were got rid of at once. That was at the beginning of the war when we were raising corps, but once a corps was in the field we had to keep it supplied with recruits to make up the natural wastage of war. Then, about the time I got to Pretoria in October, 1900, a considerable change was made. We saw we should have to go on recruiting; we had had troops in the field for about a year, many of whom had to be allowed to go, and we had to replace them. The system that was instituted was that at all the big places like Cape Town and Durban, Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, and so on, we had a district office and a district recruiter who was in charge of the recruiting in the district round about; and then the regiments which were low and required recruiting and were ordered by headquarters to make up their numbers, sent down an officer and a non-commissioned officer or two to beat up recruits. They issued posters and opened an office perhaps, and they obtained their recruits and brought them before the district local recruiter who passed them into the service. That, I think, is the right system, because you ensure one

system if you have a district officer, and you also encourage the competition in regimental recruiting which was considered necessary, especially by Lord Kitchener, in order to keep the regiments full.

12230. I suppose they were examined medically also?—Yes, of course they were also examined medically.

12231. Did you keep them any length of time under training before they joined?—No, it was impossible to give them any training worth mentioning. Of course towards the end of the war we got some men over again who had been to their work or their farms and then re-enlisted, and they wanted very little. They got very little preliminary training.

12232. That raises the question of the length of service?—Yes, and that I think is a very important point; at the beginning of the war men were enlisted as a rule until their services were no longer required, or words to that effect. It was considered then that the war would not last so long as it did, and no special term was named as a rule; sometimes it was, sometimes three months was named, and sometimes six months, but nearly always there was added "or for as long as my services are required." That was interpreted to mean that if the period named expired before the war ended the man could be kept on if necessary. When the war had lasted a year, in October, 1900, the greater part of the South African Colonial forces were re-constituted; the men were allowed as a rule to go back to their homes; they were encouraged to re-engage for a short period, and from that time onwards we engaged men only for short periods, not longer than six months, and the general period was six months. Then a man, at the expiration of six months, could claim to go even if the war was not over; there was a difference between the reading of the terms in the first year of the war and later.

12233. And did they generally go at the end of the six months?—Most of them would go, but many would come back at the end of a month after they had spent their money.

12234. I think, so far as raising a corps is concerned, you think a year is the shortest period?—I think that I would engage men for not less than a year, provided there was a possibility of the war continuing. I think it is a mistake not to name a period, and to say for as long as their services may be required; it is not fair to the men, and it is unsatisfactory. It is sometimes very hard, of course, to fix a period. We thought that six months would end the war, and afterwards we found that it was not long enough. The short periods, of course, caused the whole of the Colonial forces to be continually in a state of change; every six months the whole of the force was reconstituted.

12235. That is to say, just about the time a man was getting useful he went away?—Yes, and, of course, he had to be sent back to his home, paid up, and given a discharge certificate, and perhaps a month later you had to go through the whole form again.

12236. At any rate, the same sort of regulation ought to apply in all cases?—I should apply it in all cases, because it creates a great deal of discontent otherwise.

12237. Then as to establishment?—In the same way with establishment; I think an establishment should be laid down which would govern all mounted corps, and if necessary dismounted corps could have another. Nearly the whole of the corps were mounted; there were only one or two exceptional corps dismounted among the Colonials, and if you do not lay down an establishment you get into a great deal of trouble, which any military man will understand, especially with regard to pay, and especially where irregular officers are concerned. They frequently think they can make men into sergeants and officers without regard to establishment; perhaps an officer goes sick for a few weeks, and they put another in his place, and then comes the question of pay for the two of them.

12238. But you think the Commanding Officer and Adjutant at any rate ought to be regulars?—I think that it is better if you can get a good regular officer to command. Of course, towards the end of the war we got several very excellent Colonial officers, who had had great experience and were good fighters, and they made

*Lt.-Colonel
John Adye,
C.B., R.A.*

4 Feb. 1903.

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4 Feb. 1903.

most excellent commanding officers, but they are hard to get. Naturally, an officer who has had a military training and education, and has reached a certain rank, is better for the command of an irregular regiment, but he has to be very carefully selected. In any case, I would make the Adjutant a regular officer.

12239. As to the appointment and promotion of the officers, how would you deal with that?—I think that the greater number of the officers of the Colonial corps must themselves be Colonials, and as it is impossible, when you are forming corps in this way at a pinch, to know all the officers, you must leave it very much in the hands of the Commanding Officer, who will select his own very possibly from the non-commissioned officers and men under him, but I think it is very necessary that what was done in South Africa should always be done, namely, that he should submit his selections for the final approval of the General Commanding in the field, otherwise, especially with officers who have not had much experience in that way before, they are very apt to select men who are not entirely fitted.

12240. They were sometimes rather lax in forwarding their recommendations?—That, of course, is very apt to occur in war. They were trekking about in South Africa, and perhaps they did not touch the line for a month at a time, and they did not have very much opportunity, and when they had they were very busy, or perhaps they forgot it. Such things did happen, and the result was that officers' names came in perhaps some months after they had been appointed, and then perhaps it would be found that they were in excess of the establishment, that there was no vacancy for them, and so on. A good deal of friction arose through that, but it was almost impossible to avoid it in a campaign such as that in South Africa.

12241. You are speaking chiefly of the South African corps?—Yes, but it also occurred with regard to the promotion and appointment of officers in the over-sea corps after arrival, because, of course, they lost officers in the same way; although they came with their complement full of officers, and sometimes over full, they had vacancies occurring almost every day, and the same thing, therefore, applies to them.

12242. The original appointments were made in the different Colonies?—Yes.

12243. But you had to deal with the promotions and appointments in consequence of casualties?—Yes.

12244. Non-commissioned officers were made by the Commanding Officers without reference?—Yes, their names were not sent in.

12245. As to training, you have already said you could not train them beforehand?—It was not found possible to give them a training of more than perhaps a week or so when you were raising a regiment at the beginning of the war; we gave them a little instruction in riding and shooting at certain places; but as soon as men were armed, equipped, and horsed, they were sent up to the front, where they were very much wanted. Naturally, that would not do with every enemy.

12246. You prefer to have them under proper instructors at the recruiting centre?—Yes, I think if you had a few regular instructors at the recruiting centre it would be a very great thing. We had them at Cape Town in the first two or three months of the war, when we were raising several corps in succession. We borrowed a few non-commissioned officers from Cavalry regiments and so on, and we drilled the men in squadrons, and troops, and got them together, but once regiments took the field it was not possible to give individual recruits much instruction.

12247. Even where you could drill them, you did not give them the same amount of drill as a regular soldier gets?—Of course not.

12248. As to equipment?—I do not think there is very much to say as to equipment. Their equipment was, as a rule, the same as that of the regular forces, but the whole question of accounting for equipment they found exceedingly difficult, and I think some simple form of ledger might be devised if we are going to employ Colonial forces again on a large scale.

12249. And discipline is a difficult matter?—Discipline is, of course, a difficult matter with irregular forces.

You cannot treat them in quite the same way as regular forces; the men have never been together before, and are not accustomed before entering the field to discipline.

12250. The same scale of fines would not apply?—No, and fining was the general punishment inflicted by the Commanding Officers of Colonial corps.

12251. I suppose you are speaking there of minor offences?—Yes, with regard to court-martial offences they were dealt with in the same way as the regular forces.

12252. Did you find the discipline good on the whole?—I think as long as the troops were busy, and in the field, it was good, but once they came into the line, or got into a town, or where there was any drink to be got, naturally the discipline of irregular troops, who had only lately been raised, was not so good as that of regular troops.

12253. As to camp discipline?—That, I think, was wanting to a certain extent, chiefly because they wanted good officers and non-commissioned officers to look to details such as the roster of duties and the performance of ordinary duties in the horse lines, looking after their horses and waggons and so on.

12254. We have had evidence that a good many of these corps were bad horse-masters?—Of course, my experience was largely in an office, but I had a command in the field for about eight months, and I had some Colonial forces under me then, and my experience was the same, that they were often bad horse-masters, and they were all the worse, I think, because there was a sort of natural feeling that a Colonial knew more about horses than anybody else.

12255. They would not take directions?—No, they liked to have their own methods, and I do not think their methods were always good. That, of course, is a matter of opinion, but many of them were of course experienced in horse management.

12256. If the Commanding Officers found a man they did not consider worth keeping they discharged him?—Yes, the Commanding Officers were very fond of discharging their men in the field when they found that they were not of much use; for instance, a regiment would come into a place and they would then discharge three or four men they had found were not much use on the veldt, and those men would either be left in that place on their own account, as it were, or else they would be transported down to the coast by railway. Then, of course, they immediately enlisted again, and there was no check on them; if a Commanding Officer did that you could not keep an eye on these men he got rid of, and many of the men were continually being enlisted and discharged on that account. Instructions were issued that Commanding Officers should not do this, but they objected very much because they said it took such a long time to get instructions from headquarters with approval, and they preferred simply to kick a man out and let him go. Naturally, that is not a very satisfactory way of dealing with the case. It also gave great power to the Commanding Officers, some of whom used it in one way and some in another; some would discharge for an ordinary offence, and others would not. There was a want of system, and also it was not always quite fair to the men.

12257. Was that altered before the end of the war or did it remain the same?—It was a question of considerable difficulty all through the war; I issued circulars about it to all the Colonial Corps in accordance with the instructions of Lord Kitchener and the Adjutant-General, but I am afraid they were always rather disregarded. It is a subject upon which Commanding Officers have a different opinion from Headquarters, and I can quite understand their view; at the same time I think the lesser evil is to report the matter, even if there is a little delay.

12258. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was the man discharged without inquiry?—No, he would have an inquiry by his Commanding Officer.

12259. By him alone?—By him alone; he would be dissatisfied with his conduct, and he would say, "You may go."

12260. There was no regimental inquiry?—No.

12261. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Did that apply to the over-sea contingents?—No, I am speaking more of South Africans.

12262. (*Chairman.*) As to the pay, there were differences in the rates, were there not?—The pay is a very important question, and a rather difficult one, I think. The rate was essentially the same all through but there were small variations. A private soldier got 5s. a day in every mounted corps with the exception of one corps that served in a very unhealthy district and got higher pay; that was a local corps, and was the only exception that I can remember. The rates, for instance, of the non-commissioned officers' pay varied a little. I think that was due to the corps having been raised in various Colonies; Natal raised corps on her own account at the beginning of the war and so did Cape Colony. Of course the corps that came from over-sea were raised in their respective Colonies, and I do not know that any rate of pay was laid down by the War Office and sent to all the Colonies concerned, at all events if it was done these slight variations occurred.

12263. At a later date the later contingents were all paid by the Imperial Government direct?—That is so.

12264. Then I suppose that was on a uniform system?—I do not think that even then it was laid down from the War Office; it may have been—I may be mistaken—but even some of the later corps came with a few variations in their pay.

12265. What you would recommend on another occasion is that all rates of pay of irregular forces should be uniform?—I think that all irregular forces employed in a common theatre of war should be paid on one scale, no matter whether they come from Australia, Canada, South Africa, or elsewhere.

12266. Inclusive rates with no allowances?—I would have those rates inclusive.

12267-8. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Do you not think there might be a difficulty if this inclusive rate was lower than the rate they received in their own Colony?—I was talking then of improvised corps, corps raised specially for the war, not of corps that already existed in their own Colony.

12269. They would have to get their own rate?—Yes.

12270. You could not cut them down?—Certainly not.

12271. (*Chairman.*) When you speak of inclusive rates with no allowances you also mean the travelling on duty should be free?—Yes, of course men must travel on duty free, but I would not give them such things as lodging, detention, servants, forage, and ration allowances; I would give them a high rate to include all those things. It would be infinitely simpler and I think it would be more satisfactory to the men. Of course these allowances are chiefly drawn by officers; if an officer goes say to Cape Town to recruit for his corps, he goes to a hotel, and he sends in a claim for lodging allowance, fuel and light allowance, for forage for his horse, for rations, and so on, and it gives a great deal of trouble to adjust.

12272. Not on Service?—Yes, on Service.

12273. But not in the field?—Not in the field, but while the war is going on he goes to Cape Town or Durban, possibly, for his health. I think it would simplify it a great deal if he simply had one rate of pay whatever he might be; a high rate of pay, of course, it would have to be, and he should understand that wherever he is he will not receive other allowances.

12274. That naturally applies to officers on that sort of special duty?—Yes, it sometimes applies also to sergeants on recruiting duty.

12275. When a man is serving in the field with his regiment he would get rations and so on?—Yes, it is only when he is detached that I am speaking of now.

12276. As to the methods of pay, we have heard a good deal about the trouble caused in that way?—Yes, there was a great deal of trouble about the methods of pay, and, theoretically, of course the company and squadron commanders should pay their men themselves

and be present when the men are paid, and see that the men sign the pay sheet and receive what they are entitled to in the way it is done with the Regular forces; but, practically, we found that we could not do that; the officers had no experience in this way, they had no properly-trained pay sergeants, and they were continually moving about in the field, and found it extremely difficult to keep any account, even the simplest. So that as far as the South African Corps were concerned, we appointed regimental paymasters who took all those duties off the shoulders of the company or squadron commanders, and these paymasters lived as a rule at a base or centre; they did not accompany the regiment in the field, and when the regiment touched the line they went up with a certain amount of money and paid the pay then due, saw that the men signed the accounts, and came back and rendered their accounts in the proper way to the Army Pay Department. I think, with irregular forces raised during a war, that is the only way in which you can deal with this matter.

12277. Would there not be a difficulty sometimes, if the corps were split up a good deal, of the regimental paymaster getting at them?—He could generally get at them, and the men do not require much pay in the field or during war; they would not draw their pay perhaps for several months at a time, and they would prefer not to, there is nothing for them to spend it on, and they might lose it or have it stolen. I do not think that would be a difficulty, but if it was you might give him some assistance in the shape of a non-commissioned officer to go up and pay a detachment.

12278. As it was, men who were away from the regiment or left behind sick were not paid?—The individual man who is away from his regiment is always a trouble; it was found a trouble, I know, with Regular regiments, and still more so, of course, with Irregular regiments, but if Commanding Officers or officers of companies and squadrons had given their men last pay certificates in a simple form, simply the name and rank of the man and the rate of his pay and the date up to which he had been last paid on even a slip of paper and signed it, any Army Paymaster of the Army Pay Department would have been able to pay that man up to date on that, but failing that, of course, the men could not draw any pay without further reference.

12279. I suppose they sometimes lost it?—A man might lose it, but he would generally take care to stick to it if he knew his pay would depend upon it. Once you can communicate again with the man's paymaster you can obtain pay for him; many men came to us at Pretoria and said they were in want of pay, and I would make enquiries and get it for them; that was in the case of men who were in hospital or were detached, but if they had had a simple form of last pay certificate they would have only had to go to the nearest Army paymaster to receive what was due to them.

12280. Some of these corps were disbanded during the war?—Yes, because, perhaps, they had died down so low or lost so heavily, or there may have been various circumstances which caused them to be disbanded; some even of the best-known ones were disbanded before the end of the war. Then, again, two or three would perhaps be amalgamated to form a rather larger corps as they had got so weak and low; but as a rule, of course, the end of the war was the time when the bulk were disbanded.

12281. Were they all disbanded at that time?—They were all disbanded at the end of the war with the exception of one corps, which I believe has since been disbanded. Of course, I am speaking of the special corps raised for the war; the Volunteers were not disbanded—they were disembodied.

12282. Had you any difficulties with regard to that matter?—No; it is a matter that requires a little thought and care, and as to which a few regulations should be drawn up beforehand and issued, so that people may know what is to be done; the corps has to be collected, and you have to get in the men from the various detachments and other duties they may be doing, and you have also got to settle about the men in hospital and in prison who are away. Then a date ahead has to be fixed, and it should be notified to the

*Lt.-Colonel
John Adye,
C.B., R.A.*

4 Feb. 1903.

Lt.-Colonel
John Adye,
C.B., R.A.
4 Feb. 1903.

corps that beyond that date they will not be paid; you may be able to dispense with them before that date, but you will pay them to a certain date, and not further. The staff will have to be retained beyond that, of course, probably the Commanding Officer, Adjutant, Paymaster, and Quartermaster. They have to render their accounts and return their stores and equipment, and they should be given a limited time, otherwise with irregular corps they are very apt to prolong the operation as long as possible.

12283. Did you see the disbandment through?—Yes, it was carried out before I left.

12284. And it was all wound up?—It was all wound up.

12285. Satisfactorily?—I believe so; of course, the accounts have to be passed by the War Office, and that takes some time. I daresay many of them may be still under question now, and there may be outstanding questions of account, but the actual officers and men were disbanded some time before I left.

12286. Did the men leave satisfied?—I think so; we gave them six weeks' or perhaps a month's notice that on a certain date the corps would cease to exist, and that they would receive pay to that date.

12287. You have some observations on the whole subject?—The chief point, I think, with regard to all these hastily-raised special corps that have no existence before a war is that we should have certain lines laid down beforehand, so that we should know what we are going to do and how to do it.

12288. You had nothing?—We had nothing before; we have never employed corps on anything like that scale; perhaps one regiment might be raised, but not anything like the numbers we raised during the war. All the points I have touched upon to-day, and a great number of details concerning each of them should, I think, be embodied in a hand-book or in instructions for officers concerned in raising corps; for instance, we should fix, if possible, the rate of pay; we should certainly fix the establishment; we should also consider the question of terms of service, the question of recruiting expenses, and there are the standards of age and height and so on.

12289. Has anything been done in that direction?—I do not think so.

12290. You have had a great deal to do with it, but you have not been asked for any report on the subject?—When I returned I suggested that I should write a detailed report on the subject, and I believe the military authorities approved, but I think there was some difficulty about how I should be paid while writing it. I was to have been employed, but some hitch occurred, and, although I have got a great amount of material which I could put into the shape of a report, I have not rendered one at present.

12291. Because it has not been required of you?—Yes. I did mention the matter when I came home, and I was told that it should be done, but I have not been employed to do it. I think also a handbook or short instructions for Commanding Officers of Irregular Forces, would be very useful, giving them hints as to accounts and discipline, and as to one or two small elementary returns, how to make them out, and how to correspond with their superiors, how to answer a telegram, and small hints such as seem very elementary but are very useful for a man who has not had experience of that sort before.

12292. And you think there ought to be an Inspector-General in those cases?—I think in South Africa, where we had such a large number of Colonial forces of all sorts under arms, and where we were raising men and discharging men all through the War, it would have been of use if some officer of the nature of an Inspector-General could have been appointed, whose duty it would have been to travel about to inspect the recruiting and discharge depôts and see that they were doing their work properly, that men were not detained there unduly; that men were receiving their pay in the right way; to inquire into complaints, and also to visit regiments as they came in from trek. When they reached the line it would have been a very good thing if some officer from Headquarters, who dealt entirely with Colonials, could have visited them and inquired into

various matters, have seen that their officers were all present, and if some of their squadrons were very weak, could have made arrangements for recruiting them again, and so on.

12293. That was no part of your business?—No; I was tied to my office at Pretoria the whole time, and directed matters from there.

12294. The Imperial Yeomanry had an Inspector-General?—Yes, they had, and the Mounted Infantry had an Inspector-General, and I believe both those officers travelled about. I know the Inspector-General of Mounted Infantry did, and saw some of his units from time to time, but the Colonial forces wanted one still more, in my opinion, because first of all they were larger, and secondly, they were being raised in the country itself and discharged there.

12295. (Sir Henry Norman.) In the Mounted Infantry do you not include a large number of Colonial forces from Australia, and so on?—Yes; but when I said Mounted Infantry I meant the Regular Mounted Infantry; they were dealt with by the Inspector-General.

12296. The Inspector-General did not inspect the Canadian or Australian men?—No.

12297. (Chairman.) Is there any other point you would like to mention?—I do not think so.

12298. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) While your remarks apply chiefly to the Irregular forces raised in South Africa, you were the Assistant Adjutant-General for the whole of the Colonial Forces?—Yes, from the end of October, 1900.

12299. You would recommend, I think, that the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant should be officers of the Regular Army?—Yes, or officers who have had experience with the Regular forces of the Colonies.

12300. As a matter of fact, the officers of the Colonial Regiments, the over-sea Colonies, were not of the Regular Army?—No; but I think most of them were members of their own regular permanent forces—both the commanding officers and many of the officers.

12301. In many cases they were?—Yes, my remarks applied more to those raised in South Africa.

12302. And you consider that when in command and as adjutants they were entirely satisfactory?—Yes, as a rule.

12303. You speak of the quality of the troops raised in South Africa; would you say that those from the over-sea Colonies were satisfactory both as to physique and intelligence as a whole?—Yes, as a whole, I should say especially so. The forces that were raised in the over-sea Colonies, I understand, were chiefly picked men, and when we called, say, upon New Zealand for 1,000 men, something like 5,000 volunteered, and we were therefore able to pick one man out of five. Of course I am only speaking from hearsay now, because I had nothing to do with that, being in South Africa; but I am certainly of opinion that the Colonial forces that came from over-sea had the appearance and did the work of picked men as a rule.

12304. And their discipline as a whole was quite satisfactory?—Their discipline as a whole was very satisfactory. Of course there were exceptions, as there will be in every Army.

12305. It would be difficult, would it not, to establish one rate of pay for the whole of the Colonies?—I think for the troops that are going to fight in one theatre of war, and that are raised only for that war and not for service in their own Colonies, one rate might be fixed.

12306. But you are aware that in some of the Colonies the pay for soldiers as well as for labourers is much higher than in others?—Yes, but the rates for Irregular forces would always be very high rates, and the rates in particular in South Africa were very high. I think the lowest rate of pay, that of the private, which was 5s., was the same for every corps from every colony.

12307. Did this difference of pay cause great discontent in South Africa?—No, I do not think so; but what did cause trouble was that some corps came from, we will say, Australia, and they were not quite certain exactly what their pay was to be. They understood they were to get so much from the Imperial Government, and they also thought in some instances that they were to get something from their own Colony.

12308. Take, for instance, the troops from Canada, they got the 1s. or 1s. 3d. of the Regular pay from the Imperial Government?—Yes.

12309. But their own Government paid them as much again—indeed more than that?—Yes.

12310. Was that known amongst the troops generally there?—I do not think that it was.

12311. So that there was no discontent from that cause?—No, not in that way.

12312. You said that the commanding officers were apt to discharge men they did not care for, who were not considered very useful?—Yes.

12313. Was that the case also with those from the over-sea Colonies?—No. I was speaking of the locally raised troops in South Africa.

12314. You recommend also that the medical officers for examining the recruits should be of the Regular Service—that refers to South Africa alone?—Yes.

12315. As to uniformity, you say you think it would be well that there should be an Inspector-General or some officer so that there could be a central supervision to ensure some degree of uniformity; was the necessity for this very marked with regard to the Colonials from over-sea?—Would you mind telling me where you are quoting from?

12316. You say here, in the statement which you have submitted to us: "When the troops come from several Colonies they require some central supervision to ensure some degree of uniformity" (*vide Appendix, page 579, post*)?—What I mean is that one Colony will send a thousand men and call it a brigade, and also will appoint to it a brigadier, and give him a large staff; while another Colony, which also sends a thousand men, will call it a regiment, under a colonel, with an adjutant, and I think when the second regiment gets into the field its Colonel is apt to say: "Why should not I be a brigadier, because here is a man next door to me, commanding the same number of troops, who is a brigadier and receives higher pay, and has a larger staff. Why should not I have the same?" There were occasionally questions arising of that sort, and as each Colony had apparently sent its contingent, on an organisation drawn up in the Colony, they naturally differed. Improvised troops, not of the permanent forces of a Colony employed in one theatre of war ought all to be organised on the same principle, and as those in South Africa were all paid by the Imperial Government, the Imperial Government should lay down the organisation and the establishment as well as the rates of pay.

12317. Was it not the case that the contingents from the outside Colonies had their own paymasters?—No, I think not as a rule.

12318. In some cases they had?—In some cases, especially at the end, some of the later contingents.

12319. Had those from Canada, for instance, their own paymasters?—I rather think the Canadians had, but I am not quite certain.

12320. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) In your estimate of 60,000 men employed in the South African corps, may not a certain proportion of those men have been counted twice over?—Yes, it is quite possible, but I have allowed for that in my estimate. I think I have placed it a little high, and perhaps 50,000 would be nearer it, but I am afraid it is impossible at this stage, owing to there having been no regular system from the very start, and not one officer to whom they all reported and sent their returns, to get the exact numbers.

12321. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was your exact duty respecting the over-sea troops?—Every question that was referred to headquarters with regard to the over-sea troops was dealt with by me under Lord Kitchener.

12322. What class of questions would be referred?—Various, for instance—Questions of pay; in some cases they were not certain exactly what their rates of pay were. The Bushmen contingents was one instance. In other cases there would be the question of establishment; they would refer and say, "Why should not I have a paymaster?" "Another corps close to me has two doctors; may I not have two doctors?" Then there were questions of discharge; men would get telegrams from home saying their relations were dead, or that their business was going to the bad, and might they be sent home; and there were questions of discipline also which came up.

12323. With respect to pay, have you heard that there was a good deal of difficulty with respect to one of the New South Wales contingents?—I have heard nothing special. Was that an early contingent?

Lt.-Colonel John Adye, C.B., R.A.

4 Feb. 1903.

12324. There has been a good deal of litigation about it which I believe is now coming to the Privy Council. They said they were engaged at 5s. a day, but the New South Wales Government understood that from that 5s. a day was to be deducted the amount they received from the Imperial Government, I think 1s. 3d., so as to reduce their pay to 3s. 9d. a day. You have not heard anything about that?—There was a question to that effect some time ago with regard to one of the Bushmen contingents I remember, and, speaking quite away from papers and so on, I think it was laid down that they would get 5s. a day, no matter from whom they got it, but that they would certainly get the 5s. Who was to pay it or who was to pay the different proportions of it would be a matter of adjustment between the Imperial and Colonial Governments.

12325. That was the men's idea, but the Colonial Government understood they were to get the advantage of the Imperial pay?—I think it has been laid down by the War Office that they will get 5s. a day, and they certainly seem entitled to 5s.; I am speaking, of course, without the book.

12326. The Colonial Government thought the men were to have deducted from the 5s. a day the 1s. 3d. of Imperial pay. The men want to recover the full 5s., and in the Colonial Courts they have recovered it, but now the Government are coming to the Privy Council; those matters would not come within your cognisance, I suppose?—Yes, they would in the first instance, but the action which you say has taken place has probably taken place since the War was over, and since I left South Africa. I remember a case—I do not know whether it was that particular one or not—occurring, and that was the case I had in my mind when I said they were not always quite certain what their pay was.

12327. You think that this ought to be rectified in the future?—I think it ought to be laid down clearly beforehand, and, in fact, I would have on every man's engagement sheet exactly what pay he is to get. It does not matter who pays him, that is a matter of account between the Governments, but the man ought to know what he is going to get.

12328. You were not with the General of Communications?—For the first three months of the War I was on the staff of the General of the line of communications at Cape Town; I then only dealt with the Cape Colony Irregular Forces and Volunteers.

12329. And not the over-sea?—When Lord Roberts came out I was placed on the Headquarter Staff, and since October, 1900, I dealt with every sort of Colonial—Over-sea, South Africans, Volunteers, Irregulars and all.

12330. For instance, the communications from friends of wounded men or sick men did not come through your Department?—No, they would be referred to the Casualty Department, who answered questions about them. I was the Staff Officer for Colonial forces on Lord Kitchener's staff. There were also officers on the staff of the line of communications who would answer questions of that nature.

12331. I think all the communications we had in New South Wales were from the General of Communications?—Not all, but many of them; in the same way the War Office had a great deal of correspondence with the General of Communications which would not trouble to go to Lord Kitchener.

12332. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You were mentioning the various and many descriptions of troops that were raised temporarily, and it has come before me, as a Governor of Chelsea Hospital, in connection with pensions, that there were enormous numbers of corps raised locally, such as Railway Pioneers?—Yes.

12333. Mine Guards?—Yes.

12334. And those are all included in the 60,000 you have mentioned, I presume?—Yes.

12335. And, I presume, included in the over-sea contingents are the corps raised in London, like Lord

Lt.-Colonel John Adye, C.B., R.A. Loch's corps, which was recruited here?—Yes, there were one or two corps of that nature.

12336. And they are included, I suppose?—Yes, there were only one or two; it is only a rough estimate.

12337. It has also come to my knowledge, and I think you said something to the same effect, that some corps were composed of men who were enlisted for very brief periods indeed?—Yes.

12338. And they might have had the opportunity of enlisting three or four times over?—Yes, and no doubt many did.

12339. The pay, after all, was fairly uniform amongst all the Colonials, whether they were Over-sea or South African?—Yes.

12340. Five shillings being the general standard?—It started on the basis of 5s. for a trooper.

12341. As to those corps that existed before, for instance, from Queensland, nearly all the men that came at first were men who were, or had been, in the local forces?—Yes.

12342. And their pay was not in all items the same as that of the New South Wales men or the South Australians or New Zealanders?—No.

12343. They took their own rates of pay, and it would have been impossible to have altered that. I think in Queensland the private got 6s.; at all events, there were little difficulties of that kind, especially in the non-commissioned ranks, and it would not have been very easy beforehand to fix a uniform rate?—Not for men from permanent forces, no doubt, because the men in permanent forces naturally claimed to receive what they had originally enlisted for, and you cannot alter their rate.

12344. In the Colonies the permanent force consists of men regularly enlisted who serve in barracks?—Yes.

12345. And there is an equally permanent force for the time they enlist of men who follow their own trades and only come out for drill or camp?—Yes.

12346. And they are accustomed to receive so much every day they are out?—Yes.

12347. The permanent force gets very much less pay, as they are always in barracks?—Yes.

12348. So that there would be a good deal of difficulty in fixing a uniform rate; when you take Canada and New Zealand and so on there would be rather a difficulty?—When you raise forces for a special campaign such as that in South Africa, you have to pay them a very high rate; the rate fixed was 5s. for a trooper, and I do not suppose that in any of the Colonial forces from the outside Colonies a private got more than 5s. a day.

12349. They are paid in different ways, because they owned their own horses and got a special allowance for their horses?—I suppose that 5s. would be the highest rate, and they would not lose by taking the 5s.

12350. I do not think anyone had less than 5s. The ordinary Mounted Infantryman, who mainly went from the Colonies, and who earns his own living, gets on the days when he goes out in Queensland 6s., and when he goes into camp he gets 6s. a day and rations. However that may be, there is a difficulty in fixing a uniform rate when there are so many different Dependencies of the Crown. I do not know what they fix for the men from India?—We had only very few—Lumsden's Horse.

12351. I think they got a higher rate of pay than 5s. probably?—They left the field about the time I went up to Pretoria, so that I could not say what they got as they were never really under me.

12352. Was the equipment of the over-sea corps fairly kept up after they arrived in South Africa? I suppose they got their fresh equipment supplied from the General Ordnance Stores?—Yes, in South Africa.

12353. And their horses were kept up?—Yes.

12354. I see the punishment principally inflicted for breaches of discipline and so on was fines?—I think that was the general punishment for minor offences.

12355. There is perhaps some difficulty in inflicting punishment for small offences on men who are rather

independent?—Yes, you naturally have to have rather a different standard of discipline.

12356. In talking about discharges by Commanding Officers, I suppose a Commanding Officer could not discharge an over-sea Colonial, could he?—Not an over-sea Colonial; I was speaking of the South Africans.

12357. No over-sea corps was disbanded in South Africa; they were sent back to be disbanded, were they not?—They were sent back to be disbanded; but if the Colony had no objection, when a corps returned the men who wished to remain in South Africa were discharged there, if the Government of the Colony concerned agreed.

12358. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was that the case all through?—Yes.

12359. Many of the men complained bitterly of having to return in order to go back to South Africa again?—That was because their Government said they did not wish to have them discharged there.

12360. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) There was no commandant appointed to command generally the over-sea Colonials?—No.

12361. What was General Hutton's position—did he command the Mounted Infantry generally?—I am under the impression that he commanded the Mounted Infantry generally, not specially Colonials; but that was before I went to Pretoria.

12362. So that you do not know?—No.

12363. I think he had some staff relation or connection with the Australians certainly?—It was during the few months I was away in the field, and I could not say.

12364. But there was no inspector appointed, as you suggest there should be?—No.

12365. And you think it very essential that for every over-sea corps, as well as the corps raised in South Africa, there should have been a paymaster?—I think it would have saved trouble and friction, and also a good deal of money.

12366. We have had some evidence to the same effect with regard to the Yeomanry?—I think it is a very important thing that there should be someone who understands accounts and the method of payment in these irregular corps.

12367. You think that the discipline of the over-sea corps was, on the whole, good?—Yes.

12368. Would you say the same of the corps raised in South Africa?—It is a little difficult to compare them, perhaps; the over-sea corps, as I say, were chiefly composed of men who were picked, I understand; moreover, they had a large number of military men as officers, who came from their permanent forces. The South Africans did not have that to any extent; the permanent forces in South Africa were the Volunteers who required their own officers, and the irregular forces raised in large numbers had not, as a rule, officers with any previous military training, unless they were got from the Regular forces.

12369. As to the forces of the over-sea Colonies, I think most of their officers were officers in their own Colonies, who had been so for some time, and had had some experience?—Yes; and also the mere fact that these corps were formed as a body in their own Colony, and then came across the sea as a regiment, and landed in South Africa as a regiment, and very possibly had a month, as the last ones had, to get together in and get their horses into condition, gave them a greater chance than the South Africans at first.

12370. And they were known more or less to their officers?—Yes.

12371. Still, several of the South African corps surely had military officers in command of them?—Yes, most of them.

12372. And others had adjutants?—Most of them had adjutants; but, of course, many of their officers were men who had had no previous military experience.

12373. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to add?—I think not.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

Thursday, 5th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
Field Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Colonel A. W. THORNECROFT, C.B., called and examined.

Colonel
A. W.
Thorneycroft
C.B.

12374. (*Chairman*.) You, in October, 1899, were serving as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General at Pietermaritzburg, I believe?—Yes.

12375. The particular point upon which we wish to have your evidence to-day is with regard to the raising of the regiment that you, I believe, raised at that time. You have been good enough to give us some notes. (*Vide Appendix, page 580, post and App., Vol. page 343*). Shall I take you through them in detail or would you like to make a statement?—I think the points I have touched upon in my notes are nearly all I could think of. I have no further statement to make myself, except what I put down in my summary.

12376. Then I may use this as a *précis*, and ask you questions upon it?—If you please.

12377. Your operation began in consequence of a telegram from Sir George White on the 16th October, 1899?—Yes.

12378. What did he ask you to do at that time?—In the telegram he asked me to raise a corps of 500 mounted riflemen as soon as I possibly could get them together.

12379. Was that the first effort in that direction which had been made in Natal?—The Imperial Light Horse were the first regiment raised of South African Colonials. They were got together by Colonel Wools-Sampson, an officer of very long experience in the Colony, before the outbreak of hostilities, anticipating that they would be wanted. He got a great many men of the best material in South Africa together to form his regiment, and he collected horses, and more or less saw his way to the organisation of the corps. That was the first irregular corps raised for the War. Mine was the second.

12380. Then the Imperial Light Horse were actually raised first?—Yes.

12381. And they were in existence when you began?—They were in existence when I arrived at Pietermaritzburg.

12382. But there was a committee at Pietermaritzburg who kept a register of names?—The Uitlander Committee. Many men came down from Johannesburg, and were anxious to form themselves into a corps and go to the front, and in order to facilitate operations the Uitlander Committee kept a register of these various people, about their ages, and where they had been employed, so that there was some reference as to their character.

12383. And you were able to use that information?—I was able to use that information, and it assisted me very much.

12384. Did you find it reliable?—Quite reliable as regards the men.

12385. How many did you get from them?—I should say about 300.

12386. Then that was the first attempt?—That was the first formation of the corps.

12387. Your first difficulty, I think, arose with regard to pay?—Yes. It has always been the custom to pay Colonials in South Africa 5s. per day. I was out

there in the Zulu and other wars, and I was well aware that the men would not serve for 1s. a day.

12388. But the authorities at home proposed to pay them 1s. a day?—Yes, they tried to get the men to serve at 1s. a day, but it was impossible to get men to serve for 1s., and I so informed Sir George White, who corresponded by cable with the Secretary of State for War, and it was eventually approved that they should receive the usual wage of Colonial troops.

12389. When you say it was wished to pay them 1s. a day, in what form did that come out to you?—I got a telegram from the Chief Staff Officer to Sir George White, in Ladysmith, to say that the rate of pay would be the same as that of the British Mounted Infantry, that would be 1s. 3d. a day.

12390. It was in consequence of Orders from home?—I understand so.

12391. But you did not see the Orders?—I did not see the Orders.

12392. If we want to know about that we must get it from Sir George White?—Yes.

12393. Some of the men that you were negotiating with were very enthusiastic, and said that they did not want any pay?—They offered to come for nothing. They said they would not serve for 1s. a day. Of course, when a Colonial is asked to volunteer to fight he knows from previous experience that if he is disabled or killed he has got no Government pension, and if he is married, as many of them are, he has to keep up his home during the time he is away at the front, and from the expensive nature of living and house-rent in the colonies it is impossible for a trooper to keep his wife and family going even on 5s. a day; so that it would be unreasonable in my opinion to ask him to serve at any less wage. Many of the men who served under me kept their homes going from 18 months to two years, and then were obliged to ask me to let them go home to try and get work to do for a time in order to keep their homes going.

12394. During the time this difficulty was being dealt with you, of course, could not complete your enlistment?—I could not absolutely enlist the men and make them take the Oath, but I did as much as I could. I provisionally enlisted them and went on with the testing of their qualifications as regards riding and shooting, in order to be ready as soon as possible.

12395. And it was on the 27th of October that you got authority to enlist the men?—Yes.

12396. And then you at once set to work to do so?—I had all the forms of attestation and everything ready, and I at once enlisted the men who were available in this camp that I had formed.

12397. Who by that time had reached the number of 400?—Yes.

12398. You divided them into companies and sections, and so on?—Yes.

12399. I believe you let the men have some choice as regards their serving?—It is a very essential thing to allow comrades to serve together. For many of the duties, such as cossack posts or outpost duty, and all that,

Colonel I consider it a very important thing to let comrades
A. W. who will stick together under any circumstances serve
Thornycroft, in the same sub-section.
C.B.

12400. You found that to work well afterwards?—
5 Feb. 1903. Admirably.

12401. Then with regard to the selection of officers, have you anything to say?—That is a most important point in the raising of a colonial corps. Unless very great care is taken on that point, the chances are very much opposed to your getting an efficient unit for fighting.

12402. Will you describe what had been the custom?—There was a corps raised after mine called the Colonial Scouts, where the men were permitted to elect their own officers, and the consequence was that a very indifferent class of man became an officer by the favour of his own comrades when he was not fit to lead them in the field and he could not command the confidence of those men whom it was his duty to lead, and the system broke down, as I knew it would. I would not permit anything of that kind when I raised my corps. I had authority to choose my own officers absolutely, and although I submitted their names to Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson, the Governor, he never interfered with my selection in any way. And I had the power not only to choose them and make them officers of any rank that I thought they were capable and fit for, but I also had the power to dismiss them instantly for any misconduct or inefficiency, or if in any way I thought they were not fitted, or to reduce them to a lower rank. If I thought a man was a good man, but not fitted for captain, but likely to improve, I could make him a subaltern if necessary. In a colonial corps it is absolutely necessary to give the Commanding Officer a perfectly free hand in that matter, in order to enable him to take the field quickly and efficiently.

12403. And had you to exercise this power of punishment, so to speak?—I do not think I absolutely dismissed an officer, but when I found they were not efficient I allowed them to resign their commission, not for any crime or any misconduct in the face of the enemy, but simply because I found they were not suitable for the positions. Out of the large number that I had, over 120 during the campaign, I think on three occasions I allowed an officer to resign his commission as he was not qualified to lead men in the field.

12404. You consider it absolutely necessary that some one should have that authority to appoint officers and dismiss them?—I consider that is a most essential point. If an officer is selected to raise a regiment, the General or other authority who appoints him should have sufficient confidence in him to allow him to have a free hand as regards his officers.

12405. One of your objects I see was to get Regular officers?—I wished to mix them so as to have partly officers of tact and discretion in the Regular Army who had had previous experience, and partly Colonial gentlemen who had had experience of former wars out there, and partly I wished to get some officers of the Indian Staff Corps (now called the Indian Army). With a mixture of the whole I found that, eventually, about the time of the battle of Colenso, or shortly afterwards, I had a very capable body of officers who were able to do anything.

12406. Is there anything else you have to say with regard to the selection of officers?—No. I lay the greatest stress upon that point. The men are all right, but if you place a section of 30 men under the command of an incompetent and incapable man who is pushed on to you by some political or other favour in a colony where such games will be tried, it is not fair to ask those 30 men to go into action under an incompetent man who is responsible for their lives, absolutely, when he is sent away out scouting, and the men resent it very much.

12407. Then as to non-commissioned officers, what have you to say?—It is thought by some officers that it would be a good thing to give one colour sergeant per company, one sergeant, that is to say, from the Regular Army for every 120 men, in order that he

should know the routine and method of keeping a roster of it; but I found I got on quite well without it. In a country like South Africa you will always find, I think, a sufficient number of people who have served in the Army who will be available on the spot with that colonial experience, and one has to use a little latitude in the management of these men.

12408-9. Most of your men were Colonials?—Most of my men were Colonials. I had two or three men who had been serving in the Army whom I made non-commissioned officers, just to keep things straight with regard to keeping a roster and telling off the duties. I managed quite well with only one officer of Regulars, and one non-commissioned officer, whom I made my sergeant-major. I was very fortunate in getting the services of a first-class business man as my quarter-master, through whose hands the whole of the stores and equipment for the regiment had to pass.

12410. And as to the pay, what arrangement did you make?—For the pay I had a Colonial gentleman who had to pay the whole of the men, like they get their pay, I understand, on board ship, or are paid in any large works.

12411. (Sir John Edge.) What was the name of the Quartermaster?—Captain Hendry.

12412. (Chairman.) I see your battalion was completed on the 7th of November?—Yes, with the exception of a few officers. I kept places for a few officers, because I knew several gentlemen who were up in Rhodesia or up in the Zambesi country, and I made every endeavour to get those gentlemen down to me, because I knew they were first-class men.

12413. In an enclosure (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 343*), you have given us the full establishment?—Yes.

12414. Then what was the next step, the drill?—With regard to the drill, when we had got the whole of the thing in order, a great deal of my time was taken up in drawing the equipment and the horses, and generally organising the duties that were to be carried out every day by a certain staff, everybody to go and draw such gear as was necessary for his department, and that was a very heavy thing to get all the transport and the harness, and all the thousand and one things that are necessary to start a regiment of 500 men straight off like that.

12415. How long did that take?—That went on gradually as we could get the things; there was not sufficient equipment there to equip my regiment, and some of it had to be bought locally, which was a great disadvantage. However, the Army Ordnance Corps used every endeavour that was possible under the circumstances in which they were placed to get what they could; but there was no stock of saddles or rifles available for handing out straight away, which would have saved me a very great deal of labour. Saddles had to be bought in the town, and many were of an inferior class; but the only thing to do was to take what could possibly be got, in order to get to the front where we were urgently required.

12416. What was the date when you were ready to go to the front?—I think it was the 14th of November.

12417. You were not complete till the 7th?—I am not quite sure about the date.*

12418. When you spoke of there being so much to do, I thought, perhaps, there was a considerable interval?—No, on the 19th of November I fought the first action with my regiment.

12419. Then it was a question of a week or a fortnight?—Yes, on the 19th of November I fought the first action that my regiment was engaged in at Mooi River.

12420. Then there could not have been much time for detailed drill?—No, there was very little time for detailed drill, but very simple drill was all I attempted to teach the men. The great point I insisted upon was that they must get on and off their horses quickly, and must be able to lead the horses. When three men dismount and the fourth man of the section leads the

* Colonel Thornycroft subsequently sent the following information to the Commission by letter:—Date of enlistment, 27th October; ready to move to the front, 14th November; whole regiment assembled at the front, 18th November; first engagement, 19th November.

Colonel
A. W.
Thorneycroft,
C.B.
5 Feb. 1903.

horses, it wants a little management and control on that man's part with a new lot of horses undergoing new training. Fortunately, the South African Colonial-bred pony is easily trained in that manner.

12421. Had you chiefly South African ponies?—Entirely at the first raising of my regiment, fortunately. I was extremely fortunate in the class of Colonial-bred pony on which the regiment was first mounted.

12422. Afterwards, did you have other horses?—Towards the end of the campaign I had every variety of horse, but I impressed fully upon the men the necessity of looking after their South African ponies, as I knew that the supply, in all likelihood, with a protracted campaign, would not last, and I so warned them that they took the greatest interest and pride in looking after their Colonial South African ponies; so much so, that after two years of campaigning there were a large number of those original ponies which were issued to me at Pietermaritzburg still in the ranks of my regiment.

12423. Then the men were pretty good horse-masters?—They were good horse-masters when they saw the absolute necessity of it. They were careless at first about it. A Colonial is accustomed to have a Kaffir to clean and groom his horse; he has not been accustomed to go and do the work himself. They dislike a lot of stables, but they saw the absolute necessity of it, and, under the supervision of the officers, they loyally carried it out to their great benefit.

12424. Were the officers responsible?—The company officers were responsible to me that the stables duties were properly carried out on all occasions, and the consequence was that it was a great assistance to the regiment that this horse-mastership was carefully looked after.

12425. I suppose a great deal of the efficiency depends upon that?—It depends entirely upon the care of the horse with a mounted corps like mine. A man is quite useless if he is dismounted.

12426. Did you dislike the other classes of horses that you were given?—Of course, the Colonial-bred pony was acclimatised in his own country. He was better to start with, he had not come off board ship and had his heels worn down by the long voyage from South America, North America, or Australia. He was accustomed to the climate and class of forage that he would get, and he was found to be more efficient than other horses that came out and were rapidly sent to the front at the beginning of the campaign, without any rest at all.

12427. Then, of course, they scarcely had a chance?—They had very little chance. The casualties were, of course, very great in the initial stages of the campaign, and those casualties had to be filled up by horses taken rapidly off board ship; and that went on for a considerable time, until a system was adopted of forming dépôts for every column.

12428. And thereby giving the horses a rest?—Thereby, if a horse was a little debilitated or lame you could put him into your mob of horses and drive him along with the Kaffirs, and take out a fit horse to mount the man on, and so you could rest the horse before he became absolutely knocked out altogether. It was an extremely good system, and one that we advocated, and which the Commander-in-Chief was fully aware of, but the difficulty was to get enough horses at the start.

12429. I see in one of your enclosures (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 353*), you attach great importance to the question of shoeing or not shoeing horses on board ship?—Yes. I prefer to have them shod on board ship, because if they are not they wear their heels right down so low that when they come off there is nothing on which to nail a shoe, and I found that of the two evils a long voyage with shoes on was preferable to a long voyage without shoes. I know that others differ with me on this point, but I should certainly keep a horse's shoes on on board ship, to prevent his heels wearing right out.

12430. What were the rifles that your men were armed with?—At first there were no rifles available in the Ordnance Department at Pietermaritzburg for

my regiment, so I made an arrangement with the Natal Volunteer Armoury, and I borrowed some. I got 500 Martini-Enfields from them, Mark III.

12431. Did you use them throughout?—Those were in use till they either got broken or damaged to such an extent as to be of no further use, and were gradually replaced by Lee-Metfords, and, finally, by Lee-Enfields. When I raised two more companies they came up equipped; by that time arms had arrived at Pietermaritzburg, and the two companies that I raised to make six in all in my regiment were armed with the Lee-Metford rifles.

12432. Had you any preference for one over the other?—The Lee-Enfield was the best rifle.

12433. You were asked for a report by the Director-General of Ordnance, and that you have given us (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 345*)?—I have attached that report because it touches on so many points of efficiency, equipment, and clothing, that I thought it might be of some use to the Commission.

12434. And the shooting of the men was tested at the beginning?—The shooting was tested before I allowed the men to join the regiment. A Committee of gentlemen—that was before they were made officers—took them down to the rifle range, and at unknown distances, at a very small target representing the head and shoulders of a man, they tested them to see if they could hit that mark, or go to any appreciable extent near it. If a man did not know how to handle his rifle he was rejected, and if he was a good sort of man I advised him to join the transport corps or some other, where he could make himself useful in the War without having to be a good shot.

12435. Then you had practically good shots from the beginning?—Yes, I should say the shooting was satisfactory, but I consider that it is a tremendously essential point that we should encourage rifle shooting in the Colonies to a very large extent; I say that with my experience of Colonials. Although I consider the results were satisfactory, I should have liked to have had more time and opportunity to practise the men, especially in shooting at short ranges. The Boers were bad shots at short ranges, and our own men were indifferent. But that is the essential point. When you get to a decisive range, say 300 yards, if your men are first-class shots, with good fine sights on their rifles for close shooting, you are at an enormous advantage. I should like to have given more attention to that, but I was obliged to go to the front at once, and I should have liked a little more time to train them in snap shooting at close ranges.

12436. In the course of the War they got more training?—Of course they got a certain amount. I practised them when they halted for a time; I constantly practised them in that way, and the expenditure of ammunition was well worth the result.

12437. Did they improve?—They improved a great deal.

12438. How would they compare with the Boers?—I should say that 50 per cent. of the men that I had were equal to any shots of the Boers I saw.

12439. At the end?—Shortly after the commencement.

12440. What do you think of the Boer shooting?—The Boer shooting has deteriorated since the last war. I was present in the 1881 War, and the shooting of the Boers has deteriorated very much since those days, in my opinion.

12441. Naturally at the beginning of the War the men did not know much about taking cover?—They were accustomed to Kaffir warfare, where they are apt to disregard the fire of the enemy, which is always high; the Kaffir fires over your head as a rule. But when it came to the absolute good shooting of the Boers, on some of the first occasions when I took them into action, the necessity was soon felt of taking cover.

12442. And of entrenching?—And using every bit of cover that could possibly be found.

12443. And they carried entrenching tools, I suppose?—Entrenching tools were carried in a Scotch cart, which is a two-wheeled cart with six mules; entrenching tools were carried in that along with the small-arm ammunition, and that was in the first line of transport, which

Colonel
A. W.
Thornycroft,
C.B.
5 Feb. 1903.

was always close up behind the regiment. They are extremely handy carts, you could take them almost anywhere, and they were most serviceable and efficient. But we had no method of carrying entrenching implements on pack animals. There is a cage in the Service which holds entrenching implements on the side of the pack saddle, but there were none available, and I never got any of those.

12444. I suppose they had constantly to entrench?—The scouting was the chief thing that I had to perform—constant reconnaissance and scouting—and I did not have to entrench very much in that work. The men were thrown out as a screen in front of the forces, and it was very seldom that they had to absolutely make an entrenchment.

12445. For scouting, the South African Colonial had a considerable advantage, I suppose?—A very considerable advantage on account of his knowledge of the country, his knowledge of the language, and because his eye is accustomed to the veldt, and he would notice things that other men who had not been in the country before would not notice; and they had, of course, a great advantage in that way. They were extremely good scouts.

12446. You appear to attach considerable importance to good telescopes?—The very greatest. Good telescopes and good Zeiss glasses should be served out to all troops, and they should be encouraged and taught the use of these glasses in times of peace. It is not the slightest good taking a man straight into war and giving him a telescope the day he moves against the enemy; he does not know how to use it any more than he knows how to use a rifle the first day he has it in his hand. The intelligent use of a telescope, picking up objects at a distance, requires constant practice.

12447. Particularly the telescope?—Yes, particularly the telescope; you could more quickly teach a man to be intelligent with the Zeiss glasses or field glasses.

12448. Do you make any further distinction between a telescope and a Zeiss glass?—With the best Zeiss glass you could see that there was a movement going on at a considerable distance away, and if you put a telescope—what I call a stalking glass that one uses in Scotland, costing about £10—on it you could on many occasions distinguish what it was. The difficulty in the war was to distinguish friend from foe: "Is it one of our own columns moving over there, or is it one of the enemy's"; and I consider it will be far more difficult in future to distinguish friend from foe when the tendency is for all armies to dress in khaki, or something of the same description.

12449. For that purpose the man who can use the telescope is a very valuable man?—Yes. The Boers were very good at it.

12450. Had they telescopes?—Yes, they had telescopes and an enormous number of Zeiss glasses.

12451. Your men also, being accustomed to South Africa, could go by the spoor?—Yes, that was a very important point. I had all sorts of Colonials under me from every Colony at different times of the War. The Canadians and other Colonials were fairly good at that. Men who had been in Canada and Australia were very good trackers, many of them.

12452. And you think that in that way you were able to get really trustworthy intelligence?—Yes, on many occasions the indication of spoor followed up by reconnaissance gave them information which otherwise perhaps the British soldier would not have got from want of knowledge in noticing these things.

12453. And as to the physique of your men, was that good?—Very good indeed—admirable; they were very heavy for the horses—for the ponies in some instances—but that could not be avoided.

12454. They were medically examined at the beginning, I believe?—Yes.

12455. And what about the discipline?—The discipline was very good.

12456. You had not much trouble?—I had no trouble whatever. During the time that the regiment was in the initial stage, before I enlisted them, I had 300 to 400 men living in camp under no military law; they were my friends, living there on my invitation prac-

tically, but there was no drunkenness, although the town was open to them, and there was no insubordination. The only desire of the men was to do everything they were told and get to the front. That was the spirit which prevailed throughout.

12457. And they were an intelligent set of men?—Most intelligent.

12458. That of course helped them to get into their places and learn their duties?—Quite so.

12459. Then at the end of your *précis* you have noted certain points which you think are worthy of consideration in the recruiting, training and equipment of officers and men of a Colonial force. I think you have gone through most of them, have you not?—I think so.

12460. The first point is the selection of officers; that you have already spoken to?—I cannot speak too strongly upon that point.

12461. The second point is the necessity of a regimental paymaster; that you have spoken to?—Yes. It is impossible that a company commander or a squadron commander (whichever you like to call him) in the field, who is constantly out reconnoitring, or on outpost duty or fighting, can have the responsibility of the cash and accounts passing through his hands; and I had advocated this for so many years in the Regular Army as well as in any other corps that I determined I would do it when I had the opportunity. The Paymaster, when money was wanted, got it from the nearest point, either from the nearest bank, or he went down and got it from the district Chief Paymaster. He brought the money up to my camp, and he paid the men, marking on a simple pay-sheet. Thus there was no checking of accounts again; he had not to check the accounts of the company officers; there were his own accounts, kept in a business-like manner by the Paymaster himself, who was paid to do that job, of what he had paid to the men. The only necessity was that there should be some man, some officer or sergeant, present at the payment to say, "This is John Smith or William Jones," and to identify him to see that the right man got that pay. That relieved all the fighting officers of the responsibility of money affairs, which I consider a very great point in the efficiency of a corps.

12462. It is said that when a regiment is split up (which was constantly the case in South Africa) there might be a difficulty in getting the paymaster to pay them all?—I found no such difficulty. The paymaster or the paymaster-sergeant took the money down. I had constant detachments, and I found no difficulty in getting the men paid in that way.

12463. (Sir John Edge.) Was the paymaster a Regular officer?—He was a Colonial, Captain Chipman. He had lived for 20 years in the Transvaal. I allowed the men to bank such money as they did not want in their pockets, and they could draw it from me at any time.

12464. (Chairman.) That means to say that it was left with the paymaster?—It was left in the Standard Bank. It was banked in the Standard Bank, and a ledger account was kept for each man who wished to bank his money. I kept the ledger account—I mean the paymaster did; it was not kept in the bank; it was in one lump sum in the bank.

12465. And you found that to work well?—I found it to work admirably. If I had had a dishonest paymaster, or anything like that, it would have given me a little trouble till I righted the matter and got a man I could trust; but I constantly inspected the accounts myself, and saw that everything worked smoothly.

12466. (Sir John Edge.) Was your paymaster-sergeant a Regular?—No, he was not.

12467. (Sir Frederick Darley.) There were civilians attached to the regiment?—There were civilians who volunteered to serve; and the only difficulty was in getting everybody paid up. As the regiment moved along, the men got wounded and got into hospital, and some died, and so one left a regular trail behind one as one moved up into the Transvaal and down into the Orange River Colony, and the difficulty was to find out where all your men were—those left in this hospital or that, and those who recovered and were moved down to the base. But I sent this paymaster-sergeant on tour once a

Colonel
A. W.
Thornycroft
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

month to round up all these people and pay them their cash, and so keep their accounts square in the regiment.

12468. (*Chairman.*) Then the third point in the Summary of your *précis* is the necessity of a thorough training in riding and shooting. I think you have already spoken of that?—Yes.

12469. And a medical examination is the fourth point; you have dealt with that?—Yes.

12470. Equipment and clothing is the fifth point?—To get an efficient corps, supposing war broke out there again to-morrow, there should be a supply of good saddlery, of the best material, and of equipment sufficient for raising two or three Colonial corps. I would say that it is necessary to keep in a colony a considerable store of equipment of the best material and clothing, so that should the necessity arise where the men are there should the equipment be ready for them in an emergency. I suffered because it was not so when I raised my regiment. Although we carried on, we carried on under difficulties, which it would be better to avoid, I think.

12471. This was all treated as an emergency in your case. What you want is that in future there shall be some organisation to do away with the emergency side of it?—I think there should be a store. In Rhodesia at the outbreak of the War there was a large supply, I understand, of saddlery and equipment. It was not so in Natal.

12472. Your sixth point is the rifle; you say the rifle should be a short one?—The long rifle that we had to use is not adaptable for mounted men. A short rifle, of the length of the old carbine, is what is wanted; but it must have the same ranging power, up to 3,000 yards, say 2,500 to 3,000 yards, of the present rifle.

12473. Is that practicable?—Certainly. I fired with one, which has been shown at the War Office, the day before yesterday at the Small Arms factory at Birmingham. I understand that the Government have adopted a new rifle of their own.

12474. And the rifle, you say, should be made in three sizes of stock?—Yes; that is a very important point. If I have to shoot with the same weapon that a man 5 ft. 4 in. shoots with, my eye is so near the back-sight that the sight becomes blurred, and I do not get the same amount of accuracy in shooting. I want the back sight removed further from my eye by lengthening the stock, and a man must be fitted with a rifle the same as with a pair of boots, in my opinion.

12475. You say it should be "encased in wood with few projections, so that it can be easily slung on the back." What does that mean?—The whole of the rifle should be encased in wood. I may want to hold a rifle in a certain position, and another man may want to hold it more forward, and after firing some time in a hot corner the muzzle becomes heated, and the man cannot grip his rifle any further. The whole weapon should be encased in wood from breach to muzzle.

12476. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You mean the under-part?—No; I mean all round. That is the new weapon that the Government are going to advocate.

12477. (*Sir John Edge.*) The upper part of the rifle, where the sights are, would not be encased in wood?—Yes, all covered in wood.

12478. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Otherwise a man mounting suddenly on his horse cannot hold the weapon?—No, he cannot hold the weapon because the barrel becomes so hot that it would burn his hand; and, besides, sitting at the top of a kopje, or in a place exposed to the intense sun of India or Africa, the barrel becomes heated by the sun to start with, and with a few rounds fired rapidly out of it, it becomes almost impossible to hold it. There is no difficulty about casing the barrel.

12479. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Is that intended to be introduced into the Army generally?—Certainly.

12480. (*Sir John Edge.*) In India sometimes you cannot hold the rifle in your hands, it gets so hot?—I have experienced that.

12481. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Does that increase the weight?—It increases the weight, but not to any appreciable degree. My brother happens to have invented a rifle which he is trying to get the Army to take, and I have taken a great deal of interest in this

matter. We have been firing the rifle he has invented, and, of course, I have seen a great deal about the ins and outs of it. He has produced a rifle which is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches shorter than the present Government weapon, with the same barrel, by bringing the bolt action down into the stock. The Government are now, I understand, trying a rifle; they have cut 5 inches off the barrel. Instead of cutting 5 inches off the barrel, my brother has the same identical long barrel, but he has brought the bolt action down into the butt; therefore he gets a weapon $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches shorter firing exactly through the same barrel, which gives the long range.

12482. (*Chairman.*) Then you propose to have a bayonet?—I propose to have a bayonet—a longer bayonet than that at present in use. I have tried it myself, and I think it is perfectly feasible for the Mounted Infantryman, with the well-balanced rifle that I have described (and which I could show the Commission, of course), to use it as a short jobbing spear.

12483. He can use it mounted?—I think he could use it mounted and unmounted. And I think you will find that Colonel Rimington, who, I understand, is to give evidence, will advocate that that is a possibility too, and well worthy of a trial.

12484. We have had some evidence about the necessity of an offensive weapon as well as the rifle. You think it should be a bayonet?—A bayonet on the rifle in the hand is a very efficient thing, and I am convinced that if proper attention and sufficient encouragement are given, you can produce such a bayonet as can be fixed on to the end of this short rifle and used as a weapon, which would be longer than a sword and not quite so long as a short hog-spear.

12485. You would not advocate a sword for Mounted Infantry?—I would not advocate swords for Mounted Infantry, I only advocate a longer bayonet than that at present in use.

12486. But you think an offensive weapon of some kind is necessary?—It is an absolute necessity.

12487. You had the bayonet?—We had the bayonet.

12488. And used them?—We used them on several occasions.

12489. What is the length of the present carbine?—I could not say.

12490. This rifle you say ought to be 42 inches long?—About 42 inches.

12491. Is that shorter than the carbine?—It is about the same length, I think. I cannot say straight off. I have never commanded a corps armed with the carbine.

12492. And the rifle that you had was how long?—The rifle is 49 inches, I think.

12493. There is a difference of 7 inches?— $7\frac{1}{2}$.

12494. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) The barrel of the rifle was 49 inches, do you mean, or the length altogether?—The whole length from the butt to the muzzle.

12495. Then about 3 feet, I suppose, would be the barrel?—Yes.

12496. (*Chairman.*) Your seventh point is that an efficient intelligence department is necessary under a specially-selected officer?—That is a thing that of course received very little attention at the commencement, and I could get no funds allotted to me for an intelligence department of my own. I, therefore, formed a small corps of my own, and I paid them myself.

12497. Was it not a part of the organisation from home?—No, it was not in any way.

12498. But it ought to have been?—It was a part of the organisation of the General Army, of course, but as mine was the only mounted corps available and went up first to Mooi River, where the operations began practically for the relief of Ladysmith, I had to organise as best I could with my native Scouts, not to fight in any way but to get information from the Kaffirs in the zone between us and the Boers. I pushed these fellows out at night, and my men who could talk the language went with them. I organised a small body of scouts of my own to do absolutely nothing but gain intelligence for me through the Kaffirs and the farmers.

12499. In these points I understand you were con-

Colonel
A. W.
Thorneycroft,
C.B.
5 Feb. 1903.

sidering what ought to be done in the future ; and in future you think there ought to be as part of the organisation of a regiment a thoroughly efficient intelligence department ?—Regiments are formed into a brigade, and it would be the duty of the brigadier to see that he had an intelligence officer and proper intelligence. But regiments are so often detached for various reconnoitring duties that I should say the efficiency would be enormously increased if a small scouting intelligence department were formed in each regiment.

12500. And with some funds for employing secret agents ?—Quite so.

12501. With regard to your eighth point, horses, mules, and so on, I understand that you have not anything to add specially to the report (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 352*), you have sent in ?—Nothing.

12502. What was your experience of the Medical Establishment, which is your ninth point ?—The Medical Establishment was quite satisfactory. I had civilian medical men who were practitioners in Johannesburg and various places, who joined in their capacity of doctors as other men joined in other capacities. They were most efficient and extremely attentive to the men.

12503. You had one large regimental ambulance, but in your opinion you ought to have a light ambulance for patrols ?—Yes, it was very difficult to bring in men who were wounded on patrol. It needs a good deal of thought and a good deal of trouble taken to produce some light ambulance that could go after a patrol, perhaps of 50 or 60 men, and bring home say two or three of those as wounded men.

12504. And the tenth point is signallers ?—The equipment was very difficult to get at one time ; there was not very much signalling equipment available, but in a country like South Africa or Afghanistan, or countries of that class, where the light is good, and in my opinion in any country where soldiers go to operate, it is a most essential thing to have plenty of equipment of the best material, and trained men to use it. You cannot at a moment train signallers to use the heliograph or the lamp system. You can soon teach a man to use the flag, but it takes them some time to learn to read the heliograph ; and it is an enormous saving in horse-flesh when they can. It is an enormous factor to a commander who places himself on a position of advantage like a hill with patrols moving in different directions if he can see through the telescope the movements of the enemy, and by his heliograph direct the patrols what to do. On many occasions I have successfully captured the enemy by that method.

12505. And that does not exist at present ?—In the Regular cavalry and infantry there is a full equipment.

12506. But if you were to raise irregular corps it does not exist ?—There is no method of obtaining it unless you go and take the men off the Regulars, and thus make them inefficient, so to speak ; you take away their good men and they object to that. In my opinion there should be a corps of signallers in the Army just as there is a telegraph battalion.

12507. Then the eleventh point is maps of the country ?—The maps were very bad.

12508. We have had a good deal of evidence about the maps ?—I can only say what happened to me. The only map I could get of any value at all was the school map off the walls of the schools in the villages that we passed through.

12509. Was that in Natal ?—Yes.

12510. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What map was that ?—That was the map generally used in the schools in Natal.

12511. But who was the publisher of it ?—I could not tell you.

12512. (*Chairman.*) It would not be accurate at all, I suppose ?—It was not accurate, to an appreciable degree, and it did not show the military features of the country, but it gave you an idea of the locality of places and the probable distances to have in your mind's eye when you were sending out your patrols, in giving them written orders where to go and what to do.

12513. On what sort of scale was it ?—I think it was about a mile to half an inch, but I cannot remember now.

12514. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are you speaking now of south of the Tugela, or rather south of Ladysmith ?—Yes, south of Ladysmith.

12515. North of Ladysmith there was a military map, was there not ?—Well, the military maps that we got were very inaccurate ; they were very defective at that stage of the war. Afterwards we got maps of the whole country, and as the war went on the maps got better. All the commanders of columns going round the country made every endeavour to correct the maps as they moved about, and they gave their corrections to the Intelligence Department, so that the maps gradually were very much improved. In the first stages of the War, when it was most necessary to have maps, we were very much handicapped by not having them.

12516. (*Chairman.*) Then the last point is the establishment of a regimental mess ?—I put that down for the guidance of anybody who might have to raise a regiment at any time, because I think you can there, under your own eye, form your judgment of the characters of men of very different classes who are brought together to form the officers of a Colonial corps. If you have not got an opportunity of seeing them at dinner, or some such meal that they are able to take together, those who are out on outpost duty or reconnaissance or stables, you do not see sufficient of them to form an accurate judgment of their characters, and sometimes if you have any casualties, if five or six officers are knocked over, and you have to pull out the officers that you think the best, you are at a disadvantage ; but living, as we did, all together in bivouac, or elsewhere, I was able to form a judgment of the capabilities of those under me, and so to pull out those who were, in my opinion, the best men to fill vacancies as they occurred.

12517. Is there any other point that you wish to mention to the Commission ?—No, I do not think so.

12518. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) With regard to the attestation in Enclosure B. (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 343*), in which a man is made to say, "I further undertake to serve under penalty of immediate dismissal for inefficiency or misconduct," do you know whether that form was generally adopted in corps raised in South Africa ?—Yes, I believe it was afterwards. Having established that, and having it printed at Pietermaritzburg, I think it was generally adopted by the other corps which were afterwards formed in Natal.

12519. Something like that must have been adopted in Colonel Rimington's force, because in the memorandum which he has sent to the Commission he alludes to the power of dismissal for anything of the kind ?—Yes. It gives you a tremendous hold over the men. Lengthy courts-martial and that kind of thing are not suitable in the field when you are in command of a Colonial corps. Of course, under the Army Act you can try any man the same as you can a regular soldier, but if you have the power of saying, before the whole of his comrades in the face of the enemy, "Now you are a useless and inefficient man, go away, you are no use," I consider that the most terrible disgrace you could put upon a man, and it was felt to be so throughout the Colonial corps.

12520. In enlisting men, I suppose you had no hard and fast rule as to age ?—No. If a man was physically fit I took him.

12521. Whatever his age ?—Yes.

12522. You were speaking about keeping a stock of saddlery, clothing, equipment, and so forth, so as, in the event of war breaking out, as it did in 1899, to be able readily to equip the troops. But supposing war did not break out for five or six years, would not the saddlery, equipment, and clothing deteriorate very much ?—Yes, I think they possibly would do so, but so will they deteriorate in this country from being kept here. We are obliged to keep in this country a very large amount of equipment for emergency of war for the regular army, and I consider it would be just as valuable to keep it in a place like South Africa, or any one of the Colonies (where the Colonies would come to assist us) as at Woolwich.

12523. But, then, it is always being issued from Woolwich; you are sending out part of it for supplies and replacing part?—War is an expensive thing, and to get efficiency we have to pay; and from my point of view as a soldier (I have nothing to do with the finance), I say that to get efficiency you must be ready.

12524. But there is that difficulty in keeping stores in readiness for a force that does not exist. In keeping it for the British Cavalry, and so on, there is a certain amount always being issued. It is the same with provisions?—Quite so, but it was a very great difficulty to me. You can imagine the difficulties of having a lot of 30s. saddles, which were trade goods for Kaffirs, with a tree that split open, and being expected to keep your corps efficient in the field with no sore backs! It was a very grave difficulty. The difficulty might be surmounted for the future in conjunction with the Volunteer movement in the Colonies. If Volunteer movements are kept up in South Africa or elsewhere there will be a sufficient amount of saddlery and such matters as that.

12525. In reserve?—I would keep, in conjunction with the Volunteer movement, a reserve perhaps of saddlery.

12526. At present, so far as I know, the mounted troops in Australia, and probably in other countries, have their own saddles—they do not get them from the Government at all?—Of course, on the Boer system of commando law, every man turns up with his saddle and rifle, and in ordinary times the man who would volunteer would very likely bring his own horse. But this was an extraordinary occasion; the men were being driven out of the Transvaal without any of their goods and property, and yet they had to be fully equipped.

12527. Those stretcher-bearers that you spoke of are four to each company?—Yes.

12528. Those were not soldiers, were they?—Yes, they were soldiers, but they were unarmed; when they were stretcher-bearers they were not allowed to carry arms.

12529. Did they wear the Geneva Cross?—Yes, they had a large cross on their arm.

12530. Do you think the Boers recognised the Geneva Cross and paid much attention to it?—I think, in the present days of long-range fire, there were many occasions when the ambulances got hit and the bearers got hit. The bearers, going into action to bring out the men, were constantly hit, but then it is impossible, at a range of 1,500 yards, to differentiate between the man who is firing and the man who goes in to pull one out.

12531. But I mean when the Boers came up near them, did they acknowledge the Geneva Cross when they could recognise it, or did they ever molest them?—To my knowledge, I do not think they ever showed any hostility, by any act or otherwise, to any of my own personal ambulance men or stretcher-bearers under my own command.

12532. You had a scale of transport for your corps; was it always complete and able to be kept up?—It was most efficient. There, again, I was fortunate in obtaining a man—Captain Prettejohn—who had had enormous experience in South America, North America, Africa, and everywhere, who, by his knowledge, was able to get hold of the requisite materials to mend his wagons and keep his harness in good condition. My transport mules were always in good condition, and the wagons were always as efficient as it was possible to make them, on account of my having been fortunate enough to select such a capable officer as Captain Prettejohn.

12533. Your transport was entirely attached to your regiment, I think?—Yes, enough to carry two days' supply for man and horse.

12534. And you found great advantage from that?—Well, I was ready to move off anywhere at a moment's notice. Afterwards, when I came to command a mobile column in the field, I had of course to take extra waggons as a supply park; but throughout the campaign I kept the organisation as I started it, to carry two days' supply for man and horse.

12535. You are perhaps aware that with the main

army the regimental transport system was done away with?—It was, I know.

12536. The transport was taken away from the regiment?—Yes, I know it was.

12537. You are in favour of the other system?—Yes, so far as my efficiency went I am in favour of it, because I had a certain number of vehicles, and it was to my benefit and the benefit of my regiment to keep my mules in good condition, efficient in every way; and, as I say, I was ready to go off with two days' supply, and one day's supply on man and horse if necessary; they could live for five days; whereas if I had had to draw wagons and mules from other people I should not have got that degree of efficiency. Having the thing under my own eye, and under my own command, I saw that the mules were efficient and the wagons were efficient. And, naturally, a driver who is constantly with you takes a pride in his team of mules, and you reward him, and then he will say: "Here is an inducement for me to look after my mules and keep them very efficient." So that up to that point I advocate, and should certainly prefer with a regiment of mounted infantry or cavalry to have a sufficient transport for two days' supply belonging to it, and the remainder of course would be drawn from the Supply Park, which it is the duty of the Army Service Corps to bring up under the direction of the General.

12538. I gather from what you have said that you do not consider a sword necessary for mounted infantry, you would have a bayonet?—Yes, I would have a bayonet longer than that at present in use.

12539. I daresay you may have seen in some of the military papers and elsewhere remarks made on an occasion when a number of mounted troops bolted. I think it was when Lord Methuen was wounded, when it was stated, I think, that if those men had had swords perhaps they would have behaved better, because they would have felt confident that they were able to defend themselves?—Swords for Colonial raised corps would be quite useless in my opinion; they are not naturally swordsmen like the natives of India used to be, and it takes a considerable time to teach a man the use of a sword, how to use it intelligently and efficiently from his horse. I am of opinion that you ought to rely almost entirely upon the fire of your rifle, and if you get off quickly and use your rifle intelligently I consider that is the best thing for a mounted infantry man, because he is an infantry man, he fights on foot. But as I think I stated just now I advocate a sufficiently long bayonet to enable him to use it as a short lance. I may say, as regards this new weapon that is going to be introduced into the Army, that whoever makes it, or whatever the form of it is, it is going to be a short weapon, and with a sufficiently long bayonet on it. I think it would give a man considerable confidence, and I think we could train men to use it quickly. Of course it is very difficult now to get home with the bayonet. The Boers would fire as we were advancing till we were as close as I am to you, and then they would put their hands up, and our men, notwithstanding the fact that their comrades had been shot down up to the very last moment, would very seldom use the bayonet. I think if a man holds out with his rifle till the last moment, firing and shooting down the advancing troops, he must pay the penalty, he must fight to a finish; but the British soldier said "No": directly he got up to the Boer and the Boer put up his hands they were friends at once. That would not be so, of course, if you were fighting an European or civilised nation, fighting with the bayonet; it is presumed that they would fight to the finish.

12540. And in case of pursuit do you think that the men would use bayonets?—I think it is a feasible thing to train the men to do it on their horses, and I think you will find that Colonel Rimington will say that he did it on several occasions. But the old rifle with a bayonet on it is not such a handy weapon as the weapon I advocate, a shorter weapon, which is more handy to keep in your hand. I think it would be a feasible thing to train men to use it. I do not say they would be able to stand against regular cavalry advancing.

12541. And would you propose to have the same

Colonel
A. W.
Thorneycroft,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

Colonel
A. W.
Thorneycroft,
C.B.

system with regular cavalry ?—If I was given command of a cavalry regiment and told to equip them I think I should be inclined to make them carry a bayonet.

12542. And no sword ?—No sword—a bayonet and a lance, or short hog spear, such as you use for pig-sticking in India.

12543. That, I understand, is the armament which has been adopted lately with native cavalry in India, doing away with the sword and having a lance ?—A lance and a short rifle.

12544. Is there anywhere a record of all the casualties to your corps that you know of ?—I could compile one.

12545. I think it would be very interesting, it would show what the regiment suffered during the whole course of the war. There have been no detailed casualty lists published at all, so far as I have seen, giving the casualties of particular regiments ?—The casualties in certain engagements were published from time to time in the *Times* newspaper.

12546. There is no record of how many were killed and how many were wounded and how many died of disease in each particular regiment ?—I could compile it for you, but I might have to send to South Africa. I might be able to send it in six weeks.

12547. If you will send it in at any time it will be of interest ?—I shall be very glad to do so.

12548. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Have you acted as squadron leader or captain of a company in the Regular forces ?—I served with Mounted Infantry in the Boer War of 1881.

12549. As a squadron leader ?—Yes.

12550. In time of war ?—Yes.

12551. Have you done so in time of peace ? I am asking you this in view of the squadron leader or the Captain of a Company being the paymaster. Have you had any experience of that ?—Yes, I have served in the Scots Fusiliers for 23 years, and during a considerable part of the time I was a captain and commanded a company.

12552. Then during that time you were paymaster of that company ?—Yes, it was my duty to pay the men—either myself personally or by one of my subalterns.

12553. Do you approve of that system ?—I do not.

12554. The books that have to be kept are very cumbersome ?—They are very cumbersome and complicated, and it takes up a great deal of the time of the officers and of the Colour Sergeant who keeps the account; he is the accountant of the company or squadron. The Squadron Sergeant Major or the Colour Sergeant of Infantry, should spend their time in assisting to teach the men the art of war, training them for the purpose for which they are intended.

12555. And above all officers, perhaps, the Captain is the most important with his company ?—He commands the unit which when launched in the present day of long-range fire cannot be controlled in many cases after he has once pushed to the front, and the whole of his energies should be expended, in my opinion, on training his men for the moment when they are brought face to face with the enemy.

12556. It has been said that you might have a paymaster to pay the men and keep the pay books, but that the squadron leader or captain of the company can only deal with stoppages that have to be made from the men. Is there anything in that argument, do you think ?—I do not see that you want to make any appreciable stoppages. There is his clothing account; that ought to be kept, but I would make the Quartermaster keep his clothing account.

12557. But there are a large number of stoppages, or there have been at any rate ?—There have been petty stoppages for hair cutting and library subscriptions and such like.

12558. And for hospital. A man is charged 7d. a day for hospital although he may be there for enteric fever, or something which he could not help ?—Quite so. The only point that you must be careful of is this: It used to be the rule for the Regimental Paymaster to pay out the money to the Captain, but it was a Regimental Paymaster. Instead of letting all this mass of accounts engage the attention of officers who should teach and

train their men, I would let this paymaster do his work and pay the men just as in a large business where the men are paid at a pigeon-hole. If large numbers of men can be controlled in that way or on board ship, where, I understand, the paymaster pays the men, and not the officers of the ship, I would strongly advocate that; and I may say that I found that it worked admirably when I gave it a trial in my regiment. At first the company officers did try to pay their men to some extent, but I stopped it.

12559. (*Sir John Edge.*) Was the standard of education as a rule high in your regiment ?—I should say the standard of education was distinctly high. It depends upon what you take as the standard. Of course a large number of men serving in the ranks of my own regiment were gentlemen of very high education, and a large number who were not of that rank in society were men of great business capacity, who had got good places for themselves in Johannesburg and other centres like that; therefore the intelligence, in my opinion, was of a high order, and it was of great assistance in the general working of the regiment; men fell into their places and brought their brains to bear quickly. And besides that, men who had had long colonial experience, who had travelled all round the interior in prospecting and other expeditions, had learnt to think for themselves, and their individuality was a thing I noticed very much indeed.

12560. That, no doubt, would be of great assistance in the field ?—Of enormous assistance, the individuality of the man who thought for himself, who made his way in the world under very keen competition.

12561. I suppose it would be impossible to get that class of man as a rule by ordinary recruiting in England ?—You could not get that class of man at a wage of 1s. of course—it would be impossible.

12562. Or even at 5s. probably ?—No, very likely not.

12563. How was your regiment for *esprit de corps* ?—I have pointed out in my report (*Vide Appendix, page 582, post*) the tone shown by the officers was eagerly followed by the men, so that the one anxiety of them came to be to get to the front and prove their worth there, not only by their gallantry in the field, but by their good conduct in camp, and in every way to facilitate the easy leading and commanding of the regiment.

12564. Had you any complaint to make against them with regard to their conduct in the face of the enemy ?—None whatever. They were prepared to follow their officers or remain with them or do anything that they were told.

12565. And they did ?—They did.

12566. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) In raising your corps had you any help from a manual or other book of that kind, so far as details went ?—There was a small pamphlet printed in South Africa called "Manual for Field Service of Mounted Infantry," and I based my equipment to some degree upon the wording of that book, but it was not sufficiently well thought out to go absolutely by it.

12567. With all your great experience, if you were to put down all the points requisite in forming a regiment such as yours, would it not be a very valuable assistance to any future officer raising a corps of that kind ?—I should think that anybody who read this summary that I have here would not find the slightest difficulty in raising a corps on the lines that I did. I do not think there is any point here in which you cannot get information about any article which I used throughout the war. I have given the numbers of the things served out, and the method in which they should be carried. I went fully into it, because I thought perhaps it might be of some use in the future formation of corps.

12568. But in process of time may not that disappear. You do not describe it as more than a sketch. I suppose ?—A summary of the evidence which I was asked to touch upon.

12569. Then that will disappear in the ordinary course of events, will it not ?—I should certainly say so.

12570. But if a Manual was at this moment, when all the ideas are fresh in people's minds, got out

say by yourself and Colonel Rimington, and officers of this class, and stamped as a manual, would it not be very useful in any future raising of a corps?—With regard to that point, I would say that it is very hard to lay down a hard and fast rule in the raising of a Colonial corps. Circumstances change; you operate in a different country where perhaps you must adopt different methods of transport; you may want coolie transport in some parts, you may want pack transport in others, or it may be a different class of transport. That is one affair. Of course, I think that a properly constituted manual would be a good thing, but I presume that the War Office will produce such a book from the reports we have made at various times. All the officers commanding regiments in South Africa were asked to report upon the various articles that they had, and this enclosure D (*Vide Appendix, Vol., page 345.*) which I have here, was the report that I submitted to Sir Henry Brackenbury, Director-General of Ordnance, at the time. I should presume that they would produce a manual for field service for Mounted Infantry, at the War Office. Of course it is a necessary thing, but you cannot lay down a hard and fast rule right through, unless you know what country you are going to operate in. I should probably equip people differently for one country from what I should if they were going to another, with regard to clothing and things of that kind.

12571. Take South Africa as the field of operations alone. If any man in future was raising a corps, and could put his hand upon a good manual, the question is, would it be of great assistance to him?—Yes, enormous assistance.

12572. Your valuable experience, and the valuable experience of officers who have raised corps, will by and by be lost, and there will be an end of it, unless something of the sort is on record in the form of a manual?—There is a scale of course for the mobilisation of a corps of Mounted Infantry, and that should always be kept up to date, and should be available.

12573. And if attached to that scale there were some hints and suggestions from the experience of officers like yourself, that would be very valuable?—It would save a great deal of thought and a great deal of risk, so to speak, if an officer has not to make up his mind what is the best thing to be done. You might want, of course, to raise a regiment of Zulus, and you must adopt different methods, of course; but I agree with you that such a manual is a very necessary thing to be kept up to date.

12574. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I think you mentioned that the physique and intelligence of your corps were excellent?—Yes.

12575. Had you an opportunity of seeing the contingents from the other colonies?—I had them constantly with me. I commanded contingents from Australia and New Zealand, and I worked in the same brigade, Lord Dundonald's brigade, with your own Horse, Strathcona's Horse.

12576. How did they compare with those of South Africa and your own corps in intelligence?—I think they compared extremely well. I think there were men who had lived perhaps a rougher life in some of the Colonial Corps, but I think the intelligence shown was very even. I had an opportunity of judging all of them, and I think in the intelligence and bearing in action, and in all respects, there was very little to choose among the men that came under my notice from the four Colonies, so to speak.

12577. Had you an opportunity of seeing any of those from the Prairies of Canada, the North-West?—Only such as were in Strathcona's Horse.

12578. So that you think they compared very well indeed with those of your own regiment in that respect?—I think very well. Of course in the early stages of the War, the Imperial Light Horse and my regiment, and the regiments that were formed first on the Cape Colony side got the best men, they got the pick of the men in South Africa; and I know that during the latter stages of the War, rather than keep my regiment up to full strength, I would sooner have 300 good men of good character, good men of every description, than keep the regiment up to 500 or 600, taking a worse class of men into my regiment; and I did so. I allowed

my regiment to go down in the number of recruits in order to keep the quality good. In some of the regiments raised latterly in South Africa, the quality of the men, that is to say their general bearing in all respects, was nothing like so good as that of those men who were in the corps that were first raised.

12579. You mentioned, I think, that the horses were rather light for your men?—Well, we were mounted more on ponies, which in my opinion, did their work well; they carried the men with less trouble to themselves than a big horse would.

12580. What would be the size of the horses, 15 h. 2 in.?—No, not so big as that, 14 h. 2 in.

12581. And how did the South African horses compare with those from the Colonies that you saw, say, those from Canada?—The South African Colonial horses in South Africa beat everything that I saw there easily, as regards efficiency in every way, for campaigning purposes straight off. I do not say that the Argentine and Canadian horses, if they had been given sufficient time to rest, and sufficient time to get acclimatised, both to the climate and the food, would not have done well; I think they would, perhaps, provided the best class were brought from that country.

12582. But the Argentines were not equal to the others?—No, the Argentine was the worst class of horse I had.

12583. They were very poor as a whole?—Very poor. In my opinion, and the opinion of officers who know the Argentine, the right class of pony was not brought from the Argentine.

12584. The strength of your regiment was, I think, 500?—At the commencement 500. But I afterwards raised two more companies, and a machine gun section, when it became 750 altogether.

12585. You had two Maxim guns?—Yes.

12586. Did you consider that sufficient; would it not have been better to have had a larger number, with a corps like yours?—I think two machine guns were hardly sufficient. I would say three machine guns would be ample. I advocate the Colt gun myself, personally.

12587. Three guns could be well used?—Three could be well used, because in reconnoitring and pushing your way on, if you have one with the advance guard and one on either flank in case of opposition that may be made to you from a ridge or a kopje, or any point of vantage which the enemy have their scouts on to oppose your advance, my system was to send my machine gun right up to the scouting line amongst the kopjes and ridges where the Boers were, and generally clear them off, and so I got my scouts on and pushed them on more rapidly with less loss under cover of the guns.

12588. And some of the over-sea contingents had three guns?—They had, and a pom-pom.

12589. You think the Maxims were better than the Colts?—I prefer the Colt myself.

12590. And had you any experience of the galloping gun?—The Dundonald carriage, do you mean?

12591. Yes?—I had four of them lent to me by the Colt Gun Company.

12592. Do you consider it serviceable?—The carriages were made of such bad material that they quickly became unserviceable, and gave me a great deal of trouble to keep efficient. But given the best hickory in the construction of the whole carriage, I should say that is the best method of working machine guns.

12593. It could be more conveniently used at once?—Yes, it can be carried round and brought into action very quickly, and taken quickly out of action.

12594. Perhaps they were better fitted for the Transvaal than for Natal?—Exactly. I have given in some of my suggestions here, a method by which you can either use your machine guns on pack transport or on wheeled transport.

12595. I think you have mentioned that the boots served out which were made in the Colonies were not good?—The Colonial made boot of a similar pattern

Colonel
A. W.
Thorrkeycroft
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

Colonel
A. W.
Thornycroft,
C.B.
5 Feb. 1903.

to that issued in England was very inferior in quality. I had two pairs of boots issued per man, and they could only carry one pair, that is to say they had them on them. Those men that inadvertently went to the front in Colonial made boots were soon without a pair of boots, whereas the British made boots were far superior and lasted much longer.

12596. Was it that the material was inferior or that the workmanship was not so good, or both?—Material and workmanship.

12597. And you consider it of very great importance that the foot gear should be really good?—Yes, all the equipment should be of the best material; it is the most false economy in the world, I think everybody will agree, ever to buy an inferior class of goods at all. The difficulty of supplying men up at the front with another pair of breeches or boots is enormous, whereas if they are given the best leather and the best corduroy to start with they will last them probably years in campaigning, and you will not be hampered with the necessity of serving out additional things to the men.

12598. May I ask again whether you had any opportunity of seeing and comparing the boots of the outside Colonial contingents?—No, I did not; I never did so.

12599. You say (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 350*) that the tents, instead of being white, ought to have been of khaki or dark colour. That is, I suppose, that they would not be seen so well at a distance, for the same reason as the uniform?—Yes.

12600. Were they of linen or of cotton?—Canvas, it is cotton canvas.

12601. As being much lighter?—The ordinary bell tent of the British Army is of cotton canvas, I think.

12602. Formerly the tents were all linen canvas. The cotton is much lighter, is it?—It is the ordinary canvas. I am no expert in the manufacture of the article.

12603. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) We used to call it canvas?—Yes, but I advocate the use of the Willesden canvas, that green or brown canvas. I myself had a tent of that material, which lasted very well indeed.

12604. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You mentioned that your troops were very expert in the spoor—that is in tracing men; is not that the case also with the natives?—Yes, they are accustomed from childhood to see anything on the ground and notice what has passed, and can tell you what animal it is.

12605. Were they used much for that purpose?—I had natives who went with me, not armed for any purposes of aggression, but for the purpose of intelligence and gathering intelligence from other natives. A native will tell another native when he will not tell a white man very often, and for that purpose I employed natives in my intelligence department.

12606. Of course, the natives of North America, the Indians, are great on that?—Yes. Colonel Steel, who commanded a regiment, was very expert at it.

12607. In speaking of the bayonet which you recommend for the carbine, what length of bayonet would you suggest?—I should put such a bayonet on as would bring the whole weapon from the place you hold it, that is to say the point you hold the weapon with the bayonet on it for using as a lance, at least 3 feet 6 inches from the point of grip to the point of the bayonet.

Brigadier-
General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

Brigadier-General M. F. RIMINGTON, C.B., called and examined.

12608. (*Chairman.*) You first went out, I believe, on secret service before the beginning of the War in 1899?—Yes.

12609. And you were at Bloemfontein?—Yes. Previously to that I was there in 1897, two years before.

12610. And then at the time when war became imminent you left the Free State and applied for permission to raise a corps?—Yes.

12611. Which was given on October 3rd, 1899?—Yes.

12612. You have been good enough to send us some Notes (*vide Appendix, page 583, post*) upon which I will ask you questions. Will you in the first place give us an explanation, please, with regard to the method of raising your corps?—I thought when I was going out to the War it would be a useful thing to get a number of men who could guide in the country, and I pressed for authority to raise them. I also made arrangements as soon as I thought there was any likelihood of war coming to get some of the best men I knew in the Free State to come over the border as soon as war was declared, and I also made arrangements with various people on the borders of the Cape Colony to join—men who would be useful on the border; and at the moment that War was absolutely declared I had these men—they came over, and some rode out 70 or 80 miles or more, left their commandos and joined me. And I employed some of the men on the border some 40 miles away from Naauwpoort at Colesberg Road Bridge and Norval's Pont to let us know when the Boers had crossed our border. One occasion when the Boers crossed the border was communicated to me within five minutes by telephone, and another was telegraphed from Colesberg Bridge. Both messages came into the telegraph office at 12 o'clock at night within a moment of the Boers doing so. One man was captured and the other was not. That was the sort of man I wanted.

12613. You say that you got men from the Free State; were they burghers?—Yes, many of them were.

12614. Dutchmen?—Some were Dutchmen. One of the best I had was a Dutchman.

12615. And the men on the other side of the border, they were also farmers?—They were Englishmen who did not want to join the Boers, good fellows.

12616. They were settled in the country?—Settled in the country and in many cases their mothers were Dutch and their fathers English. One of them agreed to stay with the Boers during the war till it was absolutely necessary for him to come over to us when it got too hot for him. He came over and gave us very good information.

12617. Then the essence of your corps was that you raised it from people settled in the country?—Yes, who knew the country.

12618. Not so much from the Uitlanders?—I got a very large proportion of those too. I got those sent me by the Secretary of the Uitlanders' Committee. Then the trains were packed with people coming out at that time. We used to meet every train and if I saw any person I knew or could trust I told him to come up.

12619. Then at first, and probably for that reason, you carried it on quietly and without attracting more attention than was unavoidable?—Yes, we were rather afraid, you see, of what the Cape Government might think about it.

12620. Were your headquarters at Naauwpoort?—Yes.

12621. Did you personally inspect the men there as they came in?—Yes, I was occupied from about six o'clock in the morning till six at night inspecting them. It only took us about 10 days to recruit them, and we were drilling them every day.

12622. From the nature of the men you took you had to be very clear as to your men, I suppose?—Yes. You cannot be a spy—it is the most difficult thing in the world—not one man in a thousand is able to be a spy without giving himself away. You can always detect a spy—at least I have never heard of anybody who was not detected or suspected at any rate.

12623. To prevent that you required references?—Yes, I took the greatest care about it.

12624. And, as you say, you looked into it yourself—Yes, I was present when every man was recruited.

Brigadier-General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

12625. And you think you were successful in keeping out undesirable people?—Yes, I am quite certain of it. In the nature of things, of course, any man that is a spy must be in with both sides. For instance, one man who came to me was very friendly with the Boers, and he was suspected, but he got out all right, and came out afterwards from their side to us. But he was suspected.

12626. What were the qualifications that you looked for in the men?—The principal thing I wanted was men who could get through any part of the country or through some particular part of the country. We had a map for each man, and marked in blue what part he could find his way through at night, and what part he best knew during the day time. If a man can speak Kaffir of course he can always find his way because the Kaffir always knows his way within 50 or 60 miles of his own kraal at any rate, and you have only to go to a kraal and say to a man he must guide you to a certain place and he is bound to go; so that the ability to speak Kaffir guarantees that a man can find his way. Apart from that, many of these men afterwards guided me in night marches very well.

12627. You say you marked it on the maps. Had you maps of that part of the country?—It was just the ordinary old Free State map.

12628. It was not good enough to go by?—The main roads you can always find; there is no difficulty about that.

12629. I only ask the question because we have had a great deal of evidence about maps, or rather the deficiency of maps, and I wanted to know what your experience was in that matter?—I never experienced any difficulty from want of maps. If you can tell a Kaffir where you want to go you can always get there by day or by night. It was through absolute ignorance on the part of English officers that they could not find their way by day or night. I have marched thousands of miles at night, and I never had the slightest difficulty. Get a Kaffir guide and he will take you anywhere within 50 miles.

12630. Could he tell you the military capabilities of the country?—Yes, if you have a good interpreter he can give you a great deal of information. He will tell you where there are things you can get across, and things where you cannot.

12631. Then you think with proper intelligence you can dispense a good deal with maps?—Yes, I think so. I never had any difficulty. I made 40 or 50 night marches during the last part of the War, and I never had any difficulty in finding my way, and getting sufficient knowledge to take wagons with me.

12632. Otherwise you tested your men in shooting and riding, and medically examined them?—Yes.

12633. How many men did you enlist at the outset?—At the outset I got about two hundred. I was limited to two hundred to begin with. I could have got a great many more, but I did not want them.

12634. Did you increase them afterwards?—Yes, the moment we found a man was not quite up to the work we got rid of him, and then we could enlist some others. I had no difficulty about getting men.

12635. You say in the *précis* of your evidence that you only accepted about one in five?—Yes, I think that was the proportion.

12636. And you had a good class of men?—Yes, a great number of my men became officers afterwards. I think at the end of the War there were about 70 of these original men who had got commissions, and a good many did very well indeed.

12637. If there was any evidence of want of pluck or nerve you dismissed the man?—Yes.

12638. Had you to do that often?—No, I think I got rid of about half a dozen or so.

12639. But having the control in the hands of the Commanding officer and the exercise of it in that way is the best means you think of maintaining discipline in a corps of that description?—Yes, I think you want to have a pretty strong hand in the case of these men. A great many of these men I ought to say had been previously engaged in wars out there; some of them had been in every Kaffir war for the last 30 years or so, in the old Boer war, and so on.

12640. There was no restriction of age?—No. I think about the best man I had was 63. He had five horses shot under him during the War.

12641. What about officers?—I got some Regular officers—Captain Rankin and Captain Gale, R.E., were most useful to me.

12642. You think that some Regular officers are an advantage?—I think they are absolutely necessary. You must have people whom the men respect as something above and out of their own class.

12643. And were the other officers men of the same class as the privates?—Yes, and they got on very well indeed. They were dashing fellows to ride at kopjes and that kind of thing, and very good for transport work, and all that sort of thing.

12644. Then, as to horses, what have you to say?—Well it was an experiment on my part to pay the men 5s. a day for their horses, which answered very well.

12645. For their own horses?—Yes, they got very good horses.

12646. So that you had not to provide any horses?—I bought about 150 horses, I think, for the men who had not got horses. Some of the men who came down by train from Johannesburg naturally had not any horses of their own; some of them bought horses; some of them did not take that responsibility.

12647. In order to make it clear what you mean is, that they brought in their horses and you valued them?—Yes. I valued them.

12648. And entered them at that value?—I entered them at that value in a horse-book. If the horse was killed the man got the value of the horse, or he was given another one in place of it, if he liked, of about equal value.

12649. What were the advantages that you foresaw and which accrued from that?—The men took much better care of their horses, and that spread to the other men. If one man sees another man next to him taking great care of his horse he naturally does the same, and puts the same value upon it.

12650. Then again the presence of Regular officers you found to be a great help?—That was a matter of the greatest importance. I think you can trust Regular officers better than you can irregular officers, they have got a higher standard of honour.

12650*. And also they see that discipline is maintained?—Yes, they are very good at that.

12651. And horse management has to be attended to by the officers?—It is most necessary that it should be.

12652. You mention six points in your *précis*. I think perhaps you might give them to us to get them on the notes?—I put that down with a view to the future, so that people should have it impressed upon them.

12652*. Would you just read them?—“(1) Horse management was strictly attended to by the officers,” that is to say, they went to the stables, and so on, and saw that the horses were cared for. “(2) Grazing was always resorted to at every possible chance.” The moment a man gets off his horse he throws the reins over the horse’s head, and the horse stands and grazes, which makes him quiet for dismounted work and so on, and he is also nibbling whenever the man is dismounted. “(3) The men never allowed to sit on their horses at the halt.” That was a great fault with most troops, and wants some legislation. I mean to say that we ought to try and get a rule about that in future, that a man should never sit on his horse at the halt. The ordinary Cavalry soldier does; he gets into a habit of it at the Riding School.

12653. And it is to rest the horse that he should dismount?—Yes, of course. Then “(4) always made to off-saddle at every opportunity, even for five minutes.” Our saddles were light; we had not much on them, and it was no trouble to the man to unlance the girth. We had no breastplate or crupper. The man could just slip the saddle off the horse on to the ground, and it was just by the horse, so that he could slip it on in a moment. In retreat from Sanna’s Post my men were all off-saddled while the Boers were pressing us. When I came back I found these men had off-

Brigadier-
General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

saddled their horses, and were watering and feeding them, and the Boers were pretty near, and things were pretty tight. But the habit was a good one.

12654. That was pushing it to extremities?—Yes. I was rather annoyed, because I thought we should not get away. I thought it was playing it rather too fine. Then “(5) the kit carried on the horse reduced to the minimum.” That is absolutely necessary with any mounted operations; you cannot do anything if you have a heavy kit on the horses. We had saddle and waterproof, and whatever we could get away off the horse we did. We just carried a carbine and 100 rounds of ammunition, and, except the carbine, it was the ordinary shooting kit that a man would go out in to shoot buck.

12655. The ordinary Cavalry kit is very heavy, is it not?—At the end of the War we reduced the Cavalry kit to the same thing in my own regiment, and sometimes they did not have that.

12655*. (Sir Henry Norman.) Not even provisions in haversacks?—If a man feeds in the morning before he starts, and gets something when he gets in, and has a biscuit in his pocket, that is all he wants; and the same with a horse. If you have 9 lbs. of oats, and you give him 3 lbs. at night and 3 lbs. before he starts in the morning, you have only to carry 3 lbs. for the mid-day feed.

12656. (Chairman.) What did you estimate your kit to weigh?—The saddle would be about a stone in weight; then there would be the nosebag and 3 or 4 lbs. of oats; say the horse and man's feed would be half a stone—7 lbs. Then there would be the carbine, about 7 lbs., and there would be the cloak or something to put on him. The cloak was not always carried, but as a rule it was when we were travelling; that would be another 7 or 8 lbs.—say another half-stone. I do not think as a rule more than 3½ stone was carried, including everything.

12657. That does not include ammunition, does it?—No. I would allow another half stone for etceteras. If a man had two bandoliers, that would be about 10 lbs. in weight.

12658. That is much less than the ordinary kit?—Yes.

12659. What is that, do you know?—I have known a man put a saddle load of about 6 stone altogether on a horse, including everything.

12660. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What would be about the average weight of your men?—My men were light, as a rule. I had not many big men. I had a good many small men. I think they would average about 10 stone 7 lbs. bodily weight.

12661. Then a horse might be carrying about 14 to 14½ stone?—Yes, about that. I do not think they carried much more than that. A man, if he is a good horseman, would rather do anything than put an extra pound on his horse. He knows it is just as important as it is in racing to get the weight off.

12662. (Chairman.) Then you have one more point?—“(6) They were made to dismount and walk down (never up) all hills.” That is a very necessary thing. It is no good taking the man off the horse when he is going up hill. It is rather an advantage for him to ride up hill, because the saddle gets well shifted back, which is a good thing, and a man does not mind walking down hill; whereas if you put a saddle and a big weight on your horse walking down hill you distress it more than you do going up hill. I have always done that all through my service. I always dismount the men to walk down hill, but never dismount them to walk up hill. A horse does not mind going up hill. Besides that, there is another great point, and that is that if you are scouting you want to be on the horse when you are going up hill, because you do not know what is going to happen when you get to the top of the hill, but when you are at the top of the hill you have seen what is there.

12662*. You think that is a good system, and enabled you to keep your horses in good condition?—Yes; our horses were in a very good state all through. After we had been going a year and a half we saw some Boers one day, and we galloped them down. We were firing at

them at 2,000 yards. I sent a squadron to gallop them down, and they galloped them down in, roughly, six miles—they galloped six miles after them and galloped them all down but one man, and he was afterwards caught; so that the horses were really fit, good gallopers.

12663. And you think that the question of horse-management is one of the first things in a campaign?—Absolutely the first thing—it is 75 per cent. of the campaign so far as I can see.

12664. I see you used rather drastic measures with the men who did not treat their horses well?—Yes, we made their lives a burden to them.

12665. You made them walk?—Yes, it was treated as a crime. I established the same system in my own regiment at the end of the War with very good results.

12666. You say in your *précis*: “Men who give sore backs should not be at once remounted or sent to a base, whether horses are available or not, but should be made to walk for at least 10 or 14 days, and be made to go on picquet on arrival at camp”?—Yes, I did that with my own regiment when I got back to it. After being 18 months with this corps I had to go back to my own regiment, the Inniskilling Dragoons. I started out on General French's eastern trek with them, and I had not quite enough horses. I got all the men marked down who were not good riders and we put them to walk; they had to walk alongside the Scotch Guards and go on picquet every day when they got in. The consequence was that they set their friends to catch the wild horses, and by the end of that trek, which was rather a trying one, I had 90 spare horses. They used to drive the Boer horses in and surround them, and we had one or two successful dashes at the Boers, and we found ourselves with 90 spare horses. I had an excellent veterinary surgeon who would drive a lot of horses in, and the men would go in and catch the horses; often you would see a mare with a foal, and see half a dozen of our men dragging at the mare's tail. Then they would get the horse down, and get on it and ride it straight off. It was a great saving in horses to the Government, I fancy.

12667. I think horses were scarcer than men?—No doubt of it. We could have done without a great many men.

12668. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You do not mean that there should be any disregard of the health of the men?—I disregard the men's health completely compared with the horses. A man can speak up for himself, and will no doubt do so and go to the doctor, but the horse cannot say anything.

12669. But cannot you combine both care for the horses and also for the health and condition of the men?—My men were always fit and well. I put the horse first; he is the most necessary thing.

12670. No matter how the man may suffer?—No, I would let him walk for a week, or ten days, or anything.

12671. I do not quite understand what is meant by this statement which appears in your *précis*, “With all mounted troops extreme severity and absolute disregard for the men's health, feelings, or safety, is necessary in this respect”?—Yes, the horse is the first thing, absolutely. You must look after that. You may make your men walk until they are thoroughly tired and can hardly keep their eyes open.

12672. But you can do both, can you not?—When you have once got the men to understand that the horse is the first thing then you can; but I look after the horse first—the man looks after himself.

12673. But the horse would not be of use without the man?—We found that there were plenty of men; we never were short of men, we always were short of horses.

12674. Still the life of the man is to be thought of?—What is the life of a man? A man's life is nothing in war. You do not care whether men are killed or not as long as you attain your object.

12675. Supposing he has to go to hospital?—They will not go there as long as they think they get enteric there, unless they are very bad. I know the Inni-

killings would not go to hospital, they would rather do anything, they were so frightened of enteric.

12676. Yet it is the case that there were very large numbers of sick men in hospital?—I had very few men sick, I was remarkably free from it. But I put the horse first. As long as I have plenty of horses I can manage. I do not mind about the men.

12677. (*Chairman.*) You mean that a man can look after himself?—Certainly.

12678. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And look properly after his horse at the same time?—I do not think at the same time. He will look a little after himself first, and then after his horse. When he is convinced that you think first of the horse then he comes into line.

12679. But still he takes thoroughly good care of his horse?—Yes; then he knows his own health will be all right.

12680. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And then you do not have to make him walk?—Yes, it is the screw—putting the screw on.

12681. (*Sir John Edge.*) The training you put him through forces him to look after his horse and forces the other men who see what is happening to look after their horses?—Yes. I think it is better to leave the man behind than the horse.

12682. (*Chairman.*) To go back to your preparations: you provided transport; have you anything to say about the nature of the transport that you provided?—We got very good mule wagons indeed. I could not complain of my mule wagons; they never failed to get up to us at night. They could trot along at any time. They were all small, well-seasoned mules. The Government buyer at the time did not like small mules—I mean the particular Government buyer in the neighbourhood where I was; so I had an opportunity of buying them, and I got very good mules. One of my teams was going at the end of the War. I had them all captured except one at Sanna's Post, and that one went through the War. I saw it just before I left. There were 12 white mules, and they went through the War.

12683. They could do 40 miles a day?—With the greatest ease.

12684. And how were your men armed?—We had the Martini-Enfield carbine, a small, light carbine and a very nice carbine.

12685. And you were satisfied with it?—I would not say I was satisfied. I should like to have had the Mauser carbine with a clip, because I think loading with a clip is so much better than loading with a single loader.

12686. You prefer the carbine to the rifle?—Certainly.

12687. Will you say why?—It is so much lighter, and so much more easily carried on a horse. The rifle is such a clumsy thing, and certainly in England you never could see as far as a rifle can shoot, so I do not see any use in having it so very far shooting. The rifle is sighted up to over 2,000 yards. Not one man in 50 can see anything at 2,000 yards.

12688. And some of the men had pistols or revolvers?—Yes, they just carried those; they were their own.

12689. Had they any other personal weapon?—Some of the men did fix their bayonets on as well; one man killed a couple of Boers with the bayonet.

12690. But they did not fix them throughout?—No. When we galloped at a kopje we loaded the carbine and carried it in the hand.

12691. What do you say about the necessity of a personal weapon?—With any troops worth mounting it is an absolute necessity.

12692. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) A sword?—A sword.

12693. (*Chairman.*) You prefer a sword to a bayonet?—Certainly, as long as you have good riders; I do not think it is worth while with any man who cannot ride.

12694. On a horse at the gallop does not the sword require a good deal of training to know how to use it?—I do not think so for using the point. I think you can teach a man to use the point very easily. You

can teach an ordinary recruit to take tent-pegging with a sword in a very short time any ordinary rider can do it; therefore it must be useful when a man is lying on the ground to be able to stick the point into him, with opposing infantry.

12695. We had one witness who said it was almost impossible to teach the Anglo-Saxon to point—it is his nature to cut?—Yes, it is true that it is very difficult to teach him to point, but I think you can teach him to point if you wish to do so.

12696. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) He said it was peculiar to Englishmen that they used the edge of the sword.

12697. (*Chairman.*) I do not mean to say that you could not teach them, but his point was that their natural impulse when they came into battle would be to cut?—There are so many Irish you see, who are used to hitting each other—not pointing. Of course, the point is the thing.

12698. That is your opinion, that for Mounted Infantry you would have them armed with the sword in addition?—No, I would not have any Mounted Infantry. I would have them all cavalry.

12699. But can you make an irregular corps into cavalry?—Yes, I think so.

12700. Is it possible to give them sufficient drill?—Well, you can take the best and you can teach them to use the sword at the gallop against the enemy. Gradually the others will come up to that state of perfection that they will be able to do it. The effect of having men galloping at you is that you want either to stay and fight them or you have to get away as quickly as you can. I was on one occasion galloped at by the Boers. I was doing a rear-guard business, and had got all my men away but five. We were just waiting, sitting there. We had got the next position held so that we knew we could get away. These Boers went trekking along as if they were not going to touch us, and suddenly they went left turn and came at us from all sides. I waited until they were within 500 yards. I could not have hit any of them, at least we should have shot the leading one, and the rest would have got in. I saw then what was the effect of people galloping at you. I got out all right (I got my horse shot through the leg, and so did the other five men), back into the next position, and then from there into the next position, but still we knew what it was to have men galloping at us. And after that I always used the same principle in going at them, because I knew what it felt like, and knew what they would feel like.

12701. But the Boers had nothing but their rifles?—No, it does not matter what the men have who are coming at you. It is as if I were standing *here*. I may shoot at a man in front, but I cannot tell what is happening on my flank; I can hear or see the enemy coming, but I cannot shoot all round. Therefore they get in.

12702. But the point I was going to put was this: you proposed to use your irregulars as cavalry, and to use the sword. We had evidence to-day of a corps that was raised, and sent to the front in about a fortnight after its enrolment. Those men could not have been trained to use a sword or to be used as cavalry?—No, but I will give you an instance which will show what I mean. I say in my *précis*, "acting on these lines, I on several occasions directed the 3rd New South Wales Mounted Rifles to charge their enemy mounted with fixed bayonets." They used to fix bayonets and gallop at them in line. These Australians were very good horsemen. One day I let the Royal Artillery Mounted Rifles (at the end of the campaign, when we did not want guns they made them Royal Artillery Mounted Rifles)—I had about 700 of those men—see these Australians do it. I said to one of the officers, "What do you think of that?" and he said, "It looks very well; they look very formidable." About two days afterwards these Royal Artillery Mounted Rifles, who were not men who had been taught to be good riders, fixed bayonets and went and had a fight, which was quite unnecessary, just for the sake of having it, because they liked the idea.

12703. That is a case in which the bayonet was used. The point I was putting was whether the bayonet is not more easily used by men of that kind than a sword?

Brigadier-General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

Brigadier-
General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

Feb. 1903.

—No, a sword; but I think a lance or sword on top of a rifle or carbine looks very formidable. You see it up a great height and a great deal of steel coming along. That is a great thing when you are charging; you want something that looks formidable. Let the men in the rear ranks carry a sword ready to do the killing. A lance suddenly coming down like that looks a very formidable thing indeed. A sword on the end of a rifle is a splendid thing. I think the advantage of a sword on the end of a rifle is that you have both weapons, in fact you have three weapons; you have the sword, the pike or lance, and you have the rifle.

12704. You want a sword that can be used as a bayonet?—Yes.

12705. A sword bayonet, in fact?—Yes; they have one in the War Office now. I asked them to send me out 100 to experiment with, and they have been working up one since then.

12706. (*Chairman.*) And in this *précis*, you say: "For mounted troops in the Colonies, I advocate Cavalry drill in squadron columns, etc., a short rifle, or better, a carbine and a sword, whose handle is made like a bayonet handle so as to fix on to the carbine, this being especially useful for defence against a rush at night." That is what you think you want?—Yes.

12707. Then also a little further on you say what you would do with your troops would be "(1) teach all to shoot; (2) take all the best riders in squadrons and teach them the use of a personal weapon, and make them into a troop of swordsmen for shock tactics as Cavalry; (3) gradually work more up to the highest standard of Cavalry and thus leaven the whole lump"?—I would guarantee to take good Australians and make them into very good cavalry in a month if one were allowed to work there in Australia; they are good horsemen.

12708. To stand against European cavalry?—No, I do not say to stand against European cavalry, but very near the mark. I think, perhaps, you might say that. No, I think one would want more than a month to do that, because they must ride very close for it. But you could work them up to a very high standard, I am convinced.

12709. What do you say as to the Yeomanry in this country who are out perhaps a fortnight in the year?—I think if you get men accustomed to horses like Devonshire farmers, you can make them into splendid cavalry. A Devonshire man who rides round about on the moor and has a horse always with him, would make a splendid cavalryman. I do not think you could take a man from behind the counter and make him a cavalry soldier.

12710. It depends upon your material?—Yes, it depends upon the men being able to ride.

12711. Then for scouting, spy-glasses are essential in your opinion?—Yes, very essential. They are very expensive, but they are worth giving to any man who is going to be employed as a scout.

12712. Do you prefer binoculars or a telescope?—I prefer the binocular. I used Ross's No. 12; but I believe the Zeiss No. 8 is the best for this country.

12713. Better than the telescope?—Unless the man is very expert. I used a telescope for nearly a year, and preferred the other at the end. I had my choice and could have chosen what I liked, but I had Ross's No. 12, and for that country I know nothing better.

12714. The telescope would take up the details more accurately?—Yes, but you cannot sweep in the same way. You cannot get so quickly on to a thing, and with cavalry that is everything. You jump off your horse and put a glass up and keep it fixed for a minute, and you must get everything in front of you in that time.

12715. Probably a combination of the two would be best?—Yes, if you could get it; but I have not seen anything better than Ross's No. 12.

12716. If you have a man accustomed to stalking would the telescope not be better for him?—Yes, he will get on to a wounded bird as he goes away. I am very good with the glass. I used for nearly a year one of the signalling telescopes, and I got on very well with it. I could get it up very quickly.

12717. It is very useful to have a certain number of those men in connection with scouts?—Yes, absolutely necessary. And I think you want for positions one or two big glasses, those very large glasses on mounts, so that you can look right into a position and see the colour of the men's facings even at a couple of thousand yards or four thousand yards. I know General Macdonald had one of those big glasses, the very long, big ones, and it was a splendid glass. He had it on a tripod, and I could see a man's tie about three thousand or four thousand yards off and see the colour of it.

12718. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Did you not say that you preferred on the whole the Zeiss No. 8?—Yes, I think that is the best.

12719. Is that the largest magnifying power?—There are Nos. 8, 10, and 12.

12720. Then the No. 8 has less magnifying power?—Yes, but I was looking at it from the expense point of view; one cost £10 and the other about £8. It used to cost £8 for Zeiss No. 8.

12721. And that is good enough?—I think it is. You cannot expect the Government to pay an extra £4 for a very slight advantage.

12722. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What do you say as to the Ross glass?—No. 12 is what I had. It is very good indeed.

12723. Is that as expensive as the Zeiss?—Mine cost £10 or £12 at the Stores, I think; something like that.

12724. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Ross sells the Zeiss, I think?—Yes; it is the same idea. I believe the City Imperial Volunteers had a very good telescope, one of Ross's, but on the same system of reflecting prisms.

12725. (*Chairman.*) You have described in your *précis* the system which you pursued in scouting. Perhaps you will give us that shortly in your own words?—All scouting parties sent out by me left at night and got into some place, where they could see and not be seen, before dawn. The whole available officers and men turned out practically every day, and certainly five days per week throughout the War, two or three hours before dawn, when we were in touch with the enemy, and scouted up as near to them as possible before dawn, remained in observation till the enemy's picquets were withdrawn, most days engaging the enemy's scouts and exchanging shots. They got up in touch and got into a position and stayed there, and the enemy never could tell what was behind. They just saw the picquets there, or perhaps not even them; but they came scouting up and got a shot at them. Unless they meant to make a serious operation they would not turn you out.

12726. And if they did you would have to retire?—If there were many of them you would shoot away till the last moment and then get back. They seldom attempted to turn us out unless they knew, and if we got in before dawn they never did know. That is the whole system of scouting—to do it at night—to get into a place at night. We worked a great deal at night. Later in the day the bulk of our men were withdrawn as quickly as possible, leaving parties in observation until after dusk. That was the great point, not to come back until after dusk, and then they did not know you were there all the time. One place at Colesberg we held for a fortnight with just cow dung fires kept by the natives. They thought the picquet was there; it was just as good. The natives used to go and pile on a little cow dung, and the Boers saw it all right. They never found us out. We used to come back into the place and sleep and get up again before dawn.

12727. And you got a night's rest?—Yes; it was a very hot place to get into in the day time. If our parties once got into position before dawn, and some remained till after dusk, the Boers did not attempt to get up to their positions, and they could be got into again every day before dawn without loss. Every man was encouraged to take every opportunity of observing the enemy and to collect and report information, especially from native sources, with regard to the enemy. Though for scouting and fighting against Boer Mounted Infantry my guides were all that I could wish for, and though later I found no difficulty in galloping at and storming, carbine in hand, any tem-

porary Boer position with them, I am positively certain that they, being untrained in shock tactics and having no personal weapon, would have had no chance whatever against well-trained, well-mounted, and well-led Regular Cavalry half their number. I say this after being engaged, when in command of these men, on approximately 120 days. Later I commanded the Inniskilling Dragoons, and found that though for individual shooting and scouting they could not compare with those born and accustomed to the veldt, and able to get information from every native, well-mounted, well-trained Regular Cavalry in action were worth double their number of Mounted Infantry (whether Boers or British). I wish particularly to draw attention to this, as since I came back to England I have heard many individuals express opinions which show that they had no conception that such was the case, and it appears to me that there would be a very rude awakening if Mounted Infantry attempted to hold their own against Regular European Cavalry trained say, for instance, on the German system.

12728. That is what I was putting to you before, but you said that you thought you could make your irregular regiments into Cavalry sufficient to hold their own?—I think the whole thing depends upon the riding of the man when he starts. If a man is a good horseman to begin with, it is very easy to make him into a Cavalry soldier. The man who has been trained from his boyhood to ride can in a very short time be taught shock tactics. An Australian can ride from his boyhood.

12729. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) In the actual circumstances that they had to deal with in South Africa, which, on the whole, were the most useful, the Mounted Infantry or the Cavalry, taking them as a whole?—The Cavalry were worth three of the Mounted Infantry, because they did not get through so many horses. A Mounted Infantryman, when put on a horse, did not know what to do with it. As a man once said to me, he did not know whether to feed it on beef or mutton.

12730. There was that extreme ignorance on their part?—There is bound to be. You take a man from Sheffield or the Highlands of Scotland, and when he first sees a horse he does not know what to do with it.

12731. Take those of the Colonies of whom I speak. I see you speak of them very well. Take them as Mounted Infantry, those from the outside Colonies, not South Africa; what do you say of them?—They are good horse managers when they have been taught the necessity of it. Do you mean in respect of horse management or in respect of what, or which would I prefer?

12732. I speak, on the whole, as to the usefulness of Mounted Infantry in South Africa, or Cavalry?—I say that with English Cavalry, or with any Cavalry—and I mean by that a man who uses a personal weapon—he is worth double the amount of Mounted Infantry who cannot use a personal weapon, and who consequently when they are mounted are the same as Horse Artillery limbered up.

12733. Those who have had no training, you mean?—No; Mounted Infantrymen who do not use a personal weapon are only equal to half the number of men who use a personal weapon. That has been my experience in all my service.

12734. (*Chairman.*) Then I suppose we might pass on to the question of equipment, which is the next point. That you purchased locally or drew from the Ordnance Stores?—Yes.

12735. You have some views to give, I think, with regard to the saddle?—I think the general service pattern saddle is not what we want; I think we want something better. I think it is a very bad economy to have anything but the best saddle on a horse.

12736. Could you get a saddle that you thought satisfactory?—The Colonial pattern saddle was a fair saddle; with a good deal of trouble, we could make it suit almost any horse by taking the stuffing out ourselves and adjusting it and putting in wool and hay and so on.

12737. That is a matter that the War Office ought to consider, I suppose?—I think it is a most important matter.

12738. And water-carts you do not approve of?—I found them an encumbrance in South Africa.

12739. How did you keep your men from drinking bad water under those circumstances?—We used to use the horse's nosebag. The man always got his own water in the horse's nosebag, and brought it up so that he could make sure of good water, and when he got near to the place where he knew we were going to encamp, he used to fill the nosebag with water; it carried water very well.

12740. Better than carrying it with you in a water-cart?—Much better; the water cart is always in the way.

12741. Then as to Colonial officers what have you to say?—I had the most excellent Colonial officers under me of all sorts. I had Australians, Canadians, and New Zealanders.

12742. And they are very good with horses?—Yes.

12743. They are not trained in discipline?—No.

12744. And you think a certain amount of training in England with the Regulars would be an advantage?—I found that those who had been trained here in England had a great advantage. I had some who had been.

12745. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Some of the New South Wales Lancers?—Yes, Colonel Cox; I found him very good.

12746. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) A good many of them are really trained in England; are not a good many attached to Aldershot?—Yes, and they are most useful. They came in splendidly.

12747. Such is the case at this moment, I think—there are a certain number at Aldershot?—Yes.

12748. (*Chairman.*) As regards non-commissioned officers, what is your opinion?—I think the non-commissioned officers were not people who had been thoroughly grounded in drill. The Colonial non-commissioned officers, I think, were found very useful wherever they were to help them to get their drill.

12749. I suppose you did not require them so much in your corps for scouting purposes?—No; they looked more or less after the interior economy. I did not have Regular non-commissioned officers.

12750. Then as to horse-mastership, that you have spoken of?—Yes; I think that it is a very important thing that we should try and get always men for Cavalry who have been accustomed to horses.

12751. The waste of horses very much arose from neglect of that, I suppose, during the War?—A man who is accustomed to horses will look after his horse. I had one trumpeter who had three horses in the War; he was two years and nine months in it; he had two killed under him, and the third he had at the end of the War. He was a good horse-master, and that is the difference between a man who is used to horses and a man who does not care for horses.

12752. What have you to say as to discipline in the field?—We found it was a mistake to allow the regiment to carry out the field imprisonment.

12753. What did you do then?—We had them all under the assistant Provost Marshal and his subordinates.

12754. Had you much to do in that way?—No; once they knew they were going to have a bad time of it there was not much trouble.

12755. I think you had at the beginning the power of dismissal?—I did not have any trouble with my men; they were all a good class of men; I hardly think we had a court-martial. But I was thinking of men at the end of the war, when I had several columns under me, of trained people like the Australian Royal Artillery, Mounted Rifles, Canadians, Inniskillings, Black Watch, Gunners, and so on, and then we found the necessity of having the field imprisonment carried out by the Provost Marshal under his superintendence.

12756. This is then a more general observation; it does not apply to your corps?—Not to my corps. It was more at the end of the War, when I was commanding a mobile force.

Brigadier-General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

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12757. Your corps took part in a great many engagements during the War?—Yes, we were engaged all the time, more or less, up to January, 1901.

12758. We often heard of you?—We had a very good time indeed.

12759. Is there any other point you would like to mention in regard either to the corps itself or the manner in which such corps should be raised in the future?—I think the great point is the want of good Imperial officers, who have been adjutants or had something to do with the interior economy of a regiment, who know exactly what to do. The moment you tell irregulars they must do so and so, if you say it with an air of authority they think it is right, and no matter what it is they do it; but if it is one of their own class, they say, "Oh, you don't know any better than I do about this." That is the great point, having an Imperial officer who has authority. Those officers were the greatest possible assistance to me in every respect.

12760. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) The horses were the native South African horses?—Yes.

12761. You had none of the South American horses?—No, I do not think I had any Argentine horses, or very seldom.

12762. You have seen many of them?—I have seen thousands of them.

12763. They were inferior, were they not, to the South African horses?—Yes, because they had the disadvantage of being in a strange climate, but I have a high opinion of the Argentine horse, a well-bred Argentine horse.

12764. You think well of them?—Yes, I do. One that we took out to the War as a polo pony lasted through the campaign.

12765. They were generally small and lighter?—Yes. I did not like the heavier class of them. I liked the well-bred Argentine. I like one with a little English blood in him; I think he is all right. I have had good Argentine polo ponies.

12766. Had you any Maxim or Colt gun attached to your guides?—No, but I had to my columns; I had eight or nine. I like them. They frighten the people. It is a very unpleasant thing to be under the fire of them.

12767. You consider it a great advantage to have officers of the Regular Army from Great Britain with every corps?—I think it the greatest advantage.

12768. With all the Colonials?—I should say so.

12769. Have you had any experience of officers trained in the military colleges of the Colonies, say in Canada at the Royal Military College; have you seen any of those officers?—Yes, I have met several. I think they are very good indeed. I think theirs is a very good training, but I should regard them more as Regular officers. I have always looked upon them as Regular officers.

12770. From the experience of the English officers, let us say, do you think they are preferable?—I hardly could say that; it is taking a few whom I know, and who have come on and we should be speaking as against a very large mass. Of course, there were some very bright examples amongst them.

12771. They have greater training and experience here. That, of course, is in their favour?—Yes, I do not see why an officer trained in a college in Canada should not be better—he ought to be better, because he has more experience of the veldt life in Canada, I fancy.

12772. For instance, at the present moment the head of the College of Sandhurst was formerly at the Military College of Kingston and was selected in view of his experience and great usefulness there?—I think that is very excellent. I hear very high opinions expressed of him by officers who have been under him.

12773. (Sir Henry Norman.) But he was a Regular officer before?—Yes. I think every officer wants the widest possible experience you can give him. If you can send him out to be knocked about in rough life he gets all the Colonial knowledge.

12774. (Sir John Edge.) I have only one question to

ask you. I see from your *précis* that you have got some excellent shots in Rimington's Scouts. Did they prefer the carbine to the rifle?—My impression is that all but one preferred the carbine. One of my best shots used the rifle, but all the rest used the carbine.

12775. All the good shots?—Yes, the good shots; the men who, when you had a fight, you could count on their shooting two or three Boers used the carbine.

12776. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You say that during the war you had command of a force which embraced the 3rd New South Wales Mounted Rifles, some 800 or 900 in number?—Yes.

12777. And you found they were practically ready-made Cavalry?—Yes, they can ride so well.

12778. You say in your *précis* "these men practically are ready-made Cavalry"?—Yes, I would not say that the Australian was good at horse management at first, because he had been used to many horses. He can ride a horse and can jump off and always get another. Consequently they were wasteful with their horses at first. And another thing was that not having been used to the horse picking up a livelihood on the grass by putting his head down and eating when he can, the Australian is not careful about feeding him.

12779. In point of fact, he is not accustomed to feeding them at all?—Another thing is that he has been used to over-landing cattle, and he sits on his horse because if he got off he would stampede the cattle, so he sits on the horse.

12780. Who was in command of that force?—Colonel Cox.

12781. He had had training at Aldershot?—Yes, he had.

12782. I think there were some 80 or 100 men who came over?—Yes.

12783. Were they attached to your regiment, the Inniskillings?—No. They were attached to some regiment there.

12784. And I think they had had some eight or nine months' experience there?—Yes; they were there for a long time. They went to Salisbury Plain, and so on.

12785. Do you know how long these men had been in South Africa at the time they came under your command?—About a week.

12786. Only about a week?—Yes; they came straight under my command a week or less, I should say, after they arrived.

12787. Were they at that time, do you think, so far as military horsemanship is concerned, practically ready-made Cavalry?—I think they wanted a little bit of practice in charging and troop leading, but I thought they were very good indeed. I remember parading them when they first came, and they appeared to me then to have the proper feeling—a desire to get at the enemy.

12788. Had they their own horses with them?—Yes, they brought their own horses.

12789. What did you think of the horses they brought with them?—The small horses, I thought, were good, but the bigger class of horse I thought could not do on the food that we could give him, and he was naturally unacclimatised and did not do so well.

12790. But the small class of horse you thought good?—The small Australian horse I found a very good horse, if he got any chance at all. The smaller they are the better; and I found right through the campaign that the blood horse is the only horse that is any use at all—as nearly as possible thoroughbred.

12791. You speak of having sent some of these men against the Boers with fixed bayonets. Did the Boers stand up against them?—No, that was what annoyed the Australians so much, they would not wait. I was having rather a tight time of it when it happened the first time.

12792. Were you commanding at Diamond Hill?—I was with Rimington's Guides at Diamond Hill.

12793. Did you see some Australians there? Were they in the charge there?—I could not say; I was not with them.

12794. There the Boers did stand, did they not, for a time?—In the general engagement, do you mean?

12795. Yes.—Yes; it was a very strong position; it took us practically two days to do it all.

12796. Was there not a Cavalry charge?—Yes; but I was not there, I did not see it.

12797. You say that for mounted troops in the Colonies you would advocate Cavalry drill?—Certainly. I believe they would make splendid Cavalry.

12798. Do you know whether General Hutton is of that opinion?—I do not know.

12799. He is a Mounted Infantry man?—Yes, he is. I think he would like them to gallop at the enemy with anything they had in their hands; but I think it is worth while giving them a sword. Some of them have a lance; I think the sword is the best.

12800. (Sir Henry Norman.) What was the highest strength of Rimington's Guides at any time?—I should think about 250.

12801. In two companies?—In two squadrons.

12802. Had you your own transport?—Throughout the time that I commanded Rimington's Guides up to Sanna's Post, I had; and I left some of it there.

12803. You lost it?—Well, it was lost for me. I do not think I lost it. I had nothing to do with it; I was not within two miles of it.

12804. But what was it calculated to carry, what we call your regimental transport?—In a mule wagon we used to put about 3,500 lbs.

12805. Could you go away with that transport with everything complete for two or three days?—Yes.

12806. You had sufficient for that?—Yes.

12807. It was absolutely under your control and not allowed to be taken away for other purposes?—Yes, I had it under my control.

12808. And then after the transport was lost how did you manage; did you get fresh transport?—During the next few weeks I collected a little more, and at the end of the war I never had the slightest difficulty with transport. I captured 38,000 head of cattle, and about 350 wagons, and enough mules to keep me constantly going. I was able to supply other people with transport, and I discovered that an ox wagon, if you managed it properly, could go as far as a mule wagon and as fast; in fact, our ox wagons used to beat our mule wagons, because they were better made and did not break up so easily. The Boer ox wagon that we captured, and the Boer cattle we captured, could do 35 miles in a day, not with a very heavy load, of course.

12809. Did you find drivers for all these carts?—I could always get natives; they would always come, and I could always catch natives, somehow. I had no difficulty about it. I had Cape "boys" at the start, and they were very good indeed.

12810. What is meant by "Imprisonment No. 1" by the Provost Marshal that you refer to in your *précis*?—That is where you tie a man up. The Army Act gives that power plainly. You can tie a man up in a fixed position, and if you make him uncomfortable enough he does not like it, and he does not come again; he does not want any more. The art is to tie him up and make him sufficiently uncomfortable without exceeding the Regulations.

12811. (Sir Frederick Darley.) To let others see that he is uncomfortable?—Yes.

12812. (Sir Henry Norman.) I think some misapprehension may have arisen with regard to the remarks

that have been made about the College in Canada. Of course collegiate instruction and experience, whether at Sandhurst or Kingston, is very good, but is not the best experience regimental? You would not take an officer direct from a College, and consider that he was a sufficiently good officer to use in the way you have done with the Regular troops?—After picking the best I could find, I should like them to have two years from 17 to 19, with a cavalry regiment; then I should like to pick out the best of those who meant to be professional soldiers, and send them for a year to get the very best instruction that I could possibly give them, and to make them work morning, noon, and night, as hard as they possibly could work for a year. That would be the sieve, and at the end of that time you would get some good ones.

12813. Having given them a regimental experience first?—I would give them a regimental experience first. Of course, I should like them to read, write, and cipher to a certain degree, first of all, which they cannot all do now.

12814. However, we have got no such great instruction, I suppose, as they have at West Point, where they are for four years?—It is a pity that we have not. We should get a few Stonewall Jackson's if we had.

12815. There they are kept very tight at work the whole time?—That is the best thing in the world. I was reading Stonewall Jackson the other day, and what they teach them at West Point. That is what we want to do with our cavalry officers, to pick the best and then give them the very best system of education. All those who are not keen, or could not pass out of it are no good to us.

12816. Have you any memorandum which would show the casualties in your regiment during the war?—I am afraid I have not. I tried to get one but I have not got it. I think we got off pretty easily. The men were very good at taking cover, and when we had a dash at any place we got in pretty quickly.

12817. Then you did not lose many men in action, considering the time they were employed?—I do not think we did. I think we were remarkably fortunate.

12818. And you had but little sickness?—Very little indeed. I only remember about four or five men dying of enteric, or anything else, I mean of any disease.

12819. Do you ascribe that in any degree to the trouble you took about the water?—I certainly do in this respect, that when I got to Bloemfontein, and also Brandfort, I always asked to go to the outposts, so as to get as far as possible from where the most men were, where I could get good water. In all places we tried to get out to the outposts. At Thabanchu, a place where a lot of enteric was contracted, we were five or six miles out.

12820. And you think that you only had a very few cases of bad enteric, or of enteric at all?—Very few. I think I could count them on the fingers of one hand.

12821. Where did you get a doctor from?—I got an American, Captain Lindley, from Cape Town. He was an American by birth, and an American subject; and then later I got a civil surgeon.

12822. You had no Army medical doctor with you at all?—No I had first this American, and then this civil surgeon, and that was all.

12823. And were they perfectly efficient?—Very efficient; everything that I could desire.

12824. Had you a veterinary officer?—No, I had no veterinary man.

Brigadier-General
M. F.
Rimington,
C.B.

5 Feb. 1903.

THIRTIETH DAY.

Friday, 6th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable The Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA and
MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., C.I.E.The Honourable Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY,
G.C.M.G.Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Major-General W. R. TRUMAN, called and examined.

Major-
General
W. R.
Truman.12825. (*Chairman*.) You were Inspector-General of Remounts; from what date?—From January, 1899 up to the present time.

12826. We postponed the examination into this Department of the War Office, as we announced at the time, in order that we might have an opportunity of studying the somewhat voluminous evidence which had already been given in connection with the Department. We have done so, and we are of opinion that it would serve no useful purpose, but the contrary, to go through in detail the matters which have been brought out and examined in the course of the various inquiries which have been made. Under those circumstances we shall treat these Minutes of Evidence of the various Committees as practically the examination-in-chief of yourself to-day, and, so far as I am concerned, as having the examination-in-chief in my hands, I shall only have a few general questions to ask you. In the first place, I should just like to ask whether in these Minutes of Evidence of the various Committees we have before us we have the whole of your opinion as to the organisation of the Office before the War?—That is so, speaking broadly.

12827. That it was in your opinion inadequate?—Quite inadequate for a large undertaking such as we had to face at the time of the War, as War broke out suddenly.

12828. And also as to the manner in which it was provided with office accommodation and otherwise, and its being inconveniently situated for the public service?—Certainly.

12829. In the second place these Minutes bring out completely all the steps which you and your Department took for the provision of horses during the War?—That is so, under the order of the Quartermaster-General.

12830. You have nothing you wish to add on either of these two heads?—No, I think there is nothing else.

12831. If there is anything which has either been omitted or on which you wish to offer any explanation, now is your opportunity?—I am not sure whether it was fully explained that before Lord Roberts left South Africa we were ordered to stop purchasing and to recall our purchasing commissions from abroad. Afterwards the demands rose; the first order sent by Lord Roberts was, that we were to reduce the animals by 20 per cent. and a thousand mules per month.

12832. What was the date of that?—That was on the 26th of November, 1900, and then on the 27th of December the same year the demand rose to 7,600 with 2,000 mules, or a total of 9,600 animals per month. That was in the space of one month you may say; after it was reduced by 2,000 it rose 4,000 in the following month.

12833. (*Viscount Esher*.) 2,000 purchased per month?—2,000 horses and mules additional.12834. (*Chairman*.) Purchased?—We had to purchase them; that was a demand from Lord Kitchener. First of all the order came that we were to reduce our purchases, and, in fact, to stop purchasing, and then in

the following month we were ordered to purchase 2,000 extra animals, which raised the number up to 9,600 per month.

12835. I think it would bring it out a little more clearly to my mind if you would tell me how many animals you purchased in October of that year?—I can tell you for November at once.

12836. Was November the normal up to that date?—Yes. On the 26th November, 1900, an order came from the Cape to decrease the numbers; then in the following month, the 27th of December, we got an order to increase the numbers by 2,000.

12837. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) Was that 2,000 over the normal number of November and the preceding months?—Yes, so that it brought it up to 9,600.12838. (*Chairman*.) You purchased 9,600 in December?—Yes.

12839. You cannot say what you purchased in October in the same way?—I cannot say in October, but in November it was 7,600. The October demands were the same as those for November.

12840. And presumably about the same in October?—It must have been about the same.

12841. How long did that increase go on at 9,600?—Almost to the end of the War, indeed there were more horses purchased than that. We used at one time to ship 15,000 a month.

12842. So that the decrease order did not practically come into effect at all?—No, it never came into effect, but operations were disturbed by the order to close.

12843. And you say you were ordered to stop buying altogether; did you thereupon withdraw any commissions or anything?—Yes, we withdrew the commissions in Italy, Spain, and Canada, and I gave orders for the Commission in the United States to proceed home, but before they left the country we received orders to recommence purchasing.

12844. And as to those in Italy, Spain, and Canada did you replace them?—Not in Italy, but in Spain and Canada.

12845. You had to send them out again?—Yes. If you would like to know the numbers at the end of the War in excess of the numbers demanded I could tell you that—that is, the number of horses purchased in excess of those demanded.

12846. Did you buy in excess of the demands?—We bought a great many more than were demanded in order to provide for contingencies; up to the end of the War there were 25,431.

12847. But they were all sent out?—They were nearly all sent out; we had a few on our hands when peace was declared, owing to the rapid conclusion of hostilities and the ships having been chartered.

12848. Is there any other point?—No, I do not think there is any other point I wish to bring to your notice.

12849. There is one other branch of the subject I want to put a question to you upon. You have told us

6 Feb. 1903.

6 Feb. 1903.

to-day, as you told the other Commission, that you considered the equipment of your office inadequate; has there been any change in that respect?—There has been no change at present. During the War there was a change as our numbers were increased, but now we are being brought back to the number of officers and Staff that we had before the War.

12850. You are in the same position as you were before the War?—In the same position with the exception of one or two clerks, as supernumerary officers, are under notice to leave.

12851. And in the same office?—In the same office.

12852. Have you lodged any representation with regard to the matter since the War?—Oh, yes, we have made a reference regarding the office, but as regards the reorganisation of the Remount Department, that has been taken up by the Quartermaster-General.

12853. You have not been asked to make any suggestions yourself?—No, I have not been consulted in any way.

12854. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did you make any representations before the War that your staff was inadequate?—No; I was only a few months in office, from January to August. I had not an opportunity.

12855. I suppose it had been anticipated before the War broke out that if ever we went to war there would be very considerable demands upon your Department?—Yes; that was the basis on which supplies were to be furnished, settled in Mr. Stanhope's time. He authoritatively represented and considered that 25,000 horses would be sufficient in the event of war, and we were only prepared to meet that estimate.

12856. Your normal purchases in time of peace were about 2,500?—Yes.

12857. I suppose you knew that if we went to war at any time and with any Power there would be a very considerable demand upon your Department for the purchase of horses?—Yes, but my instructions were to assume that 25,000 would be required.

12858. But even to purchase those 25,000 an increase of staff would have become necessary, I take it, would it not?—No, it would not have been necessary at that time to increase the office staff; but I got help from four Colonels through the Adjutant-General.

12859. Then do you not see if your staff is big enough to cope with the purchase of 25,000 horses in time of war, it must be big enough to cope with 2,500 in the time of peace, and therefore at present you do not require any increase of staff?—No, it is not necessary for normal requirements.

12860. You think your staff is big enough now?—Yes, at this moment.

12861. And under the normal conditions of war if only 25,000 horses had been required, you think it would not have been necessary to increase your staff?—Not if we had taken the whole of the registered horses, because we could have taken those very easily.

12862. And your view, and the view generally in the War Department, was that it would not be necessary to go to the Continent to buy horses in time of war?—That is so; it was thought we could get all these horses that were required in the United Kingdom.

12863. And therefore the abnormal character of the South African War had not been anticipated in any way?—I do not think it had, as I was not allowed to buy, although I was ready to do so.

12864. At the present time your only complaint is that you are inadequately housed?—Yes, that is all at present for a normal time of peace.

12865. That is only a temporary matter pending the completion of the new War Office buildings?—Yes, I should think so.

12866. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Are you aware whether provision has been made for the Remount Department in the new War Office?—I am not aware.

12867. We are informed by competent authority that it has been provided. When you were told that 25,000 animals would probably be required for a war, did that contemplate that there would be no more required, and that there would not be constant wastage

during the War?—I do not think that was taken into consideration; they thought 25,000 the outside number.

12868. To see the war through?—Yes, I think that was the idea.

12869. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do you mean the idea with respect to the South African War?—No.

12870. You mean any war?—Yes; that was the idea of Mr. Stanhope.

12871. (*Sir John Edge.*) It was not your idea?—No, it was not.

12872. It was an idea that had come down to you?—Yes. I forget what year it was; it was when Mr. Stanhope was in office.

12873. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Before the War what measures were taken for ascertaining the sources from which horses could be procured? Was there a record in the War Office of the different places from which horses could be obtained and the probable number?—No, there was no record kept as regards foreign purchases, because it was considered we would be able to get the horses in the United Kingdom.

12874. All that would be wanted?—Yes.

12875. And you had been in the habit, I think you said, of getting 2,500 or so, all that were required under ordinary circumstances?—Those were all that were ordinarily required.

12876. In short, Mounted Infantry would be of little use in South Africa, and it would not require many horses?—Well, it was not thought we would require the number that had to be purchased,

12877. Had you any knowledge of the number of horses that could be got in one of the nearest Colonies—in Canada, for instance?—Well, there was no record kept, but we knew we could buy a large number of horses, because in General Ravenhill's time he went to Canada and made enquiries, and we had that on record.

12878. There was one officer sent out there, Colonel Dent, but not until the beginning of the summer of 1900?—That is so.

12879. And that, I presume, after representations had been made from Canada with regard to the number of horses that could be got there?—Yes, he was sent out; as the demands increased we were obliged to increase the commissions abroad in the different countries for the purchase of horses. After we had purchased a number in the United States we sent out Colonel Dent to Canada to purchase horses there.

12880. May I ask what is your opinion with regard to the character of the horses from the different places? Take South America, from which a very large number of horses were brought; were they considered good, serviceable horses?—I think they were very good horses. I know that country very well myself, and before the War, in 1897, I went out there and sent nearly 2,000 horses to the Cape. That was when General Goodenough was commanding, and they were principally for Mounted Infantry and a few for Cavalry. He sent home a report to England reporting on those horses, saying that they were remarkably good, and the very horses that were required for the country. That was one reason why I sent so many from Argentina, and I think if the horses I sent during the War had been treated in the same way as the horses I sent in 1897 they would have turned out very well indeed; but they were much abused, I am quite sure.

12881. And as to those procured in Texas and the more southern portions of the United States, what have you to say?—They were very good horses.

12882. Was it known at the War Office that some of the best of the horses got from the northern portion of the United States were really sent there from the North-West of Canada? Had they any knowledge that the United States got a considerable portion of their horses from the North-West of Canada?—It was never reported to me that that was done, but on the face it is most improbable. Colonel Dent was buying in Canada.

Major-General
W. R.
Truman.

6 Feb. 1903.

12883. That is after he went there; but I am speaking of before the War?—There was no record of that.

12884. There was no knowledge of that at all?—No.

12885. (Chairman.) As you have mentioned that you knew South American horses well personally, I would just like to ask you this question: It has several times been said that you could get good horses from Argentina, but that the class of horses sent to South Africa during the War was not the proper class; have you anything to say on that point?—I did not see the horses that were sent during the War, but a great many officers told me they were very good indeed, and they liked them very much. For instance, the 10th Hussars were mounted on them, and they liked their horses very much, and there were other regiments, too, that were mounted on the Argentines, who also reported very well of them.

12886. I think it was only yesterday that we had a witness before us who said he was quite aware you could get very good horses from that country, but that the horses that he saw during the War had more of the cart blood in them, and were rougher horses, and not so good for that reason; have you anything before you in the War Office on that subject?—No, we have not; there were complaints about them, but it generally turned out that it was simply through bad treatment and nothing else, and it was not really any fault of the horses.

12887. Bad treatment. Do you mean from bad horse management?—From bad horse management at the Cape.

12888. And also being sent to the front very speedily after their arrival?—Yes, in many cases they were landed, put into the train, and sent up to the front, taken out of the train, and saddled up, and then they would go on a 20 miles trek without shoes.

12889. I have seen it said also that the price which was given for the horses you got from Argentine was not sufficient to get the really good horses from that country?—Of course if you went to some of the best ranchers there and bought their best horses you would have to pay £50 to £60 apiece, but these were very high-class, principally high-class carriage horses, which were not suitable for us, and we did not require that class.

12890. You think that the price which was paid was sufficient to get the class of horse you wanted?—Quite sufficient; indeed, I only gave £5 apiece for my horses when I was out there.

12891. In 1897?—Yes; and those are the ones that were so well reported upon by General Goodenough.

12892. (Viscount Esher.) Sir Henry Norman asked you a question as to the wastage of horses in time of war. Have you any idea what the wastage of horses in the German army was during the year of the war in 1870?—I could not tell you the percentage exactly, but I have been informed that the Cavalry used up more horses in proportion than we did.

12893. In that year of the war?—Yes.

General Sir CHARLES MANSFIELD CLARKE, BART., G.C.B. recalled and further examined.

(See Questions 2342 to 2594 and 2807 to 2816, Vol. I., for Sir Charles Clarke's previous Evidence.)

General
Sir C. M.
Clarke,
Bart., G.C.B.
See Q. 2357.

12908. (Chairman.) When you were here before you referred us to the evidence you had already given on the remount question, and stated, I think, that that evidence embodied your views on the subject?—Certainly, and I also said that I thought the Commission could have no better evidence generally on the Remount question, as I knew the inquiry to have been very carefully conducted, and the whole of the evidence was given on oath.

12909. That answer referred, I suppose, primarily to the evidence of what was done during the War?—Quite so.

12910. I mean there are two other branches of the subject—the adequacy of the Department before the War, and the arrangements for the conduct of the Department in future, which would not be covered, completely at any rate, by the evidence you have already given?—My evidence embraced it generally. I gave

12894. And yet it had been thought by the authorities here that 25,000 horses in a war would be all that would be required?—That is so.

12895. (Sir Frederick Darley.) As to the purchases you made in Argentina, did you buy through the dealers or direct from the ranches?—Direct from the ranches.

12896. Did you find any inconvenience in pursuing that course?—Not the slightest.

12897. You would only find perhaps four or five horses at this ranch, six or seven at that ranch, and nine or ten at another, and so forth; how did you manage to bring them all together for shipment?—When we bought small quantities I made arrangements with the owners to deliver them in Buenos Ayres.

12898. Had you any place for them to be delivered at where the horses could be fed?—Yes, there was very good accommodation in the docks; there was every possible arrangement made there for receiving horses, there were very good corrals there and suitable arrangements for feeding, watering, and taking care of them in every way.

12899. That was not the course pursued in Australia, I think; they were bought through dealers?—They were principally bought through dealers. When Colonel Thompson went out first he bought direct, but the distances were so great that it handicapped him very much.

12900. The distances the horses he bought were apart from each other?—Yes.

12901. And in order to make arrangements to bring them to the docks they were compelled to buy through dealers?—It was thought better to buy through the dealers.

12902. (Sir Henry Norman.) Is there any considerable normal export trade of horses from Buenos Ayres?—No.

12903. And yet they have arrangements in the docks for receiving horses?—Yes, because they use the corrals for cattle; they are suitable both for horses and cattle.

12904. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Some of these dealers in Australia, I daresay you may have heard, made considerable sums of money?—They did indeed, as there were many competitors in the market outside my department—e.g., the Germans were buying for China at £7 a head over our prices.

12905. They bought the horses at about the price you spoke of, £5 or £6 a head, and sold them *en masse* to the Government at a considerable increase upon that amount?—Yes; but of course they had to run great risks.

12906. They had to run the risk of buying the horses and finding them cast, as many were frequently?—Of course. At one time we had as many as 2,000 horses thrown on a dealer's hands in Hungary which were cast.

12907. (Chairman.) Is there any other point you wish to mention?—No, I think not.

a history of the Remount Department prior to the War, as far as I could from the records at my disposal.

12911. I put it in this way: As regards the history of the Department prior to the War you think the evidence you have already given does cover all that you have to say on that subject?—Yes.

12912. You do not wish to add anything with regard to that?—No.

12913. May I take it then that in your opinion the organisation was imperfect and inadequate?—Imperfect for the purposes of the South African War.

12914. Not further than that?—And not, I think, adequate for the development of the arrangements for the provision of horses in the case of mobilisation for home defence.

12915. That means to say that as it existed before

the War it was not in a state which you could recommend as a permanent arrangement?—No.

12916. That is all that you would wish to add to your former evidence on that branch of the subject?—Yes.

12917. Then with regard to the future, as far as I could read your evidence—I looked through it very carefully—you did not say very much?—I was going to allude to that point in the evidence I am going to give.

12918. Starting then from the evidence which you have already given, as we did in the case of General Truman.—we accept that as part of the case presented to us—what is the first point you wish to draw our attention to to-day?—Perhaps I may as well read what I have prepared—a short note.

12919. Certainly?—In accordance with the desire of the Commission, I beg to hand in a return (*vide Appendix Vol., page 258*) of the number of animals—horses, mules, and donkeys—provided during the War, together with the balance of animals at the close of the campaign. In the number of animals provided are included the horses and mules landed after the cessation of hostilities for the supply of which contracts had been entered into. I also hand in a return (*vide Appendix Vol., page 259*) relating to horses and mules purchased by the Army Remount Department which has been in course of preparation since July last, entering into greater detail, and showing also as far as possible the cost of freight and the percentage of loss during transit by sea. As regards the question of the Commission put to me by the Secretary whether any steps have been taken to reorganise the Remount Department, certain proposals have been worked out and put forward. They have been discussed at the War Office Council, and are at present awaiting the orders of the Secretary of State. Annual reports as to supply available in foreign countries have been arranged for through the various Embassies and Consular Agencies.

12920. You say that propositions for the amendment, if I may call it so, or reorganisation of the Department are actually in progress and ought soon to be sanctioned?—Very shortly, I should say.

12921. But you prefer not to state them in detail now?—I think it would be as well if I did not enter into the details now.

12922. May I take it that they recognise what you yourself have said, that as they existed before the War they were not adequate to the requirements of the British Army?—The proposals put forward recognise the necessity of the provision of horses not only during peace time but also during war time and in the case of mobilisation for home defence.

12923. Such an expansion of the Department in the event of war as would meet a case like that of the war we have just gone through?—Yes.

12924. Those proposals I suppose have been worked out in the War Office in the usual way coming up from your Department, which is the Department concerned?—Yes.

12925. And through the War Office Council to the Secretary of State?—Yes.

12926. With regard to these Returns which you have just given us, of course they are a mass of figures in the meantime to us; are there any comments on them you could usefully make?—I only wish to emphasise this point: the general Return embraces, as is shown therein, horses in possession of units before the War began. It embraces the number of horses and mules procured from every source whether in possession of units or whether purchased afterwards. The other Return applies solely to animals which were purchased by the Army Remount Department for the War.

12927. The second Return does not include the Yeomanry purchases?—No; and I may say with a Return like that it is not to be considered as absolutely accurate; it is as near the figures as it is possible to go. It has been prepared by the aid of the Remount Department, of the Admiralty, and of the Finance Branch in the War Office, but, generally speaking, I think it may be taken as accurate.

12928. There is one thing that occurs to me, looking at it at first sight. You take the totals supplied and the balance expended during the campaign; out of 518,794 horses supplied 347,007 horses were expended?—Yes.

12929. That is a very large proportion, is it not?—A very large proportion, but on that point I should like to call the attention of the Commission to the three examples given on page 312 of the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry on the Administration of the Army Remount Department; to show how extraordinary the losses were. These are three very good examples.

12930. It says here: "The chief cause of loss was exhaustion, the result of hard and continuous work on short rations." Is that an observation that is applicable throughout the campaign, do you think?—I should think generally it is accurate, because one knows the difficulty that existed in getting the food up to the various units. It certainly was accurate as regards part of it.

12931. What you have just said refers to the last words—"short rations"?—Yes.

12932. "Hard and continuous work" is also true?—I have no doubt they had very hard and very continuous work.

12933. Was it not also hard and continuous work commenced before the horses were in condition?—No doubt.

12934. I have seen it stated that that was really the determining cause for the great mortality among the horses?—I can give an example of the necessity for acclimatization from my own experience. In the year 1879 I took two well-bred Walers from Ceylon to South Africa. I landed in March and left the country in November, by which time the horses were becoming fit to take out for a walk. I was in South Africa in the years 1880, 1881 and 1882 and had in my stable during that time seven or eight horses purchased locally; I lost none of them. I can give no stronger proof of the necessity of acclimatization.

12935. And I suppose that if those horses were brought from Ceylon the trial to the horses was not so severe as bringing the horses from Europe?—No.

12936. A horse brought from Europe, I see in the evidence, has to change his coat?—Yes; I think nothing shows more strongly how the climatic change affects the horse than the higher percentage of losses in the horses which were sent to South Africa from the United Kingdom and from Canada; the percentage of loss in all those cases is much higher than from anywhere else. You will see that brought out in that second Return, (*Appendix Vol., page 260*), the climatic change is so very much greater.

12937. And that being the case, any putting them to work immediately must necessarily have caused an abnormal loss?—Absolutely, but I am afraid the putting them to work was unavoidable.

12938. I was coming to that. I was going to say that it does not imply any reflection upon the officers in South Africa?—No.

12939. So long as their arrangements there were, as we may suppose they were, calculated to allow as much time as they could reasonably give for military reasons?—It was a matter of absolute necessity. I have heard it said since all this discussion on the Remounts has taken place—in fact, I have seen it on paper that we ought to have kept up our supply in advance of the demand; and I need only say as to that, that I do not think any human being foresaw or had any idea what the demand would be, and on the very day that I came into office in the middle of September, 1899, an order had been given for a certain number of mules in excess of those for which authority had been granted, and that contract was ordered to be cancelled.

12940. How do you mean that it was ordered to be cancelled?—An order had been given for the purchase of a certain number of mules.

12941. Who had given the order?—The order had been given by the Remount Department.

12942. And who cancelled it?—It was cancelled by order of the Secretary of State.

12943. (*Viscount Esher.*) That was immediately be-

General
Sir C. M.
Clarke,
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6 Feb. 1903.

General Sir C. M. Clarke,
art. G.C.B.
6 Feb 1903. fore the war broke out?—On the 15th or 16th of September.

12944. (*Chairman.*) Was that during the interval of which we have heard a good deal during the course of the evidence, before any sanction was given for provisional expenditure?—Yes, prior to the date on which general sanction was given.

12945. I think that was the 22nd of September?—The 28th, I think.

12946. So that if that order was cancelled on the 16th it was cancelled only a few days before the sanction for the general expenditure was given?—Twelve days.

12947. Was it renewed when the sanction was given?—Then we gave orders for what was wanted.

12948. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) That shows you think how little anybody anticipated the enormous demand which speedily arose?—And it emphasizes what I mentioned in my previous evidence: how absolutely we were bound by the orders not to purchase until authority was given.

12949. But had the Remount Department power to order that particular purchase to which you allude; who gave them the power?—I cannot remember under what circumstances the order was given.

12950. But they must have had some authority?—Doubtless.

12951. (*Chairman.*) It comes to this: that the great number of horses used arose out of the exceptional circumstances of the war?—Owing to the climatic changes, the use before acclimatization, and, in some cases, short rations.

12952. But you would not attribute it, generally speaking at any rate, or perhaps you would go further than that, to any sending out of inferior horses?—No, I think, taking them all round. In the case of the Argentines, General Truman was correct in what he said about certain corps having been perfectly satisfied with them; on the other hand I have heard reports saying that nothing was too bad for them. In the matter of the horse it is very difficult to get any two people to agree, in fact there is a report in the office now on the general quality and characteristics and utility of the horses of the various countries, and the reports are most curiously contradictory.

12953. We have a paper—I think it is a published paper—of reports (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 432*) sent in by General Lyttelton on the horses, and that is very diverse in its terms?—I think possibly that is the paper I am alluding to. (*The document was shown to the witness.*) That is one of them. I was very glad to see one thing in the Report; we were very much taken to task at one time about the Russian horses, but with the exception that they are slow, I think the opinion is generally in favour of them.

12954. I suppose it is notorious that opinions of a horse are very apt to differ?—Very.

12955. Let us take one case, the case of which a great deal has been said, the Hungarian horses; have you anything to say with regard to that?—The Army Remount Department practically purchased comparatively few Hungarian horses; they purchased a good many small horses and cobs, but comparatively few horses; there were some at the commencement of the War, and Count Szápáry's shipment towards the end. The original reports on the Hungarian horses were, generally speaking, unfavourable, and were not calculated to make me wish to purchase more. We called for a special Report on the last shipment that was made, that of Count Szápáry, and the general tenour of that report was not favourable to them. Special orders have been sent out that they should be carefully watched and a report rendered at the end of a year from their importation as to their utility, their powers of endurance, and I think that report when it comes in will settle so far as we are concerned in this country the question of the utility of the Hungarian horses for war purposes.

12956. You are speaking of the horse as opposed to the cob?—Yes.

12957. Most of the shipments were cobs?—Yes, or horses as small as we could get.

12958. But after Sir Montague Gerard was sent out to Austria-Hungary to report on the state of matters there this contract with Count Szápáry was made as a special contract; was that not so?—It was made during the time Sir Montague Gerard was in Austria-Hungary.

12959. Apart from the general contract you had had with Mr. Hauser?—Quite apart; Hauser was then obtaining his horses, I believe, entirely from Russian sources.

12960. Not from Hungary at all?—No.

12961. He had obtained Hungarians?—He had got some originally, but at that time he was getting them entirely from Russia.

12962. They were chiefly cobs?—Yes; towards the end they would not have anything in South Africa but a small horse or cob.

12963. I think in your previous evidence before the Court of Inquiry on the Administration of the Army Remount Department, at question 4734, you use this expression: "For the last month or two I have had to go very closely into purchasing operations, and I can only say that I have never experienced a more difficult task than to weigh and decide upon which is the best of the numerous offers of animals made, every officer vaunting his wares to be superior to those of any other, and not hesitating to hint that no one else is to be depended upon." You had numbers of offerers?—Yes, that represents my opinion accurately; I cannot add anything to it or subtract from it.

12964. You had numbers of offers from Hungary, from people who wished to sell horses to you?—Yes.

12965. I think the result of Sir Montague Gerard's Report was to show that there was a great difficulty in getting into direct contact with landowners, or people interested in the breeding of horses in Hungary, because the trade was so exclusively in the hands of the Jews?—I believe the trade in horses in Austria, Hungary, Russia, and Poland from all I have heard to be absolutely in the hands of the Jews. Sir Montague Gerard in his Report suggests that we might have done better by getting into more direct touch with the breeders, in fact with the gentlemen; but there was no possibility of finding the organisation necessary for that. It would have required a very large number of officers and veterinary officers acquainted with the language, and it would have been simply impossible to get them. I think, on the whole, that the means adopted to procure animals were the only practicable ones.

12966. This contract with Count Szápáry was an attempt?—It was an attempt, and I do not think altogether a very satisfactory one; the price was high, the value of the horses remains to be proved; and it took a long time to arrange, and with any great demand for horses, contracts on the same lines I am afraid would not have given satisfactory results.

12967. At any rate, if it had proved a successful experiment, any other offerers who came to you at the War Office during the War would have had a favourable hearing, provided the War had gone on and you had required the horses, but the War ceased?—Certainly. I remember quite well an offer was made to provide Hungarian horses by two gentlemen on behalf of Messrs. Hofmann, forwarding and shipping agents, Buda-Pesth. They were well-recommended, and I see no reason why they should not have supplied us with a good class of horse, but at the time the offer was made we were negotiating with a Count Ivan Szápáry for the supply of Hungarian horses, and until it was decided whether that gentleman's contract was, or was not to be accepted, it was impossible to enter into negotiations with anyone else. The shipment of Count Szápáry's horses was made two days after the cessation of hostilities, by which time the necessity for the provision of further horses from anyone else had ceased.

12968. Have you any objection to mentioning the names of the two gentlemen who recommended Messrs. Hofmann?—The letter advocating the employment of Messrs. Hofmann was written by a Mr. Slade, who I never saw, but a Mr. Ponsonby called on me on behalf of Mr. Slade frequently, advocating the purchase of horses from Messrs. Hofmann. I told him that nothing could be done until the Count Szápáry contract had been

settled. On one occasion Mr. Ponsonby brought a gentleman named Stockinger, who I believe to have been the Austrian Consul-General in England. This gentleman also strongly advocated the purchase of horses from Messrs. Hofmann. I gave him the same reply that I had given to Mr. Ponsonby.

12969. I suppose we may take it that one of the reasons for the selection of Count Ivan Szápáry's contract was that he had a considerable backing among landowners and others in Hungary?—He was said to have.

12970. That was reported to you by Sir Montague Gerard?—Yes.

12971. (*Sir John Edge.*) Do you know if the Messrs. Hofmann were large horse dealers, or what connection they had with horse dealing?—I have said that they were shipping and forwarding agents.

12972. You do not know whether they were horse dealers?—I do not think they were; they were simply reputable men of business.

12973. (*Chairman.*) You said that it was impossible to get into contact with the landowners and others because it would require a large organisation to do so?—It would require a very large organisation of men absolutely acquainted with the language to do so, and I do not think myself it is a thing that any foreign country would permit. I look upon it as impracticable.

12974. And so far as it could have been practicable at all the organisation of the Remount Department at the time of the outbreak of the war was not calculated to carry out an operation of that kind?—Absolutely out of the question.

12975. You mentioned just now, I think, in your reference to the future organisation of the Department that there would be reports from the different Embassies?—That has been arranged for.

12976. That recognises that it was an unfortunate thing that hitherto the Military Attachés at the various Embassies were not brought into contact with the Remount Department?—In my evidence before the Court of Inquiry (page 153), I gave evidence to the effect that I thought the information might have been procured not by the Remount Department, but by the Intelligence Department at the instance of the Remount Department, before the War. The Remount Department by itself had not the staff to enable them to do it, and also the Intelligence Department were the proper people to collect the information, because they are in direct touch with the Military Attachés, and with the different Embassies.

12977. I have no criticism on that point; the proper machinery ought to have been employed but you admit that the information ought to be available for the Remount Department?—Certainly.

12978. Therefore, at the beginning of the War the agents of the Remount Department sent out were simply purchasing agents who went with practically no previous information of the markets in the countries they went to?—In my evidence, at page 3, Question 1, before the Court of Inquiry, I said, "Authority was given about the middle of 1899" (I think it was actually in June) "for purchasing remount parties to proceed to" different countries; and so they had ample time to acquire the information before any authority was given to purchase.

12979. They had to pick up during those three months or so any information they could?—Yes, and speaking generally, I know from what I have been told by the Inspector-General of Remounts, that he had a very considerable amount of information as to horses generally, in different countries, but he could not show it in black and white.

12980. In your previous evidence before the Court of Inquiry, at Question 4692, you say: "I think they could perfectly easily have acquired information during peace time as to the capabilities of foreign countries to furnish horses by asking the Intelligence Department to get it for them." That implies that they had not done so?—No, they had not.

12981. But your future arrangements are going to provide that they shall do so?—Yes.

12982. (*Viscount Esher.*) Why the Intelligence De-

partment?—Because it is in close touch with all the Embassies, and it is the Department which procures information on every point connected with foreign countries.

12983. They are not experts?—They are not experts.

12984. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) There are now commercial agents, I think, connected with the different Embassies for getting information?—Yes, and Consuls, and people of that kind.

12985. (*Chairman.*) General Truman told us what the maximum demand upon the Remount Department was supposed to be; I think you have put it in your evidence quite clearly?—I think it is horses for two Army Corps and line of communication troops.

12986. It is question No. 5334 before the Court of Inquiry: "Sufficient to supply two Army Corps with a cavalry division and line of communication troops"?—Yes.

12987. With the experience we now have, do you consider that a sufficient maximum for ordinary purposes?—The maximum must, of course, depend upon the number of troops it is contemplated to send abroad at any time. That was based upon a Minute of the then Secretary of State, and in that Minute it was only contemplated that that number of troops would be required to be sent abroad.

12988. I suppose this scheme for future arrangements which you have mentioned, will take into account what the proper maximum ought to be for the future, as well as any provision for expansion for abnormal requirements?—Quite so.

12989. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And for keeping up supply?—Yes.

12990. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point on this question you would wish to speak to?—No. There is one point in connection with the return of horses and mules purchased by the Army Remount Department that I should like to bring specially to the notice of the Commission, and that is in connection with the percentage of loss of horses purchased in Argentina. Of course the climatic change there was very slight, and the voyage was shorter, but I think it speaks well for the carriage of those horses by Messrs. Houlder Brothers, which has been animadverted upon at different times. Houlder Brothers, as the Commission knows, were employed by the Inspector-General of Remounts under circumstances which are fully disclosed in my evidence before the Court of Inquiry, and I think it only right to mention that that percentage of loss is very creditable to the firm which carried those horses.

12991. They compare very strikingly with the previous shipments from the Home ports?—Of course, you have to take into consideration that there was no great climatic change, and the voyage was shorter.

12992. (*Sir John Edge.*) It did not amount to 1 per cent.?—That is so.

12993. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Their ships are specially fitted out for the carriage of animals?—Yes.

12994. They also bring home live cattle from the Argentine?—The export of cattle from Argentina has been closed for the last three years, and the restriction has just been removed a day or two ago.

12995. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Do you happen to know the percentage of wastage which is allowed for now over a campaign? You take it into consideration, of course, in the Remount Department that there is a certain wastage?—Yes.

12996. Do you know what that percentage of wastage is?—If my memory serves me right we started with the assumption that there would be 5 per cent. wastage per month.

12997. That is 60 per cent.?—Yes; we hope there will never be another war of this abnormal nature where everybody almost wanted to ride upon a horse.

12998. But on the other hand there was a percentage of 80 in the Crimea, where there was not much riding?—There was none, or next to none, and very few horses.

12999. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) These Returns do not show the horses brought out by the units?—Yes, in the smaller Return (*Appendix Vol., page 253*)

General
Sir C. M.
Clarke,
Bart., G.C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

General
Sir C. M.
Clarke,
Bart. G.C.B.
6 Feb. 1903.

you will find "Colonial contingents," "With units," and "Remounts" separately.

13000. (*Viscount Esher*.) After all the endless controversies about the Remount Department, I suppose you have formed some idea in your own mind on the two main questions—one as to the general quality of the horses, and the other as to their cost. What is your final judgment as to the quality of the horses purchased for South Africa?—I think on the whole the quality was fair.

13001. That is your final opinion?—That is my final opinion. I think that the quality was as good as the pressure admitted of; there is no question that if you have time and there is no pressure, you will pick up a better animal for five and twenty pounds than you would for the same amount of money if you are in a hurry. I merely quote five and twenty pounds as an arbitrary figure.

13002. You think considering all the immense difficulties with which the Remount Department were brought face to face, on the whole they did as well as any reasonable man could expect of them?—I do most certainly, and I think that a very great deal of recrimination has been thrown upon that unfortunate Department unfairly.

13003. Then you come to the other point which is the cost of the horses. If you take that Return of yours (*vide Appendix Vol., page 258*), looking at it roughly, the Remount Department spent about fourteen millions on horses, donkeys, and mules?—I think roughly it runs out to £23 a head or thereabouts.

13004. That includes mules and donkeys?—Yes I wish to say that so far as I know I did not know we had purchased donkeys until we got in the returns from South Africa; they were purchased locally.

13005. How does that average of £23 per head strike you when you consider that it includes mules and donkeys—does it not strike you as being rather high?—I think not, because it includes as you will see in the marginal note, all expenses in connection with the purchase and the various purchasing commissions, and the food up to the date of shipment; it is not the absolute price of the animal.

13006. That, I understand, and if it were for horses it would not strike one as being excessive, but when you include mules and donkeys it struck me as being rather high. You think not?—The mules are dearer than a great number of the horses supplied. They are much dearer than the Argentine horses, for instance.

Colonel A. G. Lucas, C.B., M.V.O., recalled and further examined.

(See Questions 6451-6672, Vol. I., for Colonel Lucas's previous Evidence.)

13016. (*Chairman*.) You will remember that in the previous examination I mentioned that we had postponed the consideration of the Remount question in order to examine the papers, and I may say to you, as I have said this morning to the Department, that having examined the papers we do not wish to resume the inquiry into details which has been made by Sir Charles Welby's Committee on Horse Purchase in Austro-Hungary and by the Court of Inquiry on the Administration of the Army Remount Department, but we shall take the evidence which was given before those Committees as evidence which we shall deal with as practically the evidence in chief on the subject before us. Therefore all that we should wish to get is any expression of opinion with regard to any omissions, if there are any such, from the voluminous evidence already before us in these Reports, or any representations which you wish to make with regard to the future. You have given us a *précis* of the subjects, but it seems to me that even in those there are some which might be dealt with very shortly if at all; for instance, as to the details of horses I fancy that has been already stated?—I think practically all the details of the evidence that I could give is in those Blue Books, and I think if I were to leave this small note, which refers to any paragraphs in my reports dealing with the Remounts, it would save a great deal of trouble certainly to the Commission, and it would not be necessary for me to enlarge upon that at all.

13017. What are the notes with regard to?—It is

13007. Mules coming from what countries?—Most of the mules were bought in the United States of America.

13008. Do you know what was the average price for the mules. You seem to have paid about 80 dollars for a mule—that is about £15?—I think they ran rather more than that on the average.

13009. Of course £1, when you are dealing with an average like this for such an enormous number of animals, represents a very large sum?—Yes.

13010. A couple of pounds means a million and a quarter of money, but still you think that notwithstanding that the average of £23 does not strike you as being particularly high?—No, I do not think it is. In 1881 I bought about 4,000 horses in South Africa, and I had to pay a round price of £25 per head in the country.

13011. What sized horses?—A medium sized horse—a fair sized horse; it was a horse and not a cob.

13012. I take it you would admit that if the whole thing had to be done over again, knowing now the stamp of horses required in South Africa, some considerable saving might be effected? What I mean is that, during the early stages of the War before it was determined that you wanted a horse from 14 to 14½ hands, large prices were given for a different stamp of horse, and money was I suppose wasted?—At the earlier stages of the War the ordinary horses to meet the understood requirements for cavalry, artillery, and what not, were sent out; then what evidently happened was this; in the case of a big horse, the bigger the beast the more he requires to eat; the food was not always available for him to eat, and the natural consequence was that they asked for a smaller horse.

13013. But my point is that in the earlier stages of the War you undoubtedly did buy a stamp of horse for which you gave a higher price than you did in the later stages of the War?—Yes, except in the case of the Argentine's, which were all small more or less.

13014. As to your plans for the future, have they been laid before the Secretary of State yet?—I said in my evidence they were before the Secretary of State now.

13015. And if we have any questions on that point we can put them to him?—Yes.

(After a short adjournment.)

really drawing attention to the paragraphs in my reports that deal with the question of Remounts, and therefore if I were to go through that again it would be time wasted, I think.

13018. If you hand that in it will be of the greatest assistance to us?—I will hand that in (*handing in the same*.) There is only one thing I would like to emphasise with regard to that, and that is the suggestion which I made that the services of the adjutants of the Imperial Yeomanry might possibly be utilised by the Remount Department in the registration of horses in their county districts. It seems to me that from the very nature of the Yeomanry, connected as they are with horses, it would be a very good way of ascertaining the supply of horses and probably for registration, the details of such a scheme of course to be worked out by the Remount Department. I only wish to bring that forward as it has been recommended to the War Office and has received no consideration, but I think still it is worthy of consideration.

13019. That is with regard to the future?—Entirely; I am only speaking of the future. With regard to the past I would simply hand in this letter (*vide Appendix Vol., page 262*), which is a letter I wrote on February 24th, 1902, when the last force of Yeomanry was raised, suggesting that perhaps through the Yeomanry Agencies horses might be supplied for that force. The letter was sent in, but up to date, only one acknowledgment of the letter has been

Colonel
A. G. Lucas
C.B., M.V.O.

See Q. 6479.

received, so I suppose it did not meet with approval. You will find attached to that the answers of all the Yeomanry Centres as to whether they thought they could supply the horses or not. (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 263*). I thought it advisable to ascertain that information from them, and I think it might be interesting, and there is no doubt there was a large number of suitable horses in the country at that time which I think could have been obtained through proper methods.

13020. For what purpose do you mean—for the equipment of the force sent out?—As remounts for South Africa, either for the Imperial Yeomanry force or for general purposes. I think that the Yeomanry centres might have been made available for the purchase of horses throughout the country, so decentralising the purchasing.

13021. Is there any other point that came under your observation in your position with the Yeomanry that you wish to draw attention to?—I do not think so. If you will remember you stated before that you did not wish to go into the inquiries that have been made, and I would just state, with regard to those inquiries, as I did with regard to the Public Accounts Committee, that certain statements were made, but I was never called as a witness on behalf of the Yeomanry, and of course there was no opportunity whatever of contradicting or putting right those statements that were made. I do not agree that the whole blame of purchasing, for instance in Hungary, should be put upon the Imperial Yeomanry as it has been. We paid more but we got a better class of horse than the Imperial authorities; and they lowered the price, there is no doubt. The only opinion I should like to state personally on that question is that I consider it was a mistake to lower the price so much. The horses would have been better if the price had been kept up naturally, and I think they were not paying sufficient. I think if they had paid a little more they would have got a large number of a good class of horses in this country in hard condition, and one horse in hard condition would certainly have lasted out two or three of those that were purchased from foreign countries off the grass. Hundreds of horses were being sold in this country all during the last three years to go into cabs and hard work that certainly would have been perfectly suitable for remount purposes.

13022. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Were you purchasing in Hungary independently of the Remount Department?—Yes, we were the first to purchase in Hungary. I may say that when we first had the idea of buying in Hungary it was owing to General Truman stating that we were competing with him in Ireland, Australia, and America where we wanted to go, and then we suggested Hungary, and we were the first to purchase horses in Hungary.

13023. Who was your agent for the purchase?—Colonel Maclean was our agent in Hungary whom we sent out.

13024. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) That was to inspect?—Yes.

13025. But who was your agent for purchasing?—You mean whom we purchased through?

13026. Yes; Hauser?—Hauser; he was the man the Government afterwards employed.

13027. (*Chairman.*) Was it not Lewison?—Lewison was employed first; there was some arrangement between Lewison and Colonel St. Quintin originally.

13028. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Whom did he purchase from—the landowners?—No, from dealers. It is quite impossible to purchase through the landowners, especially if you have to do it in a hurry without a very large organisation.

13029. (*Chairman.*) The whole story of the purchase was gone into before Sir Charles Welby's Committee?—Yes, it was all gone into. You do not wish to touch at all on the Studdert case, for instance? There is nothing in that that I think it necessary to refer to.

13030. That is a case that has been in the Law Courts?—Yes, it has been in the Law Courts, and therefore I do not know if there are any details or any questions which you would like to ask with regard to that.

13031. In the public interest you do not represent to us that it is necessary to go into that matter again?—That is so. *Colonel A. G. Lucas, C.B., M.V.O.*

13032. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) As to the proposal that Adjutants of Yeomanry should be used to help in the registration of horses and so on, do you think that would enlarge the number of horses that could be registered? Are there horses that they could assist in getting registered that are not registered now, or what would be the object of it?—I think it would be a very simple machinery to adopt. You see at the present moment there is a Yeomanry regiment in very nearly every county in England, and in the Yeomanry itself a large proportion of the men are drawn from the agricultural classes, men who attend fairs all the year round, and therefore are in touch with the markets generally, and the Adjutant of a Yeomanry regiment has a great deal of time on his hands through certain months of the year, so that I think his services might be very well and advantageously utilised in the registration of the horses. A Return could be sent in either every twelve or six months which is a detail for the Remount authorities to decide, but by that means you would decentralise the registration, and the Adjutant of his District would be responsible for knowing the number of suitable horses that would be available in case of emergency.

13033. And that is not done now?—No. I proposed it, and as I say it has never been accepted. I think it might be done; it is a scheme I put forward for consideration. It is my own scheme purely and one I have had in my mind for many years, as being connected with the Yeomanry.

13034. Are not horses now more or less registered all over the country?—Only in certain classes I think.

13035. Do you mean that in certain counties there are no horses registered?—No, I do not say that; I do not know exactly what the present method is. There are a certain number of horses registered, more particularly in hunting stables and large establishments, but my idea would go beyond that; all the farmers' horses and all the horses in a particular neighbourhood would be noted as being suitable, and supposing there was a large number of horses wanted at any time the Commanding Officer of a Yeomanry regiment could send in a Return, "So many horses are obtainable in my county at a certain date," and I think it would be useful.

13036. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) In point of fact, the Adjutant through his men would practically know every horse in the county?—Yes, if it was properly organised they would know every horse in the county that was useful at all.

13037. (*Chairman.*) Your object is decentralisation—Yes, and making use of an organisation that could be utilised to great advantage and at very little cost.

13038. We were informed this morning that a scheme for the reorganisation of the Remount Department was under the consideration of the War Office at the present moment, and until that scheme is published it would be perhaps premature to say that your suggestions have been overlooked?—That is so; I only put it out as a suggestion, and whether it is feasible or not is for the authorities to decide and not for me.

13039. There is nothing else you wish to add?—I do not think there is anything else.

13040. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Did I understand you to say that you would send horses out now to South Africa?—No, it was in February, 1902.

13041. But you would not send any horses to South Africa for the supply of men there now?—No, it was only for the supply of the men that we were raising at the time; 3,879 horses were purchased by the Yeomanry Commanding Officers in 1900, and those horses were some of the very best we sent out undoubtedly, and those were purchased on this system of decentralisation, being purchased in the various counties by the Commanding Officers, and they did very well indeed. I think if we had done it in the other forces it would have been an advantage.

13042. For the future South Africa could provide every horse required?—I do not give an opinion on that; it is outside my knowledge altogether.

Colonel T. DEANE, C.B., recalled and further examined.

(See Questions 6673 to 6709, Vol. I., for Colonel Deane's evidence.)

Colonel
T. Deane,
C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

13043. (Chairman.) I think you told us when you were here before that you had no direct connection with the remount affairs of the Imperial Yeomanry?—None.

13044. But, as we know, you had a great deal to do with remount questions; if there is any point you would like to mention we should be glad to hear it?—I do not want to repeat anything Colonel Lucas has said, or to waste time. The only things I can say are with reference to what I observed in the administration of the Remount Department at home and in South Africa, in comparison with our system in India, and there are one or two points that occur to me which might perhaps be of use if I were to refer to them.

13045. If you please?—I think that one thing is notable, and that is that the Remount Department in England appear to have no mobilisation Manuals as we have in India. We have to prepare mobilisation manuals, or field service manuals, as they are called, which are of great value to refer to in the event of operations occurring. We have to draw up tables showing the requirements of all the units in the Service from a regiment to an Army Corps, or anything further showing the requirements in the horses of a particular force that might take the field, how many would be required to place the field army on war strength, what measures should then be taken to supply the depletion whereby the other units of the Service make good that strength, and then, lastly, casualties. Reference to those tables when war begins is, of course, of very great value. I understand there is nothing of the sort in England. Another thing that occurs to me as being likely to be useful in future is the preparation of tables showing where you can best get horses. I take, for example, the manuals prepared in India. There is a record where horses could best be secured in South Africa, the exact localities, how many could be secured, from whom, of what class, at what price, and in what time. I think that had those tables been referred to at the commencement of the war they would have been of great value.

13046. You had them in India?—Well, I had them here in these Manuals.

13047. As part of the Indian system?—They are part of the Indian system; they are on record there. That shows at once what could be obtained.

13048. You mentioned South Africa; was that as an illustration, or was it the only place?—As an illustration. That is a matter of administration in the Director's Office of the Remount Department in India.

13049. Did you only refer to South Africa, or did you have the same information for Australia?—We had the same information for almost every locality—for Australia, for Persia, for Arabia, and in some cases for North and South America; for Spain, for Italy in regard to mules for Cyprus, and other places. It is the duty of the Director to collate and prepare those tables. The information as a rule is obtained through the Intelligence branch of the Military Department in India, but if it is not on record there, reference is made direct to the Governments concerned. We have always found that the Governments concerned were only too ready to supply us with every information.

13050. When you say the Governments, do you mean the Governments of the Colonies?—Yes.

13051. But not the foreign Governments?—And foreign Governments, too—all. For these manuals we obtain every information we can collate likely to be valuable in connection with the supply of a large number of horses. Of course, in India we do not want to purchase at such distant localities as North and South America; nevertheless, we have them on record. Then those tables are referred to, and you know exactly where to get your horses. I did at one time obtain shipments from South Africa of both mules and horses. I sent officers there for the purpose, but what happened was very much the same as what happened throughout the purchases in the late war—the officers concerned had to put themselves in communication with the large contractors, and the horses were practically supplied through the contractors. As soon as the contractors learned the terms they found they were favourable, and subsequently they shipped, at their own risk and on their own arrangements, horses to India, which were purchased either by the public or by the Government, as turned out. There is certainly one thing that is brought to notice very much in recent reports,

and that is the futility of dealing with small dealers or horse owners anywhere; the right system is that of dealing with the large contractors. If that system had been adopted to a greater extent in England during the last war I have no doubt horses would have been obtained very much cheaper. I observe in one of the reports that Lord Downe reports most favourably on the system adopted in India of supplying horses through the large contractors in the Colonies. That system is one of advertising how many horses are annually required, giving advances to reliable shippers on the spot, and then taking the horses as they are landed in India if they are suitable. I think if that arrangement had been adopted throughout, the Remount Department might have saved itself a very great deal of trouble.

13052. Would that have been applicable to the case of an emergency like the recent war?—Quite so, in every direction; I think it could have been adopted in North and South America; it was adopted in Australia, and I think it could have been adopted everywhere. The mere sending of inexperienced officers about to find horses is a great mistake. The way to do is to deal with the great contractors, first going to the Consular or Diplomatic authorities, or the Governments concerned, and asking for the names of those who are reliable, and then trusting and dealing with them, and getting the horses landed in large numbers under the advance system at the port of disembarkation where they are required.

13053. With the power of rejection at that port?—With the power of rejection at that port; that is the Indian system, and it has been found an admirable one. It has been found the cheapest in the end, and to answer excellently. I have only to refer you to the reports which were called for by Lord Downe and others, showing that it is a good one.

13054. (Sir Frederick Darley.) But might not the rejection take place before the shipment if you have experienced officers to inspect the horses?—I would have officers at the port of embarkation too; I think that is a good thing to have, but merely to explain requirements and generally to see that the horses shipped are as near what is required as possible.

13055. Why not reject the horses there?—If you reject horses there you do not give the great contractors the latitude they would otherwise have; take the case of transport, it has been reported that the horses from Australia, from the Colonies, are shipped at half the Government rates, and that is the fact, because the large contractors have ways of doing it. I know from my experience in India that they did so. I know also from having imported very large numbers of horses to India that the system of sending an officer to pass horses in the country where they are produced is really unnecessary, provided that the contractor is a reliable one. We never did so in India, and we were admirably supplied with horses.

13056. But that was what was done in Australia?—It was; one of my late Remount agents, Colonel Hunt, was sent there, but I think it was quite unnecessary.

13057. Colonel Hunt, Colonel Horsfall, and Major Thompson passed all the horses?—Yes. I know the men they bought them from; their names are all in the Remount manuals in India, and had those contractors been informed of the requirements of the Government I am quite sure they would have shipped to South Africa horses that would have suited the purpose.

13058. I have heard of one instance where Colonel Hunt rejected some 200 horses out of one mob?—Very possibly.

13059. If those had been shipped to South Africa they would have been rejected there?—That would have been at the contractor's loss.

13060. The contractor would make you pay for that in some way?—No; the system I advocate is only taking the horses fit on arrival at the port of disembarkation.

13061. (Chairman.) And throwing the risk on the contractor?—Yes.

13062. Would you not have in time of war the risk that you might not get the horses that you wanted at the time? It is all very well in time of peace?—I think the horses that experienced contractors supplied must have been very bad indeed if they would not have been made use of in South Africa.

13063. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Has not one thing to be considered—in favour of your argument in fact—that there is a very large private demand in India for horses, and therefore many of those rejected which are not quite up to the cavalry standard are taken up by private people?—That is quite so.

13064. A large number of those horses which go from Australia to India are always sold to private individuals?—That is quite so; but, speaking of 10 years' experience as Director of the Army Remount Department in India, I should say that there were very few horses such as reached the Indian market and passed into the hands of the public there that would not have been gladly accepted during the past war. I am speaking now as having inspected for 10 years the importations in Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay, and it being my duty to find fault with them as much as possible.

13065. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I suspect strongly that Colonel Hunt rejected as many horses as he bought in Australia?—Very likely.

13066. He rejected 50 per cent. of those offered?—It is on record in one of the reports (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 441*), which are before you that of the horses imported from Australia 50 per cent. in South Africa were unfit for any purpose whatever, and that the majority of them would not be fit for work for nine months. I saw a great many of those horses at Durban, and I was asked for an opinion upon them. I inquired the price that had been paid, and the answer was that it was not known, and I said it was impossible for me to give an opinion on the horses until I knew what had been paid for them. You can get horses for £2 each in Australia. Lord Roberts telegraphed from South Africa that what he recommended was Australian horses; no doubt he had in view the excellent horses for which we pay £50 apiece in India, and which we acclimatise for a whole year. Those horses in the official reports have been very favourably reported upon—that is to say, Australian horses that came from India. The horses that were sent from the Colonies direct were invariably reported upon as bad, and I must confess that if my opinion was asked I should say they were very bad indeed.

13067. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You mean until they were acclimatised?—They were not acclimatised; they went straight from grass to trek.

13068. And those reports were made when they had not been acclimatised?—Quite so.

13069. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The reports are very various about them, and some of them are very bad indeed, no doubt. One report says that the Australian horses would be almost on a par with the English horses if properly acclimatised, and the next report is "Very bad stamp, cast almost immediately"; while another says, "This is a splendid cavalry horse if picked not too big and leggy. . . . Ponies are most suitable for mounted infantry" (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 441*)?—The opinions are so diverse that it is almost impossible to arrive at a correct conclusion, but there is one thing to be said, and that is that it is the Director's duty, or the Inspector-General's duty, to collate the opinions he receives from those who are in the field and to be guided by them, and by them entirely, without any outside interference. The great difficulty is that everyone thinks he knows more about a horse than his neighbour. Most Englishmen, and Irishmen too, think so, and therefore if the responsible authority is not entirely trusted it is very hard for him to carry out his duty. If I might venture to make a remark, I should say that the Director, or Inspector-General as he is called in England, of the Remount Department did not receive sufficient authority—that is to say, his authority did not extend at all to South Africa, and to a very great extent he had little to do with the arrangements in South Africa. I have quoted the instance of my having been asked for an opinion and being told that the officer there, who was Colonel Stevenson, I think, did not know what had been paid for the horses. It was surely the Director's duty to know exactly what price had been paid for all the horses purchased everywhere. Then I think he might have been more in communication with the officers in chief command, and with his own Remount officers in South Africa; he was apparently not so at all. That I think was rather a mistake, if you will excuse my pointing out what occurs to me as being a mistake. I also think there was a great want of a central controlling remount authority in South Africa. There was a very able, energetic officer with the rank of Assistant Adjutant-

General, Colonel Birkbeck, who has supplied valuable reports, but he had not that weight or authority which, considering the importance of the subject, was required.

13070. (*Chairman.*) Where was he stationed?—He was mostly at Johannesburg or Pretoria. When I first arrived in South Africa I asked who was the Inspector-General of Remounts in the country, and I was informed that there was none. That was the first thing that appeared to me to be very strange in comparison with the way that matters are conducted in the East.

13071. Would you not have wanted a central authority at one of the ports of landing?—There were four ports—Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Durban. The first thing, I think, that would have occurred to a Director or Inspector-General, if he had been out there, would have been that a very large reserve was necessary at those four seaports. Of course, it is easy to be wise after the event, but I think that mobilisation tables would show, if they had been consulted with regard to the casualties as they then proceeded, that at least 100,000 horses would have been required between these four places—that is, during the first six months of the war. That was the only method by which you could send fit horses to the front—that is, giving them a little rest and acclimatisation. As they went to the front they had received none; they practically went from grass on to the trek, and the consequence was that the majority of them died before they did much work. The right system is that of having large depôts at your seaports. Then, again, I think the advance depôts is another question that might be referred to; the advance depôts, of course, are those in advance from the base where horses are issued. There were two sorts of depôts advanced from the base, and one was called the issuing depôt and the other the resuscitating depôt. They might have all been called resuscitating depôts, because the horses that reached the advance depôts were in such very poor condition as to be mostly unfit for work for any length of time. Then, again, a point which struck me, if I may refer to it, was that the English war tables show that the arrangement of remount affairs in the field is in charge of the Director of Transport, who has also control of the veterinary service. As a matter of fact, he was in charge of neither one nor the other, and very rightly, because it was impossible for him to control both in addition to the vast transport service. The control should have been placed in the hands of the Inspector or Director of the Remount Department, and I think that he should not have been under the rank of Major-General.

13072. Who was in control?—The control at the first period of the war was given to Major Birkbeck, who was subsequently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

13073. As an Assistant Adjutant-General?—As an Assistant Adjutant-General. That was one of the points, I think, on which an improvement might have been made. Another point I venture to refer to as having struck me as very strange was the method by which horses were sent to the front. The horses were put in trucks almost anyhow, and they were taken out for food and water at various halting places. In India we keep horses on board the trains sometimes for a week or eight days perfectly easily, because the trucks are so made that the horses can be fed and watered on board of them. There was no such system out there, and the consequence was that the horses had to be taken out at various landing stages on the way, which, of course, involved a very great deal of time, trouble and risk. I see that Colonel Girozard has since adopted the Indian system of placing two bars in the middle of a truck, with a place in the centre for forage, water, and attendance, which is a very simple and inexpensive one, but that is one of the matters in connection with which a director with authority and weight in the country, would probably have been able to carry out what was required.

13074. Probably a good many of those things nobody would have foreseen before the war; as you say, it is easier to be wise after the event?—Well, I think, with all deference, anyone who had gained experience, certainly an Indian administrative experience, would have known those points as the a, b, c, of the work. Perhaps you will think that is rather strong language, but it occurs to me to be so.

13075. What I meant was, that nobody foresaw the magnitude of the operations we were going to undertake in South Africa; that was the case as it was put

Colonel
T. Deane,
C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

Colonel
T. Deane,
C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

before us?—I think, probably, not during the first six months, but I think that towards the end of six months it was apparent what large requirements would have to be met.

13076. But you were arguing, as I understood it, that in the first year of the war you wanted these large reserves and reserve depôts, and so on?—I think in the first six months it might have been foreseen.

13077. But not from the very first?—The great thing, I think is to have these printed field service tables and manuals, with all these instructions drawn up in peace time. I referred, for instance, to the case of their having been on record in our tables in India for South Africa. I have ascertained that there are no such manuals in England. I venture to think that is a defect. I also think it is a great defect not having very clear and plain instructions laid down about purchasing operations. Great complaints have been made about the inexperience of purchasing officers; but the fact of the matter is that there were no printed instructions for purchasing officers, and those are of very great value. If they are carefully and well drawn out officers should very seldom make mistakes. It is much better to have a man of business capacity, who will attend to instructions in the purchase of horses, than what is generally supposed to be a good eye for a horse.

13078. Have you instructions for purchasing officers also?—In the greatest detail, always drawn up, so that a new officer who is handed the printed instructions gets a book in which everything is laid down which he has to do—depôt instructions, advance depôt instructions, issuing depôts, and so on. As to the advance depôts, for example, for horses that go to the front, there are descriptive rolls in connection with them, showing how long they have been bought, how long they have been in the country, and what price has been paid, but none of those were issued in South Africa, so that the officer in the advance depôt did not know where the horses had come from, how long they had been in the country, or what had been paid for them, or anything of that sort. All these little matters are drawn up in printed tables and manuals for field service requirements in India, and I think they are of very great advantage in time of peace, and more so in time of war.

13079. You see no reason in the conditions of service in the home departments why the same thing should not be done?—Certainly not. I think it is here more necessary still. Of course, one of the drawbacks of the home service is that the remount establishment is a very, very small one, much smaller than it is in India, and in the next place they have absolutely no reserve of horses except those registered. In India a reserve is held of the current year's supply, and 1,000 horses in reserve fit to go to immediate work. There is nothing of the sort in England. The Indian system is a very small one, about 2,000 horses to call upon, but still it is better than nothing. A Commission some time ago drew up tables in England, and showed that the requirements of two Army Corps would be 25,000 horses, of which 9,600 would be required for casualties during the first six months of the campaign. Well, to get 25,000 horses at once, including 9,600 for casualties takes a good deal of work, and if the whole system is not got out well in peace you are very likely to break down in time of war. The same Commission recommended that in England there should be a reserve of 2,000 horses. I understand that Lord Stanley's Committee has proposed a remount scheme involving a cost of £200,000, which is a very small amount indeed for this country, considering its requirements, and I hear that £7,000 is likely to be provided, which, of course, will be of very little use.

13080. £7,000 out of £200,000?—Yes. I venture to think that on the Indian system some reserve of horses is necessary in this country. If you want remount officers of training and experience, as recommended, you cannot procure them unless you have some reserve, where they are to be trained, and 2,000 horses is really very little. There is another thing I venture to refer to, because it has been mentioned in the report of the Court of Inquiry on the administration of the Army Remount Department, and that is the necessity of giving the Director or Inspector-General a staff of adequate strength for his organisation. If I had been asked to undertake the arrangements during the past war I should have been very sorry to have attempted them without five or six staff officers of very good business capacity, and I think that would have been very little. I observe in one of the reports that up to May, 1900, the Director had one

officer, and one small room or two small rooms to conduct his business in. That business involved the expenditure of over thirteen millions of money. Lord Roberts telegraphed immediately on arrival in South Africa that he could do nothing in that country without a mobile army; mobility depended upon horses, and therefore the Director or Inspector-General of the Remount Department under the Quartermaster-General was mainly responsible for the successful operations of the war, in my humble opinion.

13081. I understand your evidence to come to this, that these defects which you have spoken of led up in the actual operations of the war to the horses being sent to the front in a condition in which they were not fit for service?—Quite so.

13082. And, therefore, that the loss, which was abnormal, resulted from that cause?—Quite so. The estimates of the losses during the Crimean campaign were 80 per cent., while the losses during the past war were 120 per cent. Of course, no tables that have been made out in the manuals I refer to would have covered, or anything like covered, such an enormous loss as that, but still they would have been useful to refer to from month to month, so that their provision might be increased for casualties.

13083. That is exactly what I meant—that your tables would not have provided for such a loss?—No, but they would have been useful as a guide to go on with from month to month.

13084. We had a table (*vide Appendix Vol., page 258*) given us to-day which showed that out of 518,794 horses that were provided the expenditure during the campaign was 347,007?—Yes.

13085. That is entirely abnormal, and outside all your tables?—Entirely abnormal; the percentages worked out in the Indian table are worked out on a series of past campaigns in European countries, but there is nothing approaching that, I quite admit. Still, it is of use to have tables and instructions on record for all these points, and they should be printed and collated in peace time.

13086. You put it down chiefly to the cause of the horses having been worked when they ought to have been waiting to be acclimatised?—Quite so.

13087. Have you gone through all the various points you wished to draw our attention to?—I will not trouble the Commission any longer. I think I have given the main points, although there are a great many others that occur to me. I have, like Colonel Lucas, prepared a brief paper, and if you permit me to hand that in it may save a little time, and if it is thought worthy of being placed on record it may be made use of. (*The paper was handed in. Vide Appendix, page 586, post.*)

13088. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Do I understand you to say that the large contractor in India takes all risk of transport, and undertakes to deliver suitable horses in a sound condition for a certain price at the port of debarkation?—Yes.

13089. There is no loss and no risk to the Government before they are delivered over to them there?—Quite so.

13090. So that going and picking up horses from one and another, these conditions would be impossible; a promise to deliver them in the same way could not be made except through the large contractors?—Not except through the large contractors, and you would naturally only give such contracts to men who were known to be absolutely reliable.

13091. And it is on that account that you consider it is always an advantage to have a large contractor?—Always in preference to the small dealers or owners.

13092. No matter what the loss may be on the sea voyage or in any other way, none of it falls on the Government?—That is so. Of course you must be careful in the selection of the men, but that as a rule should be left to the Governments or Consuls, or diplomatic authorities concerned, who are able to advise you as to the reliability of the individual you engage, and that system, coupled with that of giving advances to a reliable contractor, saves an enormous amount of time and trouble.

13093. And money?—And money.

13094. You consider it is a great economy?—I have proved it absolutely to be the case; I only speak of what I know to be the case myself from my own knowledge. I know that as far as Australia goes or as

South Africa goes now, if you wanted horses for India there are certain names printed in the remount manuals that one could go to with absolute certainty of obtaining the horses without sending an officer near the place, under careful organisation.

13095. And you consider that such contractors could have been found for the horses during the South African war?—I am sure of it.

13096. Equally as in India?—I consider so in every direction, under a proper system, but that system ought to be thought out and organised in peace time.

13097. All preparations require to be made in time of peace?—Quite so.

13098. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) I should like to ask you if you have any estimate in your own mind of what a war would cost you in horse-flesh in India, that is to say, the percentage: if you were providing for it, what would you allow, roughly? Take any one campaign, under your manual, would you say it would be necessary to form a reserve of 50 per cent. for casualties for the year?—I think, on our Indian calculations, which, as I have explained, would not have been at all applicable to the past war, which was altogether abnormal for one Army Corps, at the price we pay for horses in India, the cost, according to our estimate, would have been about £250,000, to bring that Army Corps up to war strength, and supply 15 per cent. casualties.

13099. That is, as far the number of horses goes?—Yes.

13100. I am trying to look at the percentage of horses you would allow for, under the manual drawn up for India, to meet contingencies in war time?—That is only at the rate of 15 per cent., which has no comparison with the losses in the late war; nevertheless, it is based on a series of campaigns in European countries, and for a short period. Nowadays campaigns last a very short time. It depends on the duration of the campaign, and, of course, how casualties go; with modern rifle fire, and so on, probably it is quite a different matter nowadays; still it is something to guide you.

13101. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do you not think that when you have the privilege of rejecting what horses you see fit to reject, the contractor must charge you more for the horses generally in order to recompense himself? Supposing, even the very best contractor you can name sends 500 horses to India, and you reject 200, the rejected horses may not bring the price that they cost the contractor to land there, and must he not indemnify himself for the price he charges you?—In India a very high initial price is paid, very much more than has been paid throughout the past operations—£50, while the average has not been anything like that for the South African War. The contractor who imports horses to India, if he does not sell his full number, which he never does, or anything like, sells them, as *Sir Henry Norman* mentioned, in the public market, or he sells them to officers of native cavalry, and he, as a rule, gets about £25 a head for those horses, roughly speaking.

13102. He could not have done that in South Africa?—The horses he would sell in that way in India for £25 a head, and which I have seen in vast numbers in India, would have been an admirable class for local corps, and mounted infantry in South Africa in comparison with what I saw there.

13103. I confess I do not understand it quite, but if you have really a first-class Imperial officer selecting your horses for you, I cannot help thinking that the contractor will sell you the horses cheaper, knowing that none of his horses will be rejected when landed?—If they are passed in the Colony?

13104. Yes?—Of course I can only give you my experience. I can only tell you what I have ascertained in 10 years' work; in theory what you say is absolutely correct, but in practice it fails. In practice the very best system is that of throwing the responsibility upon the contractor; it is his loss.

13105. I can quite see that, but I cannot help thinking he makes you pay for them?—He cannot, because he does not get anything more than the Government terms lay down. If he likes to import 500 horses, and

499 of those are unfit, the 499 are rejected; that is his business.

13106. (*Chairman.*) I suppose he would take into consideration in making the contract what the price was, and what his risks were?—The prices are annually advertised in the colony; they are published by the Government of India, and sent over the year before the purchases are made, so that every one may know.

13107. But you have to consider at what rate you can get the horses?—Experience has shown us that; we know that by experience.

13108. I rather agree with *Sir Frederick* that the contractor will take all that into account, and will not offer to send horses at a loss?—Our supply has been far in excess of the demand; and I think it would have been so in the past war under a well organised system. It requires some organisation.

13109. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You are not quite certain, I suppose, that the system which has answered so well in India in time of peace, or even when there have been small wars in India, as there so often are, would answer in a great war like this, where we had to get 370,000 horses in a limited space of time? There would not have been contractors to supply those horses?—That is my point; I venture to think there would, and that is the point I want to make.

13110. You think they could have got contractors for the whole of the horses wanted for South Africa from the beginning of the war to the end?—Under the contract system?

13111. Yes?—I think so.

13112. You could not have got them from Australia alone; where would you have got them?—I am talking of the localities from which horses were provided during the past campaign.

13113. Do you think you would have got reliable contractors in all these countries, South America, Italy, and so on?—I do. Take Hungary; it has been shown that it was futile to attempt to deal in that direction except through *Mr. Hauser*, as the whole trade was in his hands. He was practically dealt with entirely, and if under given arrangements he had been told what was required he would have supplied the horses. Take Chicago; in Chicago there are eight millions of horses, and that source was not tapped at all—it was absolutely left untapped. I have no doubt, and I have ascertained, that had the requirements of the Remount Department been sent there, and published in a form that we do in India, telling the great contractors what was required, and what their liabilities would be, and so on (I would, of course, have a remount officer on the spot to advise and help them), they would have procured the horses.

13114. Are you quite sure that is a reliable estimate of yours, that there are eight million horses in Chicago?—It is in a report which is before you.

13115. I should like to know where that came from; it seems an extraordinary thing that there should be about six or seven horses to every person?—I think you will find it in *Major-General Stewart's* report as well as I remember, but at any rate it is in one of those reports.

13116. I should like to know where he got his statistics?—I can enter it in my statement if you wish it, without troubling you now to look it up.*

13117. Of course, if that is correct it would not have been difficult for them to sell a million horses if they got a satisfactory price. You spoke about these depôts at the ports of debarkation of the horses, but of course you are aware there was such a want of horses that the great thing was to get them to the front, although they were pretty well killed before they got there?—Certainly.

13118. Everyone wanted to keep them as long as possible after they landed before they were used, but certainly in the first few months they had to get them up anyhow?—Yes, but I think with foresight after a few months' experience, say two or three months' experience, it might have been fairly known that rest was absolutely necessary for horses, and that therefore the reserve at the base should be increased to the largest possible extent to enable a constant flow of horses to be sent up.

13119. I do not think they ever had such a number of

Colonel
T. Deane,
C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

* Note by the Secretary to the Royal Commission:—"On page 7 of the Report by Officers appointed by the Commander-in-Chief to inquire into the working of the Remount Department abroad (1902), it is stated that "Chicago is the great mart in one States for high-class horses. It will be seen from the statistics furnished with *Mr. Bruett's* evidence (Q. 381) that in the Middle Western States, which include Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota there are 8,000,000 horses, and that these districts have never been tapped by Remount Officers."

Colonel
T. Deane,
C.B.

6 Feb. 1903.

horses that they could have afforded to leave them for a month or six weeks?—It came to the same thing at the end, because the horses lasted only from 10 days to three weeks, and then they had to wait until fresh horses were sent up again.

13120. But evidently the Commander-in-Chief thought it essential in order to carry out important operations, even if there was a great sacrifice of horseflesh?—Yes.

13121. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Could we come down to this point—could you say approximately from your experience at what price you believe horses suitable for South Africa would have been delivered by those large contractors, say, at Cape Town or one of the other ports? You know the description of horse that would have been required?—If you will permit me to explain, that is complicated somewhat in this respect, that we import, say, from Australia horses entirely for the British mounted branches, and for the horses for the British mounted branches we invariably pay £50 a head.

13122. In India?—Landed in India. In the South African campaign, of course, there were a great many local corps, such as Mounted Infantry, Yeomanry, and various other local corps, which did not require horses up to the same standard as you would require for the horses of the Field Artillery and British Cavalry.

13123. You know the character of horses that would be suitable for the war there: take such horses, and give an approximate estimate of the price?—I think you would have found that the contractors would have been willing to import horses of every class at an all round average price of £45.

13124. £45 delivered at the port of debarkation in Africa?—Yes, but less than that was paid; for the horses imported from Australia they only paid £35 each.

13125. Your opinion is that the whole number of horses required for the war could have been delivered for about that price—not more than £45?—Yes, those from across sea, cost, insurance, freight.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

Tuesday, 10th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable the Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Honourable Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

V.C. Field Marshal The Right Hon. Earl ROBERTS, K.G., K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., recalled and further examined.

(*See pages 429-468, Vol. I., for Lord Roberts's previous Evidence.*)

13126. (*Chairman.*) I think when we last had the pleasure of meeting you on the 5th of December you carried your account of the military operations up to Bloemfontein and you promised to give us the remainder up to Pretoria to-day. Have you now got that paper?—

10 Feb. 1903. I have.

13127. Would you kindly favour us with it?—I hope it is not too long. I ended last December by saying that on the 3rd of May I left Bloemfontein by train for Karee Siding. The following tables show the approximate strength of the forces at my disposal for the advance towards Pretoria.

MAIN COLUMN.

	Officers.	Men.	Horses.	GUNS.								
				9·45 Howitzers.	6-inch Howitzers.	5-inch Guns.	5-inch Howitzers.	4·7-inch Naval.	12 and 15 prs.	12-pr. Naval.	1-pr. (Pom-Pom).	Machine Guns.
MAJOR-GENERAL HUTTON'S FORCE.												
1st Brigade Mounted Infantry -	199	3,864	4,242	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Artillery - - - -	7	222	239	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	2
TOTAL - - -	206	4,086	4,481	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	2
LIEUT.-GENERAL TUCKER'S DIVISION.												
7th Infantry Division - -	196	5,988	168	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Royal Field Artillery -	23	543	401	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	-
Corps Artillery - - -	10	280	12	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Divisional Troops - -	13	278	159	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
TOTAL - - -	242	7,089	740	2	6	-	-	-	18	-	-	10

MAIN COLUMN—*continued.*

*Field
Marshal
The Right
Hon. Earl
Roberts*
V.C., K.G.,
K.P., G.C.B.,
O.M., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E.

10 Feb. 1903.

	Officers.	Men.	Horses.	GUNS.								
				9·45 Howitzers.	6-inch Howitzers.	5-inch Guns.	5-inch Howitzers.	4·7-inch Naval.	12 and 15 prs.	12-pr. Naval.	1-pr. (Pom-Pom).	Machine Guns.
LIEUT.-GENERAL POLE-CAREW'S DIVISION.												
XI. Infantry Division - -	226	6,588	156	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Royal Field Artillery - -	35	895	420	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	-
Corps Artillery - - - -	3	73	4	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Naval Brigade - - - -	8	82	10	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-
^{RHFA} Royal Engineers - - - -	4	143	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Details Army Service Corps and Royal Army Medical Corps.	11	139	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL - - -	287	7,920	686	-	-	2	-	2	18	2	-	8
Headquarter Staff - - -	62	156	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GENERAL TOTAL OF MAIN COLUMN - - - }	797	19,251	6,107	2	6	2	-	2	42	2	2	20

MAJOR-GENERAL IAN HAMILTON'S FORCE.

COMMAND.	Officers.	Men.	Horses.	6-in. Howitzers.	5-in. Guns.	5-in. Howitzers.	4·7-in. Naval.	12 and 15 prs.	12 pr. (Naval).	1 pr. (Pom-Pom).	Machine Guns.
2nd Cavalry Brigade - - -	66	1,320	1,440	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Artillery - - - - -	6	198	229	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	-
2nd Brigade Mounted Infantry - -	197	4,519	4,913	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Artillery - - - - -	7	210	234	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	1
19th Infantry Brigade - - - -	139	4,340	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Royal Field Artillery - - - -	4	126	135	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
21st Infantry Brigade - - - -	100	3,160	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Royal Field Artillery - - - -	4	126	135	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
Corps Artillery - - - - -	3	74	4	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL - - -	526	14,073	7,236	-	2	-	-	24	-	4	-

N.B.—In addition to the above, a proportion of Departmental Corps accompanied, viz., 5 Transport Companies, Army Service Corps, 2½ Bearer Companies, Royal Army Medical Corps, and 2 Field Hospitals.

LIEUT.-GENERAL COLVILLE'S FORCE, in Support.

*Field
Marshal
The Right
Hon. Earl
Roberts,
V.C., K.G.,
K.P., G.C.B.,
O.M., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E.*

10 Feb. 1903.

COMMAND.	Officers.	Men.	Horses.	Guns.		
				4·7-inch Naval.	15-prs.	Machine Guns.
IX. Infantry Division (Highland Brigade)	104	3,265	114	—	—	—
Royal Field Artillery - - -	12	286	250	—	12	—
Naval Brigade - - - -	6	50	7	2	—	—
Details Royal Engineers and Royal Army Medical Corps.	9	115	61	—	—	—
TOTAL - - -	131	3,716	432	2	12	4

N.B.—19th Brigade with Royal Artillery and details Detached with Major-General Ian Hamilton's force.

GENERAL FRENCH'S DIVISION.

(Joined 8th May 1900).

COMMAND.	Officers.	Men.	Horses.	Guns.		
				12-prs.	1-pr. (Pom- Pom).	Machine Guns.
1st Cavalry Brigade - - -	71	1,194	1,270	—	—	5
Royal Horse Artillery - -	7	210	237	6	2	—
Details - - - - -	4	54	29	—	—	—
TOTAL - - -	82	1,458	1,536	6	2	5
3rd Cavalry Brigade - - -	56	993	700	—	—	5
Royal Artillery - - - -	7	210	237	6	2	—
Details - - - - -	4	54	29	—	—	—
TOTAL - - -	67	1,257	966	6	2	5
4th Cavalry Brigade - - -	62	942	607	—	—	5
Royal Artillery - - - -	7	210	237	6	2	—
Details - - - - -	4	54	29	—	—	—
TOTAL - - -	73	1,206	873	6	2	5
GENERAL TOTAL - - -	222	3,921	3,375	18	6	15

N.B.—2nd Cavalry Brigade with Royal Artillery and Details detached with Major-General Ian Hamilton's force.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker's Division had been for some weeks acting on the defensive on the low hills near Karee Siding, and on the 3rd May it protected my right flank while I advanced with the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division on Brandfort. The little town was occupied soon after noon on the 3rd May, the Boers offering only a feeble resistance on account of their right being turned by Hutton's mounted troops from Brakpan. The enemy could hardly, I think, have expected us quite so soon, for the railway and telegraph lines were almost intact. I halted on the 4th May in order to give Lieutenant-General French time to overtake the main column. He

was hurrying after it from the Thabanchu direction, and was obliged to halt for a day or two at Bloemfontein en route to refit. It was necessary also to wait until Major-General Ian Hamilton had carried out his part of the operations, the plan of which I explained in the following letter to Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Rundle, whom I was leaving in command of the troops in the eastern portion of the Orange Free State:—"To Lieutenant-General Sir H. M. L. Rundle, etc., Thabanchu. Strictly confidential. Brandfort, 4th May, 1900. My dear Rundle,—Before I move further I think it is desirable to place you in possession of my general intentions for

our advance north. It seems clear, from what has happened in the past, that if the enemy get an opportunity they will again at once invade the south-eastern portion of the Orange Free State. By doing so they would, strategically speaking, have the best chance of injuring us, and, should they succeed in getting a footing there, our lines of communication would be materially threatened. It would cause great consternation in Cape Colony, and it would be necessary for me to send back troops from the front, which would materially interfere with my plan of campaign. Under these circumstances I look to you to take such measures as you may consider necessary to prevent any large body of the enemy being able once more to invest Wepener or to move towards Smithfield through the Dewetsdorp—Wepener gap. As soon as it can be arranged, Chermiside, with the headquarters of the 3rd Division, will proceed to Bloemfontein, and he will have under his special charge the line of railway from Bethulie and Norval's Pont up to this point. It will be your duty to exercise a vigilant control to the east of the railway, and prevent the enemy from gaining a footing there. My belief is that, as we move north, the Boers will find it necessary to withdraw the whole of their troops now in front of Thabanchu, and also the small bodies now roving about the country south of Dewetsdorp. As soon as you are satisfied that they have withdrawn in the manner I anticipate, you should move such a portion of your force as you think necessary to Ladybrand. With Thabanchu and Ladybrand occupied in sufficient strength, with Dewetsdorp, Wepener, and Smithfield properly garrisoned, with the people disarmed and their horses taken from them—a measure which is now being thoroughly carried out—the Boers will be quite unable to move down south, and even if they do get there they will find no armed and mounted burghers to assist them. I regret to hear that Ian Hamilton has taken one of your field batteries, but if it can be possibly arranged the battery shall be returned to you either before we reach Kroonstad or immediately afterwards. We are now working north on two lines. Ian Hamilton on the east is moving direct to Winburg. He has with him the following force: Broadwood's Brigade of Cavalry 2nd Brigade of Mounted Infantry, 19th Brigade of the 9th Division, and the 21st Brigade. Following him, and sufficiently near to support him if necessary, is Colville with the Highland Brigade. I have with me the 1st Brigade of Mounted Infantry and the 7th (Tucker's) and 11th (Pole-Carew's) Divisions, and hope later on to be joined by French and his Cavalry. Tomorrow we shall reach the Vet River, and on Sunday Smaldeel Junction, at the same time that Ian Hamilton reaches Winburg. Both forces will then move north towards Kroonstad. I hope no time will be lost in getting there, but I fear that our progress will necessarily be slow, for the railway must be repaired as we move along in order to replenish our supplies. Please keep me fully informed of what goes on. You have a most important task to perform, and I am sure I can rely upon you to carry out with energy and ability the responsible duty I have assigned to you. Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter.—Believe me, etc., (signed) Roberts, F.M." Before leaving Bloemfontein I had sent for Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Hunter and Colonel Mahon and given them personal instructions as to the measures I wished to be adopted for the relief of Mafeking. The 10th Division (Hunter's) and the Imperial Light Horse reached Kimberley from Natal before the middle of April, and, in conjunction with a Brigade (A. Paget's) of Lord Methuen's Division, had been very busy attracting the enemy's attention until Colonel Mahon had crossed the Vaal and made a good start towards Mafeking. Colonel Mahon's flying column consisted of 1,100 men in all, 900 mounted, including the Imperial Light Horse, four Horse Artillery guns with 100 men, and 100 picked Infantry to guard the 52 mule carts which carried the kits, rations for 16, and forage for 12 days, also medicines and medical comforts for the Mafeking garrison. Food and other stores for Colonel Baden-Powell's force were to be sent on by railway as soon as the line could be repaired. I had ordered the flying column to start not later than the 4th May, and to make forced marches for the first three or four days, so as to get clear away from the enemy; and, while I was halting at Brandfort, Lieutenant-General Hunter telegraphed from Windsorten Village that one of his battalions had crossed the Vaal, and that Mahon's little column had got fairly off. The same day Major-General Ian Hamilton engaged and drove back the enemy's rearguard at Welkom, about 15 miles south of Winburg. On this occasion the junction of the Boer forces was frustrated by a well-executed

movement of the Household Cavalry, the 12th Lancers, and Kitchener's Horse, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel the Earl of Airlie. The enemy fled after the encounter, leaving their dead and wounded on the field. On the 5th May I left Brandfort and marched with the main body to within 3 miles of the Vet River, the northern bank of which was held in considerable force by the enemy. For three hours the action was chiefly confined to Artillery on both sides, our naval and field guns making excellent practice, but just before dark the Mounted Infantry under Major-General Hutton executed a turning movement, and in a very dashing manner, under a heavy shell and musketry fire, crossed the river 6 miles west of the railway bridge, which, like all the bridges over the rivers along our line of advance, had been previously destroyed by the enemy. In this affair the Canadian, New South Wales, and New Zealand Mounted Infantry, and the Queensland Mounted Rifles, vied with each other in their efforts to close with the enemy. Major-General Ian Hamilton continued his advance, and on the same day that we were engaged on the Vet he captured Winburg, after an engagement at Bobiansburg, in which the 2nd Battalion Black Watch, under Lieutenant-Colonel Carthew-Yorston, greatly distinguished themselves. On this 5th May, too, Major-General Barton's Brigade of 10th Division was heavily engaged 2 miles north of Ruidam, not far from the Vaal, north of Kimberley, where he was engaged to keep the enemy's attention while Mahon was pushing on towards Mafeking. On the 6th May we crossed the Vet River and encamped at Smaldeel Junction, the enemy retreating before us towards the Sand River and Kroonstad. The drifts in the river bed were so bad that considerable delay occurred in getting the baggage and supply convoys through them, necessitating the main body halting at Smaldeel for two days. The Mounted Infantry, however, pushed on to Welgelegen, and Major-General Ian Hamilton's force to about 10 miles north of Winburg, its place there being taken by the Highland Brigade. Irrespective of the difficulty in crossing the Vet, I was obliged to halt at Smaldeel in consequence of the railway having been considerably damaged. All the culverts had been blown up, and every two hundred yards charges of Rackarack had been laid under the rails. These might have cost loss of life, but they were fortunately discovered by a West Australian mounted infantryman, and were all removed. I was joined on the 8th May by Lieut.-General French, with the 1st (Porter's), 3rd (Gordon's), and 4th (Dickson's) Brigades of Cavalry, and the following day the whole force marched to Welgelegen, the 1st and 4th Brigades, and the Mounted Infantry moving on to the south bank of the Sand, opposite Dupree's laager. That evening a squadron of the Scots Greys succeeded in crossing the river near Vermeulen's Kraal, and holding the drift at that point. The 7th Division bivouacked near Merriesfontein, and Major-General Ian Hamilton marched to Bloemplaats, and pushed on the 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment to Junction Drift. During that afternoon I rode to meet Major-General Ian Hamilton at a point between Smaldeel and Winburg, and arranged with him plans for the onward move. Lieut.-General Hunter and Major-General A. Paget had been gradually working up the Mafeking railway line, and on the 7th May they crossed the Vaal, and occupied Fourteen Streams, the enemy retiring precipitately, abandoning their clothes and ammunition as the 6th and half the 5th Brigades of Infantry advanced towards them. Finding that Sir Archibald Hunter was meeting with very little opposition, and recognising the advantage it would be to my force for the enemy at Kroonstad to find themselves threatened from the west, I telegraphed to him to send Major-General A. Paget's Brigade back to Lord Methuen at Boshof, and to Lord Methuen to send his Yeomanry to Hoopstad. On the 9th May I marched to the south bank of the Sand. The following morning the enemy could be seen holding the north bank of the Sand in considerable strength. At daybreak Lieut.-General French crossed the river with Porter's and Dickson's Cavalry Brigades, and Hutton's Mounted Infantry, and made a wide movement past the diamond mine at Dirksburg; and at the same time I directed Ross's and Henry's Mounted Infantry Battalions to seize the drift near the railway bridge. This they succeeded in doing by 7 a.m., and were followed across the river by the 3rd (Gordon's) Cavalry Brigade, "J" Battery R.H.A., and the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division. The 7th (Tucker's) Division crossed by the Junction Drift. Major-General Ian Hamilton pushed forward the 2nd (Broadwood's) Cavalry Brigade across the same drift, and followed himself with the 21st (Bruce-Hamil-

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ron's) and the 19th (Smith-Dorrien's) Brigades. The enemy on my right flank, as well as in front of Lieut-General French, offered a stubborn resistance, but by 11.30 a.m. they were driven from the positions that they had taken up, and withdrew towards Kroonstad, blowing up the railway bridges and culverts as they fell back. The following telegram from President Kruger was found in the office near the Sand River:— "Where is President Steyn? Delarey must delay the British as long as possible. All ammunition and supplies are to be collected at Kroonstad. The Witwatersrand Commando has been called out." President Steyn, I heard, had been travelling about the country urging the Boers to continue the war, and assuring them that they could depend upon European intervention. On the evening of the 10th my headquarters, with the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division, halted at Riet Spruit, eight miles north of the Sand. The 7th (Tucker's) Division bivouacked at Deelfontein Nord, and Major-General Ian Hamilton's column halted about four miles east of that place. During the afternoon Lieut-General French, with the 1st (Porter's) and 4th (Dickson's) Cavalry Brigades, and Hutton's Brigade of Mounted Infantry, reached a point four miles west of Ventersburg Road Station. That evening I received a message from Colonel Mahon, from Taungs, dated 7th May, informing me that in the telegraph office at that place he learned that the enemy intended making a stand at Pudimore, about half way between Warrenton and Vryburg, but as I had warned Colonel Mahon to travel well to the east of the railway, I felt tolerably sure that he would not meet with opposition until he reached Mafeking. From time to time I heard from Lieut-General Rundle that the Boers were trying to get behind him, but with Winburg held, and the reinforcements, in the shape of newly arrived Yeomanry and Mounted Infantry, which were being hurried up to Bloemfontein as fast as they could be equipped with horses, etc., Lieut-General Kelly-Kenny (who was in command of the southern part of the Orange Free State) had been able to strengthen the line leading through the waterworks and Thabanchu, towards Ladybrand, sufficiently to enable Lieut-General Rundle to prevent the enemy breaking through it. Sir Alfred Milner was constantly communicating to me at this time his fears that the Boers might be able to collect in sufficient strength to invade Cape Colony for the second time, and although I could not help feeling that there was a chance of this occurring, I was pretty sure that the rapid advance I was making, with Pretoria for my goal, would delay any attempt, at that time, on the part of the enemy to recross the Orange River. I was supported in this belief by the very accurate information which almost daily reached me from Sir George Lagden, the Resident Commissioner in Basutoland, who reported as follows:—"That your rapid advance northwards has staggered and paralysed the Boers in these parts," and adding that they were lessening their hold in Natal, and in the eastern frontier of the Orange Free State, and were hurrying up northwards, in order by all means in their power to arrest our onward movement. This information determined me not to make any alteration in my plans, but to push on to Kroonstad and towards the Transvaal as fast as the great difficulty in getting supplies up from the rear would permit. Accordingly on the 11th May, I despatched the following telegram while on the march from Reitspruit:—"To General Rundle, Thabanchu,—My hope is that our advance to Kroonstad will relieve the pressure on your force, but should the enemy succeed in turning your right flank, follow them up without delay with Brabant's Division and one of your Brigades.* The enemy must not be allowed to invest Wepener again, or to get as far as Smithfield, the garrison of which is only one battalion of infantry, two guns, and a few mounted men. I do not think you need have any anxiety about weakening your force to the extent I have named, as it seems scarcely possible De Wet can be reinforced, seeing how we are occupying the Boers' attention in this part of the country. Acknowledge receipt." That same day, 11th May, my headquarters, with the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division, marched some 20 miles to Geneva Siding, 14 miles short of Kroonstad, and within eight miles of Boschrand, where the Boers were holding a strong position covering the town. The 3rd (Gordon's) Cavalry Brigade advanced within touch of the enemy, supported on the left by Hutton's Brigade of Mounted Infantry, which formed a connecting link with Lieut-General French's column, which I had ordered to make a wide flanking movement west of Kroonstad by the Valsch River Drift, and endeavour to destroy the railway and telegraph

north of that place. The 7th (Tucker's) Division halted a short distance south-east of Geneva Siding, with Major-General Ian Hamilton's column a few miles off on their right flank. During the night of the 11th the enemy vacated their entrenchments at the Boschrand, and retreated so rapidly through Kroonstad, that when the little party, consisting of Major Hunter Weston, R.E., Major Burnham (the Canadian scout), two officers and 60 men of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, reached the line a few miles north of Kroonstad, they found that the Boers had already escaped, and blown up one of the main bridges. This was the same Major Hunter-Weston who blew up the railway north of Bloemfontein on the 12th March. The main army reached the outskirts of Kroonstad about noon on the 12th May. I sent an officer into the town to summon the Landrost, and an hour or two later I entered the town, which President Steyn, Generals L. Botha, and Delarey had left only a short time before. Before leaving Kroonstad President Steyn issued a proclamation making Lindley the temporary seat of the Orange Free State Government. He had had considerable difficulty in keeping his followers in the field, and it was reported that the Orange Free Staters were beginning to distrust the Transvaalers, accusing them of having made use of them, and then deserting them. Early on the 13th May I received the news that Colonel Mahon's column had reached Vryburg on the 10th May without meeting with any opposition; and that up to the 4th May all was well at Mafeking, and also with Colonel Plumer's little force, which had been doing such excellent work for many months in the neighbourhood of that place. It was necessary to halt for some days at Kroonstad. We were then 870 miles from our base at Cape Town. For several miles in our immediate rear the railway needed extensive repairs, and a large amount of supplies had to be collected. Moreover, remounts were urgently required, as our horses had sadly diminished in number, owing to the long marches and the scanty amount of forage that was procurable. Besides these urgent reasons, it was, I felt, running too great a risk to move further forward while the officials of the Orange Free State were within 45 miles of my main line of advance, and of the railway, on the retention of which the existence of my force at this time depended. It was essential that President Steyn should be driven from Lindley. This operation I entrusted to Major-General Ian Hamilton, which entailed his column making a considerable detour. The instructions I issued to that officer were as follows:—"Kroonstad, 14th May, 1903.—You will proceed to-morrow morning to Lindley, where Mr. Steyn has established his seat of Government. Endeavour to seize any members of the Government who may be at Lindley, and get hold of all official documents. You should seize the post and telegraph offices and the telegraph line to Bethlehem. Ascertain from English residents who have been the most pro-Boer, also least anti-English, amongst the Dutch inhabitants of Lindley. Bring away the former as prisoners, and encourage the latter to work in our interests. After taking the advice of the leading British inhabitants, you should appoint the man whom they consider best fitted to carry on the duties of Landrost. Remain a day or two in Lindley, unless you receive orders from me to the contrary, and then push on to Heilbron, where President Steyn is residing at present. I fear it will be scarcely possible for you to capture President Steyn, as he is living at the terminus of the railway, but I will endeavour to arrange to have the line cut somewhere near its junction with the main line a day or two after you leave Lindley. Should you hear on your arrival at Heilbron that President Steyn has escaped, it might be worth while to send a party in pursuit of him, if there is any reasonable hope of capturing him. Act at Heilbron as you have been instructed to act at Lindley, and cut the telegraph line which connects Heilbron with the Transvaal. Between Lindley and Heilbron you will probably be out of telegraphic communication with me, but on your arrival at the latter place you will once more rejoin the telegraphic system. It is possible that you may meet with resistance either at or near Lindley, as recent reports tend to show that some of the enemy, who have lately been near Thabanchu, have fallen back in the direction of that town. With regard to burghers, you should allow all who surrender their arms and ponies to return to their homes, unless there is some good reason to the contrary. Disarm all except the British in Lindley and Heilbron, and on your line of march, and encourage the people generally to surrender their arms and behave peacefully, assuring them that we have no wish to injure them, and that as long as they

* Brabant's was a Colonial Division raised after my arrival at Cape Town.

remain in their farms no harm will come to them. You must take decisive measures to stop plundering on the line of march, and on the arrival of your force at any town. Nothing puts the people more against us than finding themselves injured by our passage through their country. Only such cattle, sheep, and forage as are required for the food of the troops should be requisitioned, and these should be paid for, or if money is not available, receipts should be given for them. Every endeavour should be made to save your horses and transport animals, by making the men dismount and lead their horses whenever possible. Keep me constantly informed of your movements, and send without delay a list of any casualties which may occur.—(Signed) ROBERTS." On the 15th May Major-General Ian Hamilton collected his troops on the east side of Kroonstad, and commenced his march early on the following morning. I could only spare him a very limited amount of supplies, scarcely enough for eight days, trusting to his being able to replenish at Lindley and Heilbron, both of which places I was anxious to hold while I advanced across the Vaal, if troops for this purpose came up in time. Major-General Ian Hamilton made an 18 miles march the first day with his infantry, while his mounted troops, under Brigadier Broadwood, reached Kaalfontein, 10 miles further on. They had scarcely settled down for a much needed rest, when hearing that a Boer force was retreating in front of the 8th (Rundle's) Division upon Lindley, Major-General Ian Hamilton ordered Brigadier-General Broadwood to push on and get possession of the town before the Boers could arrive there. The cavalry were just in time, and occupied Lindley after a slight skirmish. The main portion of the column did not arrive until the 18th, the spruets were so numerous and difficult, and even then the supply-carts were some distance behind. Two days' supplies for the column were found in Lindley, and an important person offered to surrender—Piet De Wet (brother of Christian De Wet, who has given us a considerable amount of trouble from the day we entered the Orange Free State), but as his conditions were to be allowed to return to his farm, I was obliged to refuse, for, under the terms of my Proclamation of the 15th March, 1900, no burgher who had commanded a Boer force could be allowed to go free. I thought they were too important to let them be free about the country. Major-General Ian Hamilton's column left Lindley on the 20th. The rear guard was heavily attacked, but with the assistance of the 19th (Smith Dorrien's) Brigade, which came direct with the convoy from Kaalfontein, the enemy were routed, and the Rhenoster River was crossed safely during the night. Heilbron was reached on the 22nd; President Steyn and the rest of the Orange Free State officials were forced to leave that place and to find a temporary asylum at Vrede, and on the 24th, in accordance with instructions I had sent to Major-General Ian Hamilton, his column reached the main line of the railway near the Grootvlei station, a few miles in advance of my head-quarters. While at Kroonstad I had been greatly troubled at the sickness which had overtaken the troops. All available houses, the church, and the two or three small hotels had been made use of for the accommodation of the large number of enteric cases. Little could be obtained in the town in the shape of medical comforts, and the few medical officers with me were at their wits' end to know what to do. Very disquieting reports, too, came from Bloemfontein about the sick, and the evening before I started from Kroonstad I sent the following telegrams to the principal medical officer:—"To Surgeon-General Wilson, Bloemfontein. Kroonstad, 21st May, 1900, No. C. 1746.—I am concerned to see the high death rate at Bloemfontein, and think it is probably due to the insanitary condition of that place. I understand that Colonel Exham is sanitary officer, whose duties are so onerous and continuous that it is quite impossible any Principal Medical Officer could carry them out efficiently when he has a very large number of sick to look after, as is the case at Bloemfontein. You should appoint an active, intelligent, medical officer who will make it his business to look after the sanitary condition of the place, by riding about and thoroughly investigating the whole place every day. This should be his sole duty. Warn the Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital to be ready to start for Army Headquarters in a few days; necessary mule transport will be provided. Acknowledge receipt.—(Signed) ROBERTS." The second telegram was as follows:—"To Surgeon-General Wilson, Bloemfontein.—Kroonstad, 21st May, 1900. No. C. 1751.—Hospital arrangements here are most unsatisfactory, and I trust you will come here and superintend them. You need not wait until the

railway is open, and you should bring with you as many surgeons and medical subordinates as possible. Some hundred mattresses are urgently needed. These you must order from Cape Town or wherever they can be procured, and have them sent up in charge of some responsible person who can see that they are not left on the road. The requirements for Kroonstad should have been foreseen, and spare surgeons should have been on the spot; they could have travelled in carts from railroad, as many sick and wounded men have to do. There is ample accommodation for 20 or 30 nurses, and these should be despatched on Wednesday next, by which time the railway trains will reach this. As soon as Kroonstad has been put in order, you should arrange for hospital accommodation being provided in the Transvaal, where medical men, subordinates, nurses, and all necessary appliances will be required very shortly. Acknowledge receipt.—(Signed) ROBERTS." On the eve of leaving Kroonstad I was cheered by the receipt of the following telegram from Major-General Baden-Powell, dated Mafeking, 17th May, 1900:—"Happy to inform you Mafeking successfully relieved to-day. Northern (Plumer's) and Southern (Mahon's) columns joined hands on the 15th. They attacked the enemy yesterday, and after a smart engagement entirely defeated them with loss. British casualties, three killed, 22 wounded. Relieving force marched into Mafeking this morning at 9. Relief and defence forces combined moved out and attacked enemy's head laager, shelled them out, and nearly captured Snyman. Took one gun, flag, and large amount of ammunition. Enemy appear to be retreating in all directions, except one commando lying low possibly to cover retreat of the remainder." It was an immense relief to me to be assured that Mafeking was safe, and it afforded me great pleasure to despatch the following telegrams:—(1) "To Major-General Baden-Powell, Mafeking.—Kroonstad, 21st May, 1900.—Please accept yourself and convey to all ranks under your command my warmest congratulations on the magnificent defence you have made for 200 days, finishing off as it did with the grand success obtained on the 12th May. You have indeed nobly upheld the honour of the British flag, and the whole Empire is proud of you. I rejoice that the Queen has been pleased to give you the well-earned rank of Major-General. Tell all the inhabitants of Mafeking how much their courage and fortitude are admired, and how greatly the devotion and heroism of the women during a long and terrible period of trial are appreciated." (2) "To Colonel Plumer, Mafeking.—I send you my best congratulations on the relief of Mafeking. That the garrison was able to hold out so long was due, I feel, in a great measure to the material support afforded by you and your very small force. I beg you will assure all ranks serving under you how highly I appreciated their good work, and the gallantry displayed by them during the many months they were in an isolated position." (3) "To Colonel Mahon, Mafeking.—You have performed your difficult task with marked ability, and I heartily congratulate you, and all with you on the success which has attended your efforts to relieve Mafeking." On the 20th May I prepared to renew my onward march towards Pretoria, and issued the following orders:—(1) "To Brigadier-General Gordon, Commanding 3rd Cavalry Brigade.—Kroonstad, 20th May, 1900.—You will start to-morrow with the Brigade under your command. You will prospect the country between Honing Spruit Station and Boschpoort, so as to clear the road for the convoy, which will not start until Tuesday (22nd). You should prospect further to the north and east. See that the country is clear towards Vaal Krantz, and communicate with head-quarters, which will be at Honing Spruit on Tuesday evening, so as to ascertain whether you should join the main body on Wednesday at Rooodeval." (2) "To Lieutenant-General French, Commanding Cavalry Division, Jordan Siding.—Kroonstad, 20th May, 1900.—You will move from your camp at Jordan Siding to-day. On Monday and Tuesday you will proceed without distressing your horses and prospect the country west of the Rhenoster River along the Klerksdorp Road and towards Bothaville. Halt whenever convenient, but on Tuesday night you should be north of the Rhenoster River, ready to move early on Wednesday to a position across the railway somewhere near Prospect, where the Heilbron-Vredefort Road crosses the railway. My present information leads me to believe that the enemy are holding the northern bank of the Rhenoster River, but you must endeavour to find out and communicate to me their exact position. Should they retire from it towards the Transvaal, you can then cross the Vaal as we arranged, so as to meet my force on the 26th and 27th not far

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from Vereeniging, ; but make sure of the whereabouts of the enemy's main force first of all, as I understand they will make a determined stand between this and the Vaal River, and this may give us a chance of capturing their guns if you are across the railway and on their line of retreat in time, and able to blow up a culvert further north than Prospect. I doubt whether General Ian Hamilton's force will be able to take part in any operations we may have near the Rhenoster River, as it is scarcely possible he can be at Heilbron before the 23rd. I have, however, kept him informed of our proposed plan. Gordon's Brigade will start to-morrow, and clear the country north of the Kroonstad-Heilbron Road,

acting for a portion of the distance as escort to a convoy of supplies destined for General Hamilton's force. You will be accompanied by Major-General Hutton's Brigade of Mounted Infantry, whilst Henry's and Ross's corps of Mounted Infantry will be in front of my main column. Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen is to leave Hoopstad to-day, and reports that he expects to be at Bothaville on the 24th on his way to Reitzburg. You may be able to communicate with him during your advance northwards. Keep me informed of your movements, and of any information you are able to give of the enemy's position. Acknowledge receipt.—(Signed) ROBERTS."

FIELD STATE OF THE NATAL ARMY ON THE 1st JUNE 1900.

UNIT.	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Horses.	GUNS.			
				Naval.	Field.	Pom-Poms.	Machine.
Head Quarter Staff, and attached - -	32	238	336	-	-	-	-
1st Cavalry Brigade - - - - -	62	1,422	948	-	-	-	3
3rd Mounted Brigade - - - - -	150	2,709	2,674	-	8	-	11
2nd Infantry Division - - - - -	249	9,863	856	-	18	-	10
4th Infantry Division (General Lyttleton's force).	260	10,498	2,295	-	26	1	9
Colonel Bethune's Force - - - - -	26	495	567	-	2	-	1
5th Infantry Division - - - - -	207	8,197	717	-	18	-	7
Corps Artillery - - - - -	24	654	312	-	18	2	-
Ammunition Park - - - - -	2	31	4	-	-	-	-
Naval Brigade - - - - -	11	89	14	6	-	-	-
Royal Engineers - - - - -	6	229	44	-	-	-	-
Army Service Corps - - - - -	3	24	14	-	-	-	-
Drakenberg Defences - - - - -	93	4,565	1,156	-	19	-	5
Lines of Communication troops - -	254	5,322	2,166	-	4	-	2
TOTALS - - - - -	1,379	44,336	12,103	6	113	3	48

N.B.—The above figures are exclusive of sick, wounded, missing, &c.

STATEMENT showing the approximate strengths of the Natal Local Forces in the Field, 1899-1900.

Corps.	Officers.	Men.
Staff - - - - -	7	9
Natal Naval Volunteers - - - - -	6	132
Natal Carbineers - - - - -	35	488
Natal Mounted Rifles - - - - -	13	227
Umvoti Mounted Rifles - - - - -	10	136
Border Mounted Rifles - - - - -	14	280
Natal Field Artillery - - - - -	5	120
Natal Royal Rifles - - - - -	10	162
Durban Light Infantry - - - - -	19	478
Volunteer R.A.M.C. - - - - -	15	-
Volunteer Veterinary Corps - - - - -	8	2
Hotchkiss Gun Detachment - - - - -	2	19
Natal Police - - - - -	37	666
TOTALS - - - - -	181	2,719
Between the dates 31st October and 31st December 1900, these totals were reduced to	169	2,160

Before continuing my narrative of the further advance towards Pretoria it seems necessary to give a short account of the movements of the several forces under General Sir Redvers Buller in Natal, and Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen in the western part of the Orange Free State. On the day before my departure from Bloemfontein I had telegraphed to General Buller as follows, in order that his movements might, as far as possible, correspond with mine:—"To General Buller, Ladysmith.—Bloemfontein, 2nd May, 1900.—Cipher.—A force under command of General Ian Hamilton successfully cleared large numbers of the enemy out of Houtnek, 10 miles north of Thabanchu, yesterday. This force will soon advance on Winburg, and another, which I accompany, will move simultaneously along the line of railway. You should occupy the enemy's attention on the Biggarsberg, and as their numbers decrease, which they assuredly will, move your troops towards the Transvaal, repairing the railway as you advance. Please let me know what you can hope to do in this respect.—(Signed) ROBERTS." On the 3rd May, and before my telegram of the 2nd idem had apparently been received, General Buller sent me the following message from Ladysmith:—"To Lord Roberts, Brandfort, 3rd May, 1900.—The situation in Natal is as follows: The enemy during the last seven weeks have prepared all passes in the Biggarsberg for defence, with many gun emplacements and double lines of entrenchments. These are now held by about 6,000 men, with first rate lateral communications, and there are about 1,000 more within reach in Zululand and Vryheid. I do not think I should be justified in trying to force either the Cundycleugh, Newcastle, or Dundee roads. The weak point of the defence is that portion of the Berg between Dundee and Helpmakaar. To attack that, a force from Elandslaagte will have to make a flank march of 25 miles, exposed to attack by Waschbank Valley, and then to force the pass where I shall probably find from 2,000 to 3,000 men in a strong position, possibly more. To do this, I think it ought to be of a strength of two divisions. To close the Newcastle and Dundee roads requires six battalions. It is nine miles of front offering advantages to the attack, and one weak division is not more than enough to cover Ladysmith and make front to the passes and the Cundycleugh roads. I have also to guard Zululand and Stonefield on the road to Estcourt and Greytown. I am short, therefore, by two brigades of the force I think I ought to have. If you can send me two brigades, or even one, I think I ought to make a certainty of it with expedition; without them I shall try, but may be too weak, though, personally, I do not think the risk very great. If you are right in thinking that your advance will assuredly decrease the number opposing me, I shall be quite safe; but I rather, myself, incline to think that it will at first have the opposite effect, as there will be many Orange Free Staters who will shy from your advance, but will be quite ready to come into the Biggarsberg, while I doubt any of these Transvaalers leaving this until you threaten their own country. Troubles from lung sickness and scarcity of grass have forced me, in pursuance of instructions, to scatter my transport, but I can start in four days." On the 11th May I telegraphed as follows to General Buller, Ladysmith:—"Ventersburg Road Station.—Unless my information is very incorrect the Drakensberg Passes must be very lightly held, and there cannot be any large force opposed to you on the Biggarsberg. I think you might, without any undue risk, push on towards the Transvaal, and thus afford me material assistance." On the 13th May, and before the receipt of my telegram of the 11th, General Buller informed me that, in accordance with instructions to keep the enemy occupied on the Biggarsberg, he had concentrated some of his troops at Sunday's River Drift, on the Helpmakaar road; on the 12th he had occupied Waschbank and Indooda Mountain. On the 14th May he reported he hoped to reach Dundee the next day, and, "if all goes well," to reach Newcastle on the 19th. On the 15th May I congratulated General Buller on the success of his operations in the direction of Dundee, and suggested, if the position in Laing's Nek proved to be strongly entrenched, it might be advisable for him to make his way through the passes west of Newcastle, and march on Vrede, a move which I said "would greatly assist me." I added that I hoped to be at Vereeniging on the 30th May, and if he "could possibly manage to be on the Vaal River at the point where the Vrede-Standerton road crosses it on the same day, I think the simultaneous entry of the two columns into Transvaal territory would have

a great effect. By moving on Standerton you would turn the Laing's Nek position, and cut the railway from Natal, and might possibly capture some of the enemy's guns and rolling stock." On the 16th May General Buller reported having occupied Dundee the previous day, that the Transvaalers had evacuated the Drakensberg, and were in much reduced numbers. Later the same day General Buller reported that he doubted being able to raise enough wagons to supply a force marching from Newcastle by Botha's Pass to Standerton, a distance of nearly 100 miles; that he was inclined to think it would be easier and quicker to force Laing's Nek, as it could be done without much difficulty, but that he would prefer to reserve his opinion until he had seen the place. On the 17th May I informed General Buller that Sir A. Hunter had occupied Christiana without opposition, and I believed that the enemy were concentrating on the Vaal River to oppose my advance. I said it was unlikely, therefore, that he would meet with much opposition in the Free State, and that one division would be quite able to take care of itself as far as Vrede. I added that threatening Standerton from Vrede, would, I thought, cause the enemy to leave Laing's Nek, and that they would certainly do so when we reached Johannesburg, "which we ought to do early in June." On the 18th May General Buller reported that his cavalry had occupied Newcastle the preceding day, and that the enemy, who appeared to be thoroughly demoralised, intended, it was said, to stand at Laing's Nek, and that he thought it would be best for him to force Laing's Nek. The following day General Buller telegraphed that Lieutenant-General Clery had moved to the Ingogo, and Lord Dundonald to Laing's Nek, and that the Nek was held in strength. On the 20th General Buller reported that the railway was so much injured that he doubted if he could get supplies up in time to be at Standerton on the 30th. On the 22nd General Buller reported that the enemy were in great strength on Laing's Nek, and that he proposed to attack as soon as the railway was sufficiently repaired to secure his supplies being brought up. He said it would be of the greatest assistance to him if I could tell what portion of our force was in the Orange Free State east of the railway, where they were, and on what objective they were moving. And he asked if it was true that we had occupied Bethlehem. I replied to this telegram on the following day in these words:—"As, from your report, Laing's Nek is held in considerable force, I think it would be better to defer attacking it until the effect is known of our appearance on the Vaal River, and, I hope, a few days later, at Johannesburg. Laing's Nek is a position which, if well defended, could not be taken without great loss, a loss which is not worth incurring, as your occupation of it would not now materially assist in our advance, and a few days in the repair of the railway will not signify. Besides the 7th and 11th Divisions with Army Head-quarters marching along the railway, the following troops are to the east of the line: Ian Hamilton's force at Heilbron, the Highland Brigade and 9th Division Headquarters moving to Lindley. 8th Division hold Bresler's Flat, Tremmel, Clocolan, and Ladybrand. Bethlehem is not occupied, but Senekal probably will be shortly. Mr. Steyn is at Frankfort; and as the only Free State opposition to us now is in the extreme north-east corner of the State a move of one of your Divisions to Vrede, as I suggested in my telegram of the 14th May, would be most advantageous. This opposition may collapse shortly, but, should it not, it would be better for you to move towards Vrede than to Laing's Nek in the event of the enemy not evacuating that position." On the same day, 23rd May, and before receiving my telegram, General Buller wired to me as follows:—"The following is, as far as I can make out, the position here: Laing's Nek is held by the Wakkerstroom, Pretoria, and Johannesburg Commandos, under Erasmus; Gansvlei by the Carolina and Lydenburg Commandos under Lucas Meyer, and a commando composed of troops from Van Reenan's Pass and Tintwa, is leading south of Botha's Pass. The Orange Free State President is said to be in Harrismith, through which town the commando from Ladybrand has just passed; these two last items are not confirmed. Noll's Nek is occupied. May I again ask you what forces you have in the east of the Orange Free State, and where they are; if my information is correct it is desirable that I should know. I hope to get rail-head to Glencoe junction to-night. I have, whichever way I turn, a difficult pass to force, and I cannot promise to be on the Vaal River by the 30th as you wish, but I shall try my best." To my telegram of the 23rd May, General Buller replied as

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follows:—"Newcastle, 24th May,—I must try and do what you wish, but I doubt being able to do it. Please see my No. 258 telegram of 23rd May. Since sending it I have located the Utrecht, Piet Retief, and Vryheid commandos between Utrecht and Wakkerstroom, and according to some English-speaking deserters who surrendered yesterday, I have forces of 10,000 men round me. From Dundee to here I have the enemy on both sides, and close to my communications. If I send a Division to Vrede I do not see how I am to cover its communications, and it will be *en l'air*. I think I ought to let your force get nearer to mine before I try such a risky expedition. I will, as soon as the railway reaches Ingagne and frees my transport, try and force the Drakensberg. Once in the Orange Free State I could say better what I can do. As far as I can learn the whole of the forces lately at Ladybrand and Wepener have evaded your forces, and have passed through Bethlehem and Harrismith. Until I can locate them more accurately it would be, I think, an undue risk to detach part of my small force to Vrede, seeing how both my flanks in Natal are hampered. Almost all the commandos in the eastern Transvaal, together with those of the Orange Free State who have not surrendered, or fled north, seem to be now in front of or on my flank. I do not think I am strong enough to deal with such a force except with great caution. Up to this your advance so far from relieving pressure on me, as you anticipated, seems to have increased it." On the 26th May, General Buller telegraphed to me as follows:—"The railway was through to Ingagne last night, and should be in Newcastle Tuesday. It has been a wonderfully good piece of work, and troops and all concerned deserve the greatest credit. My force concentrates here to-morrow, but I think at present I am too weak for the job allotted me. Your advance has, as I anticipated, increased my difficulties, not weakened them. Laing's Nek is very strongly held, and is almost quite unassailable." (The cipher word is either "almost" or "quite"—it means both, so I have put both in here.) "I had hoped to turn it by Botha's Pass, but that now is strongly held. Deserters and others say 5,000 mixed Free Staters have come here from Ladybrand and Kroonstad; you will know if this can be true, but certainly there is a considerable force on the Drakensberg, and the passes all offer great advantages to the defence. I had just cleared Nkutu, and restored the magistracy, and to-day I have had to send 1,600 men from Dundee to try and cut off a commando said to be advancing from Vryheid to Nkutu. I have 100 miles of communications threatened on both flanks at short distances, and only six Brigades and a few Volunteers there to defend them, and also a force of 10,000 of the enemy in very strongly prepared positions in front of me. My view is that if you could send a Division to the top of Muller's Pass I could supply it and reinforce it. I could then turn the other passes and Laing's Nek, and once out of these defiles I could send two Divisions, possibly three, anywhere. If I can get past Laing's Nek, ought I not to strike at once at Ermelo and Belfast or Middelburg? I know the sacrifice, and believe, starting with a strength of three Divisions, the operation is feasible." On the same day, 26th May, I replied to General Buller's telegram of the 24th May, in these words:—"It is quite unnecessary that you should run any undue risk with your force, either in Laing's Nek or Drakensberg direction. My advance troops are now across the Vaal, and the main body will be on the north side to-morrow. I am arranging to occupy all the principal places in the north-east of the Orange Free State as far as Vrede with the 8th Division, Highland Brigade, and part of the 1st Division, the headquarters of which will be at Kroonstad on the 28th. Hunter reached Vryburg on the 24th." On the 27th May, General Buller telegraphed to me as follows:—"In addition to the enemy holding Laing's Nek, I believe there are on my right flank about 1,500 men of the local commandos. To my left, on the Drakensberg, the number is uncertain, but about 4,000 are within easy reach of Botha's Pass. I think it best in these circumstances to clear my right flank, and am, therefore, moving a column to Utrecht." On the 30th May, I received the following telegram from General Buller:—"All here are delighted with your successful advance. The enemy having formed a laager at Dornberg passed my right rear annoying me. On the 27th May I directed a force, under Hildyard, by Wools Drift or Utrecht, and another under Lyttelton by Inchanga Drift on Dornberg. These movements have caused the enemy at Dornberg to retire north. Hildyard is at Utrecht. The town has surrendered, and negotiations for further surrenders are in progress. Result as yet doubtful.

Lyttelton is now moving towards Vryheid. Clery is bombarding Laing's Nek. I consider I have about 10,000 to 12,000 enemy round me, but they are much disheartened, and were they not in such strong positions I doubt if they would show any fight. Railway opened to Newcastle on 28th." To the above I replied in the following words:—"30th May,—Very glad to hear of your successful progress. When you get possession of Laing's Nek you could not do better than push on to Ermelo and Belfast, as proposed in your telegram of 26th May." On 31st May, General Buller replied to my telegram of 30th May as follows:—"I shall start as you wish as soon as I get through. I am in rather a tight place at present though. When may I expect the Division asked for in my cipher of the 26th May to reach the top of the Biggarsberg? My information now is that neither Van Reenan's Pass nor Tintwa is occupied in any strength, and I am commencing repairing the Harrismith railway. If a Division or Brigade reaches Harrismith I expect to be able to rail supplies it may require as far as Brakwal to meet its wagons." And on the 2nd June, General Buller telegraphed to me from Newcastle:—"On the 30th May I sent to the Commandant on Laing's Nek, and told him that Lord Roberts had crossed the Vaal, and that further fighting was useless. This evidently produced a meeting, between our out-posts to-day, of Assistant Commandant Christian Botha and myself. He asked me what terms of peace you would offer, and I undertook to make no advance for three days while he was communicating with his Government. Can you let me know your terms of peace for individual and separate commandos? I told him that my terms were that his men should surrender all guns, and return to their farms, and if they did that they would take their rifles with them, subject to the understanding that Lord Roberts will later probably order their disarmament. I thought this would not be wrong, as they can at this moment run away if they wish, and take both guns and rifles with them. I said that to talk about independence was nonsense; if hereafter they behaved themselves they might become an independent colony—that was the only chance they had. I think they are inclined to give in, and that I have in front of me about half the Transvaal forces now in the field. If you think it worth while, please let me know if I may mention any terms of peace to them. I think that even if assisted from the Orange Free State, it will cost me about 500 men killed and wounded to get out of Natal." On the 3rd June I replied to the above as follows:—"My terms with the Transvaal Government are unconditional surrender. With regard to troops, those who deliver up their arms and riding animals are allowed to go to their homes on signing pledge that they will not fight again during present war. The exceptions to this rule are those who have commanded portions of the Republican forces, or have taken an active part in the policy which brought about the war, or who have been guilty of, or have been parties to, wanton destruction of property, or guilty of acts contrary to the usages of civilised warfare. Principal officers should remain with you on parole until you receive instructions regarding their disposal." On the same day, 3rd June, I telegraphed the following information to General Buller re disposal of my force:—"It will be some days before Harrismith can be occupied, but Rundle and Brabant will move their forces from Ficksburg as soon as they feel able to do so. We are holding Heilbron, Lindley, Senekal, and Ficksburg. We left Johannesburg to-day, and hope to reach Pretoria on the 5th." The following day, 4th June, General Buller telegraphed as follows:—"I shall be in a position on the 6th June to force Laing's Nek by a turning movement. Position, of course, is a strong one, and whichever of the four passes I try I shall expect to find nearly 4,000, with guns, in front of me. On the other hand not more than half, if so many, of these men will wish to fight. The 8th Division are moving but slowly, and I can gain no intelligence of the movements of the Highland Brigade. Do the instructions contained in your messages of May 23rd and 26th still hold good, or shall I go on? I do not think it would be a very difficult undertaking, but, of course, there is always uncertainty about an attempt on a mountain pass." To the above telegram from General Buller I replied on the 5th June:—"It would, of course, be most satisfactory if you could get possession of Laing's Nek, but scarcely seems necessary to do so now at the cost of many valuable lives, for we are in possession of Pretoria. You might commence the turning movement, and judge for yourself whether it would be worth while to continue it, according to the opposition you may meet with."

On the 8th June I received the following message from General Buller:—"On the 6th Talbot Coke, with 10th Brigade and South African Light Horse, seized Van Wyk's hill. The enemy made some resistance, and a good deal of sniping, casualties about four killed, 10 wounded. During the 6th and 7th we got two 4·7 and two 12-pounder naval guns on to Van Wyk, and two 5-inch guns on to the south-western spur of Tinkwells under cover of their fire. General Hildyard to-day assaulted all the spurs of the berg between Botha's Pass and Inkwelsane; the attack, which was well planned by General Hildyard, and carried out with immense dash by the troops, for whom no mountains were too steep, out-flanked the enemy, who were forced to retire from their very strong positions. I do not think we had any casualties, and I hope I have obtained a position from which I can render Laing's Nek untenable."

Lord Methuen remained in command of the Kimberley district from the date of my leaving Modder River camp until the 9th March, when he moved to Boshof, of which he took possession, left a suitable garrison there, and returned to Kimberley on the 13th idem. Later in the month Lord Methuen was at Barkly West assisting in the pacification of the Griqualand, Campbell, and Douglas districts. But on the 28th I found it necessary to recall him to Kimberley in view of his again going to Boshof, as news had reached me that a column, chiefly composed of foreigners, under a French officer, Count Villebois de Mareuil, would probably attack Boshof on their way to destroy the railway between Kimberley and the Orange River. Lord Methuen's troops reached Boshof on the 4th April, and on the 5th successfully attacked the commando, killing Count Villebois de Mareuil, and either killing or capturing all with him. From that time until the 14th May Lord Methuen remained at Boshof, and assisted materially in the success of Colonel Mahon's advance to Mafeking by supplying his little column with transport, and by detaching Major-General Arthur Paget's Brigade to assist in occupying the enemy's attention on the Vaal, near the point it had been arranged for Colonel Mahon to cross that river. On the 14th Lord Methuen left Boshof for Hoopstad, where he arrived on the 17th May, and where on the 19th idem he was rejoined by Major-General Arthur Paget's Brigade. As I was not sure on first arriving at Kroonstad whether I should be able to leave a sufficiently strong garrison to hold it, I arranged to bring Lord Methuen's column there from Hoopstad, but later on, thinking we had sufficient for the defence of Kroonstad, I decided to make use of Lord Methuen's Division to help us during the passage of the Vaal, and on the 18th May I sent him the following telegram from Kroonstad:—"Very glad to hear that you have occupied Hoopstad. Instead of coming here, the garrison for which I have arranged, march on Reitzburg and Parijs; if you start on Sunday, the 20th, you should reach the former place on the 26th or 27th, and the latter on the 28th or 29th, about the date on which I expect to pass the Vaal. Let me know if your supply arrangements will permit of your doing this." Later in the day I again telegraphed to Lord Methuen:—"Try and keep me informed of your movements, first via Hoopstad, and later by orderlies to the railway line, up which we shall advance. Look out for my cavalry. Acknowledge receipt." And on the 23rd May once more I telegraphed to Lord Methuen from the south bank of the Rhenoster River:—"I hope you will receive this at Bothaville, and that you will be able to march from there to Reitzburg in three days, where you should arrive on Sunday. If you find the passage of the Vaal at Elandslaagte fairly easy you might cross there, and proceed to Venterskroon, and then work up the right bank to Lindeque. Should you not find this plan feasible, then keep by the southern road through Parijs, towards Vereeniging. On Saturday or Sunday, 26th or 27th, at the latest, I hope to be on the Vaal River, opposite Vereeniging. The cavalry will be between me and Parijs, so that your movement from Reitzburg, either north towards Venterskroon, or north-west towards Parijs, will be advantageous. Wire to me from Bothaville what you think you will be able to do. Acknowledge receipt." The following day I countermanded this order, and directed Lord Methuen to march direct to Kroonstad. My reasons for this change were that Major-General Ian Hamilton had carried out the work entrusted to him in the Lindley-Heilbron direction more rapidly than I had hoped for, and was already on the railway ahead of the main body. I could, therefore, feel certain that his column would be able to afford the support to the cavalry divi-

sion which it would assuredly require, for, according to the information I had received, the Transvaalers had collected in great strength for the protection of Johannesburg, on the route by which Lieutenant-General French was proceeding, and which lay through a part of the country very difficult for cavalry to operate in without the assistance of infantry and heavy guns. Of Lord Methuen's Division I could not be so sure. I had not even heard of its arrival at Bothaville, and I did not know what opposition it might meet with between that place and the Vaal. I had to act without loss of time, for the cavalry and mounted infantry had already crossed the Vaal, and I could not risk letting them go further without proper support. Under these circumstances it appeared to me better that Lord Methuen should conform to his original orders, and go to Kroonstad. Moreover, I was getting anxious about that place, and my long line of communication, on the security of which the whole of the troops en route to Pretoria were dependent for their supplies. Although Major-General Ian Hamilton had succeeded in driving President Steyn further to the east, this part of the Boer army had not been severely punished, and I knew that a large force under Christian De Wet—the commandant who had given us so much trouble from the day we had crossed the Orange Free State boundary—was hovering about Lindley and Heilbron, neither of which places I had been able as yet to occupy. I knew, too, that the Free Staters had announced their determination not to cross the Vaal, and that in all probability a large number of them would be available to harass me in the rear. I left Kroonstad on the 22nd May, halted that night at Honing Spruit, and marched the next day to the south bank of the Rhenoster River, and on the 24th to Vredfort Road Station. From there I issued the following orders to Major-General Ian Hamilton:—"You should march to-morrow, the 25th, from Arcadia, near Crommelenburg Spruit, to Boschbank, on the south bank of the Vaal River, which, if unoccupied, you should cross with a portion of your force immediately on arrival. On Sunday morning, the 26th May, you should advance 10 miles in a northerly direction, and then five miles in a north-easterly direction, which should place you eight miles due west of Meyerton Railway Station. This you should occupy early on Sunday morning, by which time we shall be engaging the Boer army believed to be at Vereeniging. A report has been received this afternoon from General Hutton that his mounted infantry and French's cavalry are advancing up the Vaal from Parijs. These officers have been informed of the movements you have been directed to make, and have been ordered to assist you, if necessary, in crossing the Vaal. You should show them these orders when you meet them, but you are not to make any change in them without directions from me."

On the 24th May, the day I reached Vredfort Station, the force under my immediate command was disposed of as follows:—The 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division at Vredfort Road Station; the 7th (Tucker's) Division bivouacked near Prospect on the west of the railway, four miles in rear; and the 3rd (Gordon's) Brigade of Cavalry four miles east of the station. Major-General Ian Hamilton's column was at Eerstegenik, seven miles north of the headquarters, and the mounted troops, under Generals French and Hutton, were moving in a north-westerly direction, the 1st (Porter's) and the 4th (Dickson's) Cavalry Brigades crossing the Vaal at Parijs and Versailles respectively. On this day, the Queen's Birthday, I signed and read out the following Proclamation, formally annexing the Orange Free State to Her Majesty's dominions:—"Proclamation. . . Whereas certain territories in South Africa, heretofore known as the Orange Free State, have been conquered by Her Majesty's forces, and it has seemed expedient to Her Majesty that the said territories should be annexed to, and should henceforth form part of Her Majesty's dominions, and that I should provisionally, and until Her Majesty's pleasure is more fully known, be appointed administrator of the said territories, with power to take all such measures and to make and enforce such laws as I may deem necessary for the peace, order, and good government of the said territories: Now, therefore, I, Frederick Sleigh, Baron Roberts of Kandahar, K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., V.C., Field-Marshal and Commanding in Chief the British Forces in South Africa, by Her Majesty's command, in virtue of the power and authority conferred upon me in that behalf by Her Majesty's Royal Commission, dated 21st May, 1900, and in accordance with Her Majesty's instructions thereby and otherwise signified to me, do proclaim and make known that, from and

*Field
Marshal
The Right
Hon. Earl
Roberts,
V.C., K.G.,
K.P., G.C.B.,
O.M., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E.*

10 Feb. 1903.

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G.C.I.E.

10 Feb. 1903.

after the publication hereof, the territories known as the Orange Free State are annexed to and form part of Her Majesty's dominions, and that, provisionally, and until Her Majesty's pleasure is fully declared, the said territories will be administered by me with such powers as aforesaid. Her Majesty is pleased to direct that the new territories shall henceforth be known as the Orange River Colony. God save the Queen.—Given under my hand and seal at the headquarters of the Army in South Africa, Camp south of the Vaal River, in the said territories, this 24th day of May, in the year of our Lord 1900.—(Signed) ROBERTS, Field-Marshal, Commanding in Chief Her Majesty's Forces in South Africa." On the 25th I marched with the 11th Division to Grootvlei, the 7th Division halting at Wittlepoort, the 4th and 8th Battalions of Mounted Infantry proceeding to Steepan, 10 miles north of Grootvlei, and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Welterseden to guard our right flank. Generals French and Hutton moved up the Vaal to a drift near Lindaque. On the 26th May I marched with the 7th and 11th Divisions to Taaiibosch Spruit, while Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry reached the Vaal at Viljoen's Drift, and, after occupying the coal mines and railway station on the south bank, crossed the river and held the drift and bridge, one span of the latter having been blown up by the Boers. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade continued to guard my right, and Major-General Ian Hamilton's column at Wonderwater Drift my left flank. Generals French and Hutton advanced across the Rietz Spruit, encountering but slight opposition. While at Taaiibosch Spruit I heard from Lord Methuen that he had received the order to proceed to Kroonstad, and that he hoped to be there on the 28th May, and I issued the following instructions to Lieutenant-General French and Major-General Ian Hamilton: (1) To Lieutenant-General French: "We cross the Vaal to-day and halt near Vereeniging. To-morrow we march to near Klip River Station, and Tuesday, 29th, to Elandsfontein Station. I wish you to be early to-morrow (Monday) in the neighbourhood of Reitfontein (48) (see Jeppe's map, No. 5), in order to co-operate with this force, which, it is reported, will be opposed on the march to Klip River Station to-morrow. Major-General Ian Hamilton has been ordered to be early to-morrow (Monday) in the neighbourhood of Syferfontein (191) and Doorkuil (202) (Jeppe's map), in order to co-operate with this force. He has been informed of the orders sent to you.—(Signed) ROBERTS, F.M." (2) To Major-General Ian Hamilton: "We cross the Vaal to-day, and halt at Vereeniging; to-morrow we march to near Klip River Station; and on Tuesday, 29th, to Elandsfontein Station. I wish you to be early to-morrow (Monday) in the neighbourhood of Syferfontein (191), and Doorkuil (202) (see Jeppe's map, No. 5), in order to co-operate with this force, which, it is reported, will be opposed on the march from Vereeniging to Klip River Station. French is receiving orders to be in the neighbourhood of Rietfontein (48) (Jeppe's map) early on Monday (to-morrow), and he has been informed of these instructions. Communicate with me during the day at Vereeniging.—(Signed) ROBERTS." On the 27th May I crossed the Vaal with the 7th and 11th Divisions and 3rd Cavalry, and bivouacked at Vereeniging. Generals French and Hutton moved to Reitfontein, and General Ian Hamilton to Reitkuil. On the 28th May my headquarters, with the 11th Division, made a 20 miles march to Klip River Station. The Boers had prepared several positions, where they intended to oppose us, but they were abandoned one after the other as we neared them. So hard were the Boers pressed by our advance troops that they had only just time to get their five guns into, and start off, the train as some of the West Australian Mounted Infantry dashed into the station. The 7th Division halted at Witkop, a little way south of Klip Drift, the 3rd Brigade of Cavalry on the east, and Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry on the west of Klip Drift. The troops under Generals French and Hutton advanced to the western point of the Klip-riversberg range of hills, 15 miles south-west of Johannesburg, and those under Major-General Ian Hamilton to Syferfontein, a little further to the south-west. The sound of guns firing was heard during the day from the direction of General French's advance, to whom the following telegram was sent by the Chief of the Staff: "It is understood that there are important waterworks at Zubekom (9) north-west of Reitfontein (48). You should secure these, and prevent their being destroyed. The main column marches along the road to Elandsfontein Junction to-morrow, and will secure Germiston also. The Chief wishes you not to enter the town of

Johannesburg, but to push round to the north of it, via Florida, to the neighbourhood of Driefontein (461), and from there to communicate with us by the south of the town to Germiston. You should cut all telegraph wires from Johannesburg, north, west, and east, so as to prevent communication temporarily. We shall endeavour to establish a signal station at Syferfontein (191) to-night, and on the Klipriversberg to-morrow. Report fully your movements." In the early morning Major-General Ian Hamilton rode over from his camp at Syferfontein to consult with me about the onward movements of his column. On the 29th May I continued my march to Johannesburg, and arrived opposite the Germiston Railway Junction at 3.30 p.m. The 11th Division, with the 7th Division on its left, moved along the railway and occupied Germiston, after some slight resistance. Colonel Henry, whose mounted infantry preceded the main body, met with opposition at Natal Spruit Junction early in the day, and later on at Boksburg. Forcing the enemy back, he moved round by his left to the north of Germiston, supported on the right by General Gordon's Cavalry Brigade. General Ian Hamilton, who was advancing to a point about 12 miles west of Johannesburg, found General French's force, about 2 p.m., blocked by a considerable force of the enemy near Doornkop. The Boers had with them two heavy guns and several field guns and pom-poms, and were holding a strong position on a long ridge running east and west. After the Generals had had a consultation, it was arranged between them that the 2nd (Broadwood's) Brigade should join the Cavalry Division *pro tem.*, and that Major-General Ian Hamilton, with the rest of his column, should take up the position on which General French had been unable to advance, and attack forthwith, while the latter should co-operate by moving off further to the west, and endeavouring to turn the enemy's right flank. General Ian Hamilton engaged with the enemy at once. The right attack was led by the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, who captured the eastern end of the ridge, and, wheeling round, worked along it until after dark. The City Imperial Volunteers led with great gallantry on the left flank, but the chief share of the action and casualties fell to the Gordon Highlanders, who had one officer killed and nine officers wounded. The enemy who had fought obstinately, retired during the night. The casualties in General Hamilton's column were two officers and 24 men killed, and nine officers and 106 men wounded. General French's losses were slight—two men killed, and two officers and 19 men wounded. The next morning, the 30th, I halted at Germiston, the force being distributed as follows:—The 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division, with the heavy guns, near my headquarters; the 7th (Tucker's) Division, 3rd (Gordon's) Cavalry Brigade, and Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry on the heights to the north of Johannesburg; Major-General Ian Hamilton's column at Florida, 12 miles west of the town; the troops under Generals French and Hutton, a few miles north-east of Florida. In answer to the flag of truce which I sent to Johannesburg in the morning, Dr. Krause, who had been temporarily placed by President Kruger in charge of the town, came to see me. He agreed to surrender the town, but entreated me to defer entering it for 24 hours, as there were many armed burghers still inside. I agreed to Dr. Krause's request, on his giving me his word that no damage would be done to the mines, as I was anxious to avoid the possibility of anything like fighting in the streets; moreover, small bodies of the enemy were still holding the hills overlooking Johannesburg, from which it was necessary to drive them before we entered the town. Dr. Krause informed me that we had not been expected to reach Johannesburg so rapidly, and that President Kruger and the officials of the Transvaal Government only got away just in time before we broke up the railway, which we did to prevent the rolling stock being carried off. Commandant General Botha told me when in London a few months ago, that he did not leave with the rest, and slept the night of the 29th May in Germiston, within a few hundred yards of where I was sleeping, and that he was only able to escape the next morning by joining one of our mounted patrols, and passing himself off as a colonist in our employ! (That is a difficulty we always had. The Boers could come and go in our camp without our knowing who they were, as we had many people of the country in our employ. Botha actually joined one of our patrols and rode with him to the top of the hill, when he galloped off and joined his own people again.) Fortunately for us, we were able to secure a fair number of engines and trucks, as we were much in need of them to bring our supplies over the 1,000 miles.

we were distant from Cape Town; and equally fortunate for us that the Netherlands Railway Company had sufficient influence to prevent their line from being seriously injured, and thus made it possible for a few wagons, sent on from the break at the Vaal, with much-needed supplies, to reach Johannesburg on the 30th May. Early on the 31st May I received the formal surrender of Johannesburg, and, accompanied by Dr. Krause, I entered the town at noon with the 9th and 11th Divisions. There was no disturbance of any kind, and on reaching the Government offices Dr. Krause introduced me to the heads of the several Municipal Departments, all of whom acceded to my request that they would continue to carry on their respective duties until other arrangements could be made. The streets were very empty, but a good crowd of people had assembled in the main square while the British flag was being hoisted. The Essex Regiment (the leading battalion of the 11th Division) presented arms at the order "Royal Salute," and three cheers were then given for the Queen. At the end of the ceremony the 7th and 11th Divisions marched past with the Naval Brigade, Heavy Artillery, and the Brigade Divisions Royal Field Artillery. I established my headquarters at Orange Grove, three miles north of Johannesburg on the Pretoria Road, the 11th Division bivouacking four miles further north, and the 14th (Maxwell's) Brigade of the 7th Division a short distance to the west. The 15th (Wavell's) Brigade was detailed to garrison the town, and I appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Colin Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, to be the Military Governor. On the 1st and 2nd June my headquarters remained at Orange Grove, while Major-General Ian Hamilton's column moved from Florida to Bramfontein, four miles west of Orange Grove, and the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Cavalry Brigades, with Hutton's Mounted Infantry, were distributed 10 miles to the north of the same place. During these two days disquieting news continued to reach me regarding the activity and numbers of the enemy who had opposed us in the Orange River Colony, and who were closing in behind us, threatening the single line of railway leading to Cape Colony, upon which I was dependent for provisioning the Army. This information was the more disconcerting as, owing to our rapid advance and the extensive damage done to the railway, we had practically been living from hand to mouth, and at times had not even one day's rations to the good. The food question had been a terrible anxiety to me throughout, an anxiety which increased in intensity the further we moved from our base, and the more frequently the railway was destroyed in our rear. For the whole force we had little more than one day's supplies when we sighted Johannesburg, while some portions of it had not even that. In a report from General Ian Hamilton, which reached me late on the 29th May, he said: "No biscuit or groceries left, and the men have nothing for breakfast." Enough food, however, was found for his column in Florida to last until the supplies which had come by railway could be distributed. It was therefore suggested to me that it might be prudent to halt at Johannesburg until the Orange River Colony should be thoroughly subdued, and the railway from Natal opened. But, while fully recognising the danger attending a further advance, I considered the advantages of following up without delay the successes we had achieved, and not giving the enemy time to recover from their several defeats, or to remove the British prisoners from Pretoria, quite justified the risk being run. Accordingly I advanced on the 3rd June with the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division and the headquarters and Maxwell's Brigade of the 7th Division to Leeuwkop, a distance of 12 miles. Colonel Henry, with his corps of Mounted Infantry, moving to a point four miles to the north; Brigadier-General Gordon, with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, six miles to the east; Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton with his column to Diepsloot, 15 miles south of Pretoria, and the troops under Generals French and Hutton to Rooikrans, 13 miles south-west of Pretoria. On the 4th June I marched with Henry's Mounted Infantry, four companies of Imperial Yeomanry, 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division, Major-General Maxwell's Brigade, and the Naval and siege guns to Six Mile Spruit, both banks of which were occupied by the enemy. The Boers were quickly dislodged from the south bank by the Mounted Infantry and the Imperial Yeomanry, and pursued for nearly a mile, when our troops came under artillery fire. The heavy guns were at once pushed to the front, supported by Major-General Stephenson's Brigade of the 11th Division, and the enemy's fire was soon silenced. The Boers then moved to the south

along a series of ridges parallel to our main line of advance, with the object of turning our left flank, but in this they were checked by the Mounted Infantry and Imperial Yeomanry, supported by Major-General Maxwell's Brigade. As, however, the Boers continued to press on our left flank, and thus threatened our rear, I ordered General Ian Hamilton, who was moving eight miles to our left, to incline to his right, and close the gap between the two columns. As soon as his troops came up and Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle's Mounted Infantry pushed well round the enemy's right flank they fell back on Pretoria. It was now dusk, and the troops had to bivouac in the positions which they were occupying—the Guards Brigade near the most southern of the forts defending Pretoria and within four miles of the town, Stephenson's next to the Guards, on the west, and Ian Hamilton's Column still further to the west, French, with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades and Hutton's Mounted Infantry, towards the north of the town, Broadwood's Cavalry between French and Hamilton, and Gordon's Cavalry to the east, near the Irene railway station. Shortly before dusk Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle, whose Mounted Infantry had followed up the enemy to within 2,000 yards of Pretoria, sent an officer under a flag of truce to demand in my name the surrender of the town. The reply to this summons was brought to me at 10.30 p.m. by Mr. Sandberg, Secretary to Commandant-General Louis Botha, who was accompanied by an officer of the Boer Army and by Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle. The letter ran as follows:—"From Acting Commandant-General to His Excellency Lord Roberts, Field Marshal of the British Troops in South Africa, 4th June, 1900.—I have received your verbal message sent under your flag of truce. I am prepared to meet you to-morrow, personally, or through my deputy, to consult about the surrender of the town or the removal of the women and children from the town, but on this understanding, that should I or my deputy go to see you you guarantee our free return to within our lines. I herewith send you a deputy to arrange the place of meeting. Awaiting your Excellency's reply, with the greatest respect.—Your obedient servant (signed), LOUIS BOTHA, Acting Commandant-General." My verbal reply to Mr. Sandberg was as follows:—"If during the night I receive a letter from Commandant-General Louis Botha, in which he guarantees the unconditional surrender of the town of Pretoria on the 5th June, I will not move my force beyond the point now held by Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle's troops until I have met Commandant-General Louis Botha at that point at 9 a.m., and discuss the terms of the unconditional surrender of the town of Pretoria with him. Should no message reach me from Commandant-General Louis Botha, offering to surrender Pretoria unconditionally, my troops will move on the town, as already ordered, at daylight to-morrow, the 5th June. Commandant-General Louis Botha is guaranteed a free return within his own lines after the interview." At the time named I received the following reply from Commandant-General Louis Botha:—"With reference to your verbal demand, this serves to state that I have resolved not to defend the town any further, and I trust you will protect the women and children and private properties. This is, of course, because I understand from your message that you will not give us reasonable time to remove the women and children, such as was granted by us at the time to the officer commanding at Ladysmith.—(Signed) LOUIS BOTHA, Acting Commandant-General." It is true that Commandant-General Joubert permitted the women and children to be moved to a camp a few miles from Ladysmith—a measure which, I believe, he greatly regretted, and which the Boer Army generally deeply resented, but the conditions of Ladysmith and Pretoria were, to my mind, very different. It was absolutely essential for us to drive the main body of the Transvaalers to some distance from the line of railway, which connected us with our base at Cape Town. We had a very limited amount of supplies in hand, and safe transport was daily becoming more uncertain, and it seemed to me evident that, if the Boers had any fears for their women and children, they would not have waited to remove them until we were at the very gates of their city. Moreover, there were no Boer prisoners in Ladysmith, whereas some 4,000 British officers and men had been captives in Pretoria for many months; some of them I heard had been hurried off by rail towards Komati Poort shortly before I had summoned the town to surrender, and I felt sure that Commandant-

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General Botha's demand for time was only an excuse to enable the remainder of the prisoners to be taken away, or, possibly, in the hope that some fresh commandos might come to his assistance. I therefore ordered the 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division, with Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry, to move within a mile of the town, and at 9 a.m. I proceeded to the railway station. The Boer Army had left during the night, and I was met at the station by the chief civil officials, who expressed their willingness to make the place over to me. It was settled that the public entry should take place at 2 p.m. At that hour the Third Battalion Grenadier Guards lined the principal square. The Union Jack was hoisted on the Raadzaal, and three cheers were given for the Queen. The 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division and General Ian Hamilton's Division then marched past. That afternoon I established my headquarters in the British Residency. The 14th Brigade was detailed to garrison Pretoria, and Major-General J. Maxwell was appointed Military Governor. The prisoners found in Pretoria numbered 158 officers and 3,029 men, about 900 others having been taken away the day before our arrival. It may be here mentioned that the forts surrounding the town were undefended, and that their armament had been dismounted and carried off. The place was quiet, and the population orderly, and, though most of the gold in the banks and all public treasure had been taken away, no damage had been done to private property.

For a day or two after our arrival at Pretoria, there was a very general opinion that the Boers had become disorganised, and that it was unlikely they would be able to oppose us in a body again. There was certainly some reason for this opinion, for on the 7th June I received visits from a Mr. Crawford, Mr. Abe Bailey, and some other gentlemen interested in the war coming to a conclusion who told me that Commandant-General Botha was anxious to meet me in order to discuss terms of surrender. Mr. Crawford was of Scotch descent, but had been for some years a burgher of the Transvaal. He and Mr. Bailey were both on friendly terms with the Botha family, and they informed me that Mrs. Botha wished to see me, but before doing so she would be glad if I would give her permission to visit her husband in his camp about fifteen miles off. I readily consented, and the next day, the 8th June, Mrs. Botha called on me. She told me she had seen her husband, who was most anxious to arrange a meeting with me with a view to surrendering. I agreed to meet the Commandant-General at any place he might select, and to give him a safe conduct back to his own camp when the interview was over. Mrs. Botha begged me to write a letter to that effect. I thereupon sat down and wrote the following letter:—"To Commandant-General Botha.—Pretoria, 8th June, 1900.—Field-Marshal Lord Roberts presents his compliments to Commandant-General Botha, and begs to inform him that he has had the great pleasure of receiving a visit from Mrs. Botha, from whom he learns that the Commandant-General would like to have an interview with Lord Roberts. It would give Lord Roberts great pleasure to meet the Commandant-General, and he would propose to do so at Mr. Mark's house 'Swartz Kopjes,' at 11 a.m. to-morrow, if that would be quite convenient to Commandant-General Botha. It is quite unnecessary for Lord Roberts to promise that, when the interview is over, Commandant-General Botha will be allowed to return to his own camp. Field-Marshal Lord Roberts will direct the outposts to-morrow to be withdrawn to the west of Mr. Mark's house, which he thinks will make the interview more agreeable to the Commandant-General." This letter I gave to Mrs. Botha to read, and asked her whether it was in all respects what was required, or whether she had any further suggestions to make. She replied that it was exactly what was required. She then proposed that she should write a few lines to be enclosed in my letter. Mrs. Botha wrote a short letter; I placed it in my envelope, which I sealed before her, and I at once despatched it by an officer, Captain Waterfield, of my Staff, with a flag of truce, to Commandant-General Botha's camp. Early on the morning of the 9th June, Captain Waterfield returned with the following reply from Commandant-General Botha:—"June 8th, 1900.—Your Excellency.—From your unsigned letter, dated this day, delivered to me by your messenger, it appears as if I had expressed a wish to have a personal interview with your Excellency. This, however, is wrong, as I, on my side, was brought under the impression by Mr. de Souza" (one of the Boer officials), "as well as by others, that Your Excellency wished to have an interview with me to make

certain proposals to me. The nature of these propositions were so entirely unknown to me personally, as also to the go-between who brought them, that I could not believe that they came from your Excellency, and I expressed the feeling to these people that if you wished to see me on any subject your Excellency could personally propose an interview. I do not see any reason for departing from this position. I have the honour to be, your Excellency's obedient servant—(Signed) LOUIS BOTHA, Acting Commandant-General of the Z.A.R." (For further correspondence with Commandant-General Botha on this subject see the Appendix at the end of this day's evidence, page 71.) This change in Commandant-General Botha's attitude was, I believe, brought about by two things. The Boers, no doubt depressed by our rapid advance, and by the Free Staters refusing to cross the Vaal, had become temporarily disorganised, but they had never suffered serious loss since the capture of General Cronje's force, owing to their determination not to wait until we came to close quarters with them, and they quickly discovered that trying marches, hard work, and the numerous posts required to guard the long line of communication, had considerably reduced the strength of my force. There is little doubt also that the many successful attempts to damage the railway in the Orange River Colony, and the capture of the Yeomanry at Lindley on the 29th May, and the 4th Battalion Derbyshire Militia on the 7th June—events which were very greatly exaggerated in the reports made to the Boer headquarters—gave them fresh hope. Whatever the causes may have been, Commandant-General Botha's force took up a strong position along the range of hills north and south of Pienaars Poort, from which they threatened Pretoria, and created a feeling of unrest throughout the neighbouring country.

Before finishing the account of "The military operations up to the occupation of Pretoria," it seems necessary to give some idea of what had happened in the southern and eastern parts of the Orange River Colony, where the troops under the command of Lieut-Generals Kelly-Kenny, Sir Henry Colville, and Sir Leslie Rundle had been employed, and the measures taken to prevent rail and telegraphic communication being so frequently interrupted. The force left with General Kelly-Kenny, at Bloemfontein, consisted of the 6th Division, a Brigade Division of Field Artillery, two 12-pounder naval guns, and a few details; numbering in all, about 8,000 men. During the month of May some companies of the Imperial Yeomanry arrived at Bloemfontein, but they were nearly all passed on to the front, and General Kelly-Kenny was throughout badly off in the matter of mounted troops. The garrison was employed in keeping order round Bloemfontein, escorting convoys towards Thabanchu, and guarding the railway to the north and south of the town. I was anxious about the Bloemfontein district when I started, but, fortunately, no troubles occurred until the first week in June, when General Kelly-Kenny found it necessary to proceed himself to the Sand River and Kroonstad, in order to look after the safety of the railway. His prompt action on that occasion helped materially to pacify that part of the country. Towards the end of May I began to get anxious as to the whereabouts of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Colville's troops, and the 13th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry. Sir Henry Colville had remained in occupation of Winburg from the 6th to the 17th May, on which date, under orders sent him by the Chief of the Staff, Major-General Hector Macdonald left for Ventersburg with the 2nd Battalion Black Watch, 1st Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and a section of No. 7 Company Royal Engineers. Ventersburg was occupied the next day without opposition. On this day, the 18th May, the advance portion of the troops ordered to relieve Sir Henry Colville's force reached Winburg, and the following telegram was received by that officer:—"From the Chief of Staff at Kroonstad. Now that the 12th Brigade has commenced to arrive, the remainder of the 9th Division will march to Ventersburg at once. Your command will move on Lindley until further orders, which will be sent you. You should arrange for supplies for this march from Winburg. The 5th Battery Royal Field Artillery has been ordered to be railed to Winburg to accompany you, and you should await its arrival before marching. The Field Hospital, Highland Brigade details and the detachment (62 of all ranks) Eastern Province Horse, have been ordered to march from here to Ventersburg, starting to-morrow morning; these should arrive on the 20th at Ventersburg. The 13th Battalion

of Yeomanry, from Bloemfontein, has been ordered to join you at Ventersburg, and you will receive further information as to the date of its arrival there." On the 20th May, the Chief of the Staff sent two more telegrams to Sir Henry Colville:—(1) "Only two companies of the 13th Battalion Yeomanry, and possibly one mounted company of Lovat's Scouts will be able to join you at Ventersburg by the 23rd, but the other two Yeomanry Companies will follow as soon as possible." (2) "From Ventersburg the Highland Brigade will march to Lindley and thence to Heilbron. Regarding supplies, the Director of Supplies will communicate with you on the subject. Take as much as you can from Winburg. Brigade will be concentrated at Ventersburg, 23rd, reach Lindley 26th, and Heilbron 29th." Arrangements were accordingly made by Sir Henry Colville with the Director of Supplies by which six days' supplies for his whole force were taken on from Ventersburg. This was only just sufficient for the six days' march from that place to Heilbron, but transport was not available for any more. On the 21st May, the 5th Battery Royal Field Artillery arrived at Winburg; and on the 22nd, Sir Henry Colville having handed over Winburg to the 12th Brigade, started for Ventersburg. The troops which accompanied him from Winburg were:—2nd Seaforth Highlanders, 1st Highland Light Infantry, 5th Battery Royal Field Artillery, Naval Brigade—two 4.7 guns—and 7th Company Royal Engineers. Sir Henry Colville reached Ventersburg on the 23rd. The Yeomanry had not arrived, and during the day Captain Whigham, A.D.C. to General Macdonald, who had ridden out from Kroonstad, took a message from Headquarters, to the effect that there was no chance of their being in time to accompany the column from Ventersburg. Before leaving Ventersburg, on the 24th May, a telegram was sent to the Chief of the Staff, informing him that the Yeomanry had not arrived, and that General Colville intended to proceed without them. Ventersburg was then evacuated. The column bivouacked for the night at a place called Blaaubank, about a third of the distance from Ventersburg to Lindley. Shortly after Sir Henry Colville left Ventersburg, the Chief of the Staff, being then unaware that he had started, sent him the following telegram:—"Vrededorf Siding, 24th May, 1900. No. 18, Yeomanry are so late they cannot catch you at Ventersburg. You must march without them. They will join you later, via Kroonstad." This telegram was not received by Sir Henry Colville until after he had been some time at Heilbron. On the 25th the column marched to Spitzkop, where Sir Henry Colville was informed by a native that there were no British in Lindley, and that the town was occupied by the Boers. Lindley was reached late the following evening after an engagement at Blaaubank. The column crossed the north of the Valsch River, and skirting Lindley bivouacked for the night on the Heilbron road, about a mile from, and clear of the outskirts of the town. There was firing during the night, and, again, when the column moved off at 6.30 the following morning. The rear-guard was harassed during the whole of the 18 miles march, until the bivouac on the northern side of the drift over the Rhenoster River was reached. As the troops were preparing to continue their march the next morning (28th May), two men belonging to the 13th Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry, arrived with the following note:—"Colonel Spragge to General Colville. Found no one at Lindley but Boers. Have 500 men and only one day's food. Have stopped three miles back on the Kroonstad Road. I want help to get out without great loss.—(Signed) B. SPRAGGE, Lieutenant-Colonel, 27th May, 1900." Sir Henry Colville was told by the two men that Colonel Spragge was in command of the Yeomanry which should have joined his column at Ventersburg, but not being in time to meet him there, the companies had been sent from Kroonstad to join him at Lindley, where they arrived at 3 p.m. on the previous day (i.e., the afternoon of the day on which Sir Henry Colville's force left Lindley). After considering the contents of the note, and hearing what the men had to say, Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Colville decided to continue his march to Heilbron, and he accordingly sent the following reply to Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge:—"Your message received 7 a.m. I am 18 miles from Lindley and 22 from Heilbron. The enemy are between me and you, and I cannot send back supplies. If you cannot join me by road to Heilbron, you must retire to Kroonstad, living on the country, and, if necessary, abandon your wagons." This message was sent off in triplicate, a copy by each of the two Yeomen who undertook to try to return to Colonel Spragge by different roads, whilst a third copy

was entrusted to a native belonging to the Intelligence Department. Not one of the three reached Colonel Spragge, and, consequently, the reply was never received by him. After despatching the note, Sir Henry Colville continued his march towards Heilbron. After having marched about four miles on the morning of the 28th May, Sir Henry Colville's force was attacked by a number of Boers, under Commandants C. De Wet, Steenkamp, and Olivier. Being unable to proceed further, General Colville occupied "the cup-like formation of hills round Roodepoort," and in the evening, thinking it was desirable I should know that he might not be able to reach Heilbron on the 29th (the date named), he despatched the following telegram to the Chief of the Staff:—"Roodepoort, 18 miles south of Heilbron, 28th May, 5 p.m. Have fought on last four days, and to-day have only marched four miles, owing to the enemy contesting every position to my front, and seriously harassing my rear and right flank. He has two guns which out-range my Field Battery. I have only 35 mounted men left, two days' food, and about 150 rounds per man, small-arms ammunition. Enemy are still in force round me, and I fear my progress will be very slow. Had report from Colonel Spragge, Imperial Yeomanry, this morning that he entered Lindley yesterday, coming under heavy fire, and retired about five miles. As, owing to enemy between us, he could not join me here, I sent him orders to do so at Heilbron, if possible, by westerly route, or, failing that, to retire on Kroonstad. If I fail to reach Heilbron to-morrow morning it will be because I am stopped by superior force, and shall require assistance. Have had about 60 casualties in the four days, and ambulances have long been full. Colonel Hughes-Hallett and Lieutenants Doig and Radcliffe, Seaforths, slightly wounded; Lieutenant Bertram, Eastern Province Horse, prisoner.—(Signed) G.O.C., 9th Division." This message was taken to Railhead during the night by Sergeant Bettington, of the Cape Mounted Rifles, and telegraphed from there by Major Haking at 11.28 a.m. on the 29th May to the Chief of the Staff, Major Haking adding:—"I have telegraphed a copy of this to Lord Methuen, who, I hear, is at Kroonstad to-day." When morning broke on the 29th, General Colville found that the enemy had withdrawn from his immediate neighbourhood. He moved off at 5.45 a.m., and, by giving the Boers a wide berth, reached Heilbron about dusk. By noon the next day telegraphic communication with Railhead had been established, and the following telegram was sent to the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters:—"From General Officer commanding 9th Division, Heilbron, 12.15 p.m., 30th May.—Arrived here yesterday. Have two days' supplies only. Please arrange for convoy of rations, forage, and ammunition, both small arm and field gun, as early as possible. Enemy in neighbourhood. Yeomanry have not joined. Believe they returned to Kroonstad from Lindley." To this message the Chief of the Staff replied as follows:—"Germiston, 30th May, 1900.—Convoy of rations, forage, and ammunition, both small arm and field gun, is ready for you at Railhead. Please communicate with Railhead regarding its despatch to you. The only available escort at Railhead is Lovat's Scouts, unless your Yeomanry have got there. You should, therefore, arrange to meet the convoy, and give it sufficient escort to your neighbourhood." In my letter of the 4th May to Sir Leslie Rundle, I briefly stated the duty assigned to the troops under his command. They consisted of the 8th Division, 24 field artillery guns, 960 Imperial Yeomanry, which, with divisional troops, brought the total up to 8,700 men, and in addition the Colonial Division, numbering 2,640 mounted men and nine field artillery guns, under the command of Brigadier-General Brabant. Throughout the whole of May General Rundle's troops were constantly on the move, making long and harassing marches and being engaged almost daily with the enemy on the Thabanchu-Ladybrand road. By the 18th May the Boers had been gradually driven northwards, and General Rundle's force was chiefly distributed along the line—Winburg, Brestler's Flats, Trommel, Clocolan. A week later the headquarters of the 8th Division moved forward to Kopjes Kraal and the Priory, while the Colonial Division extended eastwards as far as Ficksburg. On the 25th General Rundle's headquarters, with the 16th Brigade, occupied Senekal, and the Colonial Division moved to Hammonia and Klip River Nek. Just before noon on the 28th May General Rundle received a letter, dated

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27th May, by a native runner, from Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, Imperial Yeomanry, reporting that he had arrived at Lindley with 500 men, that he had only one day's food, and was in a position from which it was difficult to extricate himself without help. General Rundle considered that as Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge had only one day's food on the 27th May, it was not possible for him to render effectual assistance from Senekal—a distance of 40 miles—and he decided to move at once on the Bethlehem road, hoping to relieve the pressure on Lindley by engaging the Boers in that direction. At 2 p.m. the Headquarters 8th Division, 2nd and 76th Batteries Royal Field Artillery, six companies Imperial Yeomanry, 16th (Brigadier-General Campbell's) Brigade, 2nd Battalion West Kent, and Driscoll's Scouts moved to Sand Spruit, and early the following morning General Rundle came into contact with the enemy at Biddulphsburg. The Imperial Yeomanry moved round to the north of Biddulphsburg, and the Artillery opened fire on the farm, which was attacked shortly afterwards by the 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards. Early in the fight the long veldt grass was set on fire, whether accidentally by our troops or purposely by the enemy was not known; the flames spread rapidly, and as it was through their fire the Grenadiers had to advance, several of their wounded were badly burned. Our casualties were 39 killed and 117 wounded. The report of the dangerous position of Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge's Imperial Yeomanry reached me at Germiston on the 30th May, and I at once telegraphed to the officer commanding at Kroonstad:—"Clear the line. Send special messenger after Lord Methuen, and tell him that Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge reported to Senekal on the 27th inst. that he was in a difficult place three miles on the Kroonstad side of Lindley, with only one day's food, from which it was difficult to get away without help. Methuen should relieve Highland Brigade in first instance, and then see what can be done for Spragge's Yeomanry. Acknowledge receipt.—(Signed) ROBERTS." Lord Methuen replied to me as follows from Kroonstad:—"30th May.—Yours of to-day. Leave with Yeomanry and battery for Lindley now. Douglas follows to-morrow morning. Paget ordered to join me there." After going a short distance, Lord Methuen received a message from Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, dated 29th May, reporting that he was heavily pressed by the enemy and was short of food and ammunition, but hoped that he would be able to hold out until the 2nd June. Lord Methuen at once pushed on with his mounted troops, and reached Lindley at 10 o'clock the following morning, having covered 44 miles in 25 hours. Unfortunately, he was too late, as Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge had found it necessary to surrender two days before. Methuen, on nearing Lindley, attacked the Boer force, about 3,000 strong, and after a running fight, which lasted five hours, completely defeated them, and occupied the town. On receiving this report, I directed Lord Methuen to leave one of his Infantry brigades (Paget's) in Lindley, and to march with the other (Douglas's) to Heilbron with supplies for Sir Henry Colville's force.

Anxious as I was not to leave the Boer forces undisturbed so close to Pretoria, I did not consider it advisable to proceed against them until steps had been taken to place the railway between Kroonstad and the Vaal in a comparatively safe condition. The whole of this part of the line was threatened, and, in places, had been seriously damaged by the enemy. The possibility of such mishaps had been clearly seen by me when I determined to advance on Pretoria, for I knew I was not sufficiently strong in numbers to make the railway line absolutely secure and at the same time have a force at my disposal powerful enough to cope with the main army of the Transvaal, supported by forts and guns of position. Now, however, that I was in possession of the capital, and the majority of the prisoners had been recovered, I was able to take immediate steps to strengthen the posts along the railway. The liberated prisoners were armed and equipped and despatched to Vereeniging and stations south of the Vaal, and I sent Lord Kitchener to see to their disposal and communicate with Lord Methuen, who was conducting operations between the railway, Heilbron, Lindley, and Kroonstad. In a few days Lord Kitchener reported that Lord Methuen had attacked and defeated the commando under Christian de Wet at the Rhenoster River, that the Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital, which had fallen into the hands of the Boers when the Derbyshire Militia surrendered, a few days

before, had been recovered, together with the officers and men who had been wounded on that occasion, and that rail and telegraph communications had been restored.

I will now bring my narrative to a conclusion by giving an account of the battle of Diamond Hill, where the Boer army had retired, and from which it was necessary to dislodge them, on account of the threatening position they occupied with regard to Pretoria. On the 11th June the attack on the Pienaar's Poort position was commenced. The troops available consisted of about 20,000 men with 74 guns, and were thus disposed:—The 11th (Pole-Carew's) Division with the Naval and siege guns at Christenen Hall, opposite Pienaar's Poort; Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's column, about six miles further south, at Zwaal Poort, the front being covered by Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle's Mounted Infantry, the exposed right flank by the 2nd (Broadwood's) Cavalry Brigade and Legge's Mounted Infantry, and the rear, which was threatened by the commando from Heidelberg, by the 3rd (Gordon's) Cavalry Brigade, and Bainbridge's Mounted Infantry. Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry closed the gap in the hills at Frank Poort to the north of the Eerstefabrieken Railway Station, and General French, with the 1st (Porter's) and the 4th (Dickson's) Cavalry Brigades, three batteries of Horse Artillery, and General Hutton's Mounted Infantry, was on the extreme left. The division was very weak, numbering not more than 1,800; some of the regiments indeed were skeletons, scarcely stronger than a squadron. The distance from General French's left to General Ian Hamilton's right was about 25 miles. The main Boer position at Pienaar's Poort was so strong naturally that to have assaulted it by direct attack would have involved a serious loss of life. I therefore determined to develop flanking operations, but the long distances to be traversed, and the defensive advantages which the nature of the ground afforded the Boers, greatly impeded our advance. I soon, however, became aware that the Boer leaders meant to follow our example and try to outflank us, with the result that the strength of their centre was considerably diminished, whilst the wings of their army were so strong, that Generals French and Hutton, on my left, and Brigadier-Generals Broadwood and Gordon on my right, informed me by signal that they were only just able to hold their own. Broadwood was, indeed, at one time hardly pressed, being under a heavy artillery fire from his front and left, whilst he was simultaneously attacked on his right rear by a commando from Heidelberg. The enemy came on with great boldness, and, being intimately acquainted with the ground, were able to advance unseen so close to "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, that it was with some difficulty they were kept off; while at the same time another party made a separate attack on Broadwood's right flank. To drive off this second body and help the guns, Broadwood ordered the 12th Lancers and Household Cavalry to charge. Both charges were successful, inasmuch as they relieved the immediate pressure on the guns and Broadwood's right flank, and caused the enemy to revert to artillery and long range rifle fire; but these results were obtained at the cost of some 20 casualties, amongst them being the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel the Earl of Airlie, who fell at the head of his regiment, the 12th Lancers. Meanwhile, Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's infantry were pressing on as fast as they could to the assistance of the cavalry, and as each battalion came up it deployed for attack, and very soon became hotly engaged. From my own position I could clearly see (though Ian Hamilton could not) a large number of Boers galloping away in great confusion from a low ridge some $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile in front of his infantry, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile short of Diamond Hill, near Rhenosterfontein. Diamond Hill appeared to me to be the key of the formidable position taken up by the Boers on this flank, and I saw there was every probability of our troops capturing the subsidiary ridge, and thereby gaining certain facilities for a further advance on the morrow against Diamond Hill itself. I, therefore, determined to press the attack home at this point next day, and ordering all the troops along our 25 miles of battle front to bivouac on the ground they held, I made arrangements to reinforce General Ian Hamilton by the Guards' Brigade under Major-General Inigo Jones, and two naval 12-prs. under Captain Bearcroft, R.N. I returned to Pretoria in the evening, and as soon as the reports of the day's proceedings reached me I telegraphed at 3 a.m. on the 12th June these orders

to Lieutenant-General Pole-Carew:—"You must support Ian Hamilton's fresh attack this morning. Hold on to your centre in strength and with your 5-inch guns, and extend your line to your right with some of the troops you had unemployed in your rear yesterday, and you will probably find a good position for your naval guns somewhere about the kopje from which Ian Hamilton was heliographing. You might with advantage bring a certain portion of Henry's Mounted Infantry to strengthen your position about Mark's Farm, but he must have sufficient to hold the ridge of hills on your left, and thus prevent the enemy from getting round your left flank. Communicate this to Ian Hamilton, and, if possible, to French also.—(Signed) ROBERTS." I was on the ground again early on the 12th June, and the movements as arranged the evening before were at once commenced. General Pole-Carew despatched the Guards' Brigade to support General Ian Hamilton's attack, and placed his two naval guns in position from which they could cover the advance, and from which they succeeded in silencing two Boer guns, which, firing at a distance of 7,000 yards, our Field Artillery had been unable to cope with. General Ian Hamilton told off the 3rd (Gordon's) Cavalry Brigade with one Infantry Battalion to guard his right rear, and the 2nd (Broadwood's) Cavalry Brigade to occupy the enemy on his right, whilst he attacked Diamond Hill, under cover of his artillery fire, with the 1st Battalions of the Sussex and Derbyshire Regiments, and City Imperial Volunteer Battalion, belonging to Major-General Bruce Hamilton's Brigade. The progress was slow at first, but about two o'clock Brigadier-General Ridley, who was commanding the Mounted Infantry with General Hamilton's column, rode over to discuss the situation with his chief. The order he received was to prolong to the right and to press the enemy's left with the whole of the Mounted Infantry. Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle, who was covering the advance, accordingly moved forward rapidly, and after occupying Rhenosterfontein Farm, pushed towards a spur from which it was necessary to turn out the enemy before the infantry could attack the main position. This point was carried with great gallantry by the 6th Mounted Infantry and the New South Wales Mounted Rifles, with files extended to 30 yards. Thus, assisted by the Mounted Infantry, General Ian Hamilton's infantry moved up the slope of the hill under artillery fire from both flanks, as well as heavy rifle fire from the west. The steadiness with which the long lines of the 21st Brigade and the Battalion of the Coldstream Guards, the leading Battalions of Major-General Inigo Jones's Brigade, moved forward, neither faltering nor hurrying, although dust from bullets, and smoke from bursting shells hung thick about them, satisfied me that nothing could withstand their assault, and about four p.m. I had the satisfaction of seeing that the leading files had reached the crest. Up to this time the casualties had not been severe, but directly the troops appeared on the crest, a very heavy fire was opened upon them by the enemy, who were well-sheltered by rocks at a distance of 900 yards, and General Bruce Hamilton, recognising that artillery support was needed before a further move forward could be made, ordered up the 82nd Field Battery to advance up the hill. It was a somewhat unique position for a Field Battery to be brought into the firing line upon the top of a hill well within a mile of the enemy's main position. It had, however, the desired effect, for very soon after the guns came into action the Boer fire lessened. The fact that our guns and Infantry had effected a lodgment on the main position from which, next morning, they must certainly pierce the left centre, coupled with the success of Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle, who had actually penetrated the Boer left and threatened their line of retreat, caused Commandant-General Botha to retire. I returned to Pretoria again that evening. There was considerable unrest in the town, which was very lightly held, and as I was unaware of the Commandant-General's intention to retire, I was preparing to continue the battle the next day, the 13th June, but at 2 a.m. I received the following message:—"From General Pole-Carew to Lord Roberts, 12th June, 1900, 10 p.m. Have just returned from ridge, south of Donkerhoek, where hot rifle and gun fire continued till dark. General Hamilton reports that he has to-day taken and occupied, with assistance of Guards Brigade, 82nd Field Battery, and 12-pounder Naval guns, main ridge Kleinfontein. But position on north of Donkerhoek still occupied by enemy, and after very heavy gun and rifle fire having failed to dislodge them, came to conclusion attack would be too costly.

General Hamilton believes casualties are moderate, considering fighting has lasted all day, and firing has been continuous and heavy. I have settled with General Hamilton that Guards Brigade and my 5-inch guns shall hold south ridge of Donkerhoek to-morrow, while he works down the captured ridge towards Rhenosterfontein, until he gets favourable ground to break through and try to let the Cavalry through. The Boer position on north of Donkerhoek is higher than ours, and, therefore, commands it to a certain extent, and the Hoek is itself almost impossible to attack in front. I have sent up my 5-inch and 12-pounder Naval guns to rake Boer position from south, whilst Hamilton attempts turning movements, and I propose to advance 18th Brigade simultaneously with Hamilton's movement, covered by Naval 4.7 guns. Do you think this movement would leave road to Pretoria too open? I hardly think it would signify if enemy is still blocked at Tiger Poort." In reply, I telegraphed to Lieutenant-General Pole-Carew as follows:—"Your report received. You must hold on with the Guards Brigade and guns to the position you now occupy at Donkerhoek" (that is the Boer name of Diamond Hill), "and you might strengthen them by calling up the Field Battery which remained unemployed during yesterday behind the hill on which we were standing. Do not attempt any forward movement until Ian Hamilton has worked his way in the direction of Elands River Station. If he can get there we ought to effectually prevent the enemy getting away their guns. You do not say anything about the present position of Broadwood or Gordon, so I cannot give any instructions as to their movements, but be sure to keep a sharp look out to your right rear. I am sending a battalion and a battery to Kameeldrift (521) to reinforce French, in case he may require assistance. Send an officer at 9.20 a.m. to where the 4.7-inch guns now are, to show me where I can see what is going on, which I could not do from the position I was on yesterday. Under no circumstances should you move forward the 18th Brigade. They could not assist in driving the enemy off their present position, and would only be brought under fire from it unnecessarily. It is not impossible that Henry might be of some assistance by working round north of the railway towards Edendale (458), but do not let him get seriously engaged, as we cannot support him." On the 13th June I started off at daybreak for the scene of the previous day's fight, and on my arrival I heard that the Boers had evacuated Diamond Hill, and were being pursued by Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's mounted troops. I rode all over the ground, and was surprised to find how little we had suffered, considering the strength of the enemy's positions. In their desire to outflank us they had dangerously weakened their centre, and this enabled it to be pierced with comparative ease. Soon after my return to Pretoria that night, I received the two following messages:—"From General Ian Hamilton to Lord Roberts (through General Pole-Carew), Elands River Station, 2.30 p.m., 13th June, 1900. All well here. De Lisle is pursuing rearguard of Boers some seven or eight miles east. He has been firing his pom-poms, and Boers have been firing their 6-inch gun at him. Broadwood is working on his right-rear with his brigade, and one corps mounted infantry, and Gordon is probably with him, but still further back. A force of some 500 Boers was moving parallel to De Lisle, or slightly in advance of him, some five miles north of the railway. From where he was De Lisle could not see these men." "From General Ian Hamilton to General Pole-Carew for Lord Roberts: Your message ordering retirement on Silvertown. De Lisle and Broadwood are in contact with large force of enemy seven miles east of this, along railway. It is 3.20 p.m., I cannot therefore retire to-day, but will do so to-morrow, unless, of course, mounted troops are unable to disengage, which I do not anticipate. P.S.—I understand I am to retire even if I see prospect of scoring some success. Kindly acknowledge receipt to Elands River Station where I now am." To the foregoing I sent the following reply through General Pole-Carew, who was then at Struben's Farm:—"Pretoria, 11 p.m., 13th June, 1900. Please forward the following message to General Ian Hamilton: Your messages of 2.30 p.m. and 3.20 p.m. to-day, just received. You need not retire to-morrow, but do not go beyond your present position and disengage your troops, as I do not think it possible they can do much damage to the enemy, and if they get seriously engaged, to support them would put a great strain on us. I want you and them to work elsewhere, work which is only delayed for want of mounted troops, which will become fewer and fewer

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every mile the enemy is followed. I am very pleased that De Lisle has been able to keep so long in touch with the enemy, but, with the railway at their disposal, it seems scarcely possible any great advantage can be gained by following them up further." I added the following direction for General Pole-Carew's own guidance: "You will see the orders I have sent to Hamilton. As long as he is at Elands River Station the Guards Brigade must hold on to their present position. I trust they will not be called upon to go further forward, as I am very averse to operations being carried on so far from Pretoria. If you think it desirable you might concentrate the 18th Brigade near Mark's Farm, with Henry's corps on the right ridges to the east and north. Keep Botha's men until to-morrow when I will send you my reply. We will send you supplies to Eerstefabrieken Station. I am afraid that going on to Bronkerspruit would be quite useless, as the wily Boer could hold us up there with a small rearguard, whilst he got all his guns and valuables away. Moreover, as I have told Ian Hamilton, we must foster our resources for work elsewhere. Let me know if the railway between Eerstefabrieken and Elands River is in any way damaged, as I am anxious to send out Ian Hamilton's supplies by rail.—(Signed) ROBERTS."

DIAMOND HILL.—LIST OF CASUALTIES.

	Officers.	Men.
Killed - - - -	8	6
Wounded - - - -	16	128
Missing and Prisoners - -	1	3
Total - - - -	25	137

(After a short adjournment.)

13128. (Chairman.) (To the Witness.) I am sure the Commission is extremely obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in drawing up the narrative of the operations up to Pretoria which you have now concluded. There is one point on which I think we should like just to be a little clearer, and that is with regard to the proceedings at Paardeberg. In the first place, may I ask, who was in the actual command during the day of the first fighting before you arrived?—That was the 18th February?

13129. Yes?—The senior officer was General French, but he was not near enough to take any command of the infantry, and General Kelly-Kenny was in command.

13130. I asked the question, because you say in your evidence that you instructed Lord Kitchener to be present, in order to keep up communication with yourself?—Yes. When I was moving up over the Riet towards Jacobsdal I sent General French to relieve Kimberley, and supported him by the 6th Division under General Kelly-Kenny, with orders to go as far as the Modder River. It was impossible for me at that particular time to know what General Cronje would do when he found his communication with Bloemfontein threatened. My own belief was, and it turned out to be correct, that he would make for Bloemfontein, and would probably move along the Modder River, but I could not be quite sure, and I wanted some person who would be a means of communication between me, General Kelly-Kenny, and General French, and I sent Lord Kitchener, telling him to join General Kelly-Kenny, and keep me informed of any news he might hear of General French, or any movements General Kelly-Kenny might decide to make.

13131. I suppose it is not the proper duty of the Staff Officer to take command, unless he happens to be the senior officer present?—Certainly not. I never intended Lord Kitchener to take command. He went to the 6th Division as my representative.

13132. (Sir Henry Norman.) And he did not take command?—No, he did not.

13133. (Chairman.) You mentioned in your narrative that there was serious fighting on the 18th?—Yes; we lost something like 800 or 900 men.

13134. I think after your arrival on the 19th you were at first of opinion that it would be necessary to attack

again the next day, principally because of the increase of the enemy in strength, and that it might have a bad effect in the Orange Free State if you were checked?—Yes. When I arrived the next day I examined the position, and I saw it was a very difficult one to attack, on account of the amount of open ground round it. I was afraid, however, that it might be necessary to attack, as I heard that the Boers were hurrying up in all directions to relieve General Cronje, and I was afraid that, unless we settled with him first, we might have to deal with him and the relieving forces at the same time. The next day, however, I went round the positions more carefully, and I came to the conclusion that it was better to beat off any reinforcements who might arrive rather than attack Cronje himself, because he was in a position where we should have suffered very severely.

13135. And, as a matter of fact, on the next day, the 20th I think, you did beat off certain parties of the Boers?—Yes, we did.

13136. And again on the 23rd?—The 23rd was the chief day; we beat off more that day than on any other.

13137. On the 23rd you beat off large reinforcements which were advancing to the Boers, and that confirmed you in your opinion that you had better not attack Cronje's position?—Yes. I did not attempt to attack the position until we had crept up pretty close to it, and on the morning of the 27th February the Canadians had got within 80 yards of it.

13138-39. And it was the pushing forward of the trenches in that way, and the dashing advance made by the Canadians, which eventually brought Cronje to send in his surrender?—Yes, he suffered, of course, terribly from our bombarding all those days, and the conditions from the dead animals being inside the camp must have been something terrible.

(Chairman.) I thought I would like to ask those two questions, in order to supplement, if I may say so, the narrative on that point, and to make it clear how the events followed each other.

13140. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Did General Kelly-Kenny actually direct the attack of the 18th?—I do not know who gave the orders, for I was not on the spot, but General Kelly-Kenny was in command.

13141. (Chairman.) But, at any rate, from the view you took of it on your first arrival that was not an unreasonable thing for the officers who were there on the 18th to do?—Not at all.

13142. Of course, we have got to consider in what way we are to use the information which you have been so good as to give us in these two papers, because it is not our business to write a history and, as we have told you I think before, we do not wish to pass any judgment as a Commission on questions of strategy or tactics, or to go back upon decisions on the conduct of individual officers; but I suppose that the somewhat indefinite reference to "military operations" in our terms of reference means that we are to try and apply any incident which occurred during the course of those operations to defects which they show to exist in the Army, and especially in the training of the men and officers. The first general question I should like to ask in that connection is, whether in preparing this narrative you had that view of the situation before you?—You mean to say, whether I had confidence in the troops under my command?

13143. No, but whether in writing this narrative which you have been so good as to set before us, you have drawn sufficient attention to any incident therein which illustrates defects in the Army, or in the training of the men and officers?—No, in that narrative I have given a series of facts, as well as the orders which I gave to, and the information which I received from, the subordinate commanders. I have not drawn any deductions from it in any way.

13144. Of course, you can easily see that in your position as Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, and now in England, you are the witness before all others to whom, if we are to get evidence of that kind, we ought to look for guidance. May I refer you to some of your previous evidence? For instance, you spoke of the training of the men and officers in evidence which is particularly in Questions 10442 onwards, and you there spoke of the training of the men and officers in general terms. Do you think there is any necessity to emphasise the suggestions you there made with reference to the incidents you have given us in your narrative? May I give you one particular instance, perhaps, as

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V.C., K.G.,
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(O.M., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E.)

10 Feb. 1903.

bringing it to a point. In both cases, in Question 10442 of the soldier, and in Question 10447 of the officer, you mentioned as the cause of failure a disinclination to accept responsibility?—Yes, on the part of the officers.

13145. Yes, and you mentioned it also with regard to the men?—What I intended to convey was the necessity for training the men to act as individuals and not as machines, to make them to be more dependent on themselves, and to think more for themselves.

13146. Could that be illustrated from your narrative of the events?—I think it could, for I more than once alluded to the great anxiety I felt in regard to my communications being held in many places by partially trained troops, such as the Militia and hastily raised Yeomanry. It is very difficult to say whether an enemy, such as the Boers, who were more like tribesmen on the frontier of India and in Afghanistan, are more troublesome to an ill-trained force than would be an organised army. In many ways I think that the Boers, acting as they did on their own individuality and from their knowledge of the country, were more difficult to deal with than ordinary troops would be; but, whether this was the case or not, the result was that our ill-trained troops often led me into great difficulties—the capture of the Derbyshire Yeomanry at Rhenoster River, the capture of the Irish Yeomanry at Lindley, and in many other cases where there were smaller detachments, both of Militia and Yeomanry, they showed what a danger it was to depend upon troops who were not thoroughly disciplined and properly trained.

13147. You trace the disasters at Rhenoster River and Lindley to the fact of the troops being untrained?—In great measure.

13148. I think you referred to the disaster at Lindley in Question 10,632, when you said: "These small parties sometimes were attacked by a large body of the enemy, and if one gave way it endangered the position of the others. I know, when I read the account of what occurred at Lindley, that was quite my impression. There the commanding kopje, which was held by a small party, was overwhelmed by the enemy, and the moment they got possession of that they really commanded all the other places"—Yes.

13149. Do I understand that you think that would not have occurred if the Yeomanry had been fully disciplined troops?—I do not think it would have been nearly so probable. Disciplined troops have much more confidence in each other, and, I think, that is the reason why the Yeomanry probably had to give in so quickly.

13150. Without any reflection on the courage and intention of the men, that is a danger which arises from the Government falling back upon untrained troops?—Yes, I think it is a great danger.

13151. And that was a matter which did attract your attention and caused you great anxiety, because of the great length of your communications, on which you were dependent upon untrained troops?—Yes. I took with me mainly trained troops, and had to trust the guarding of my communications to more or less untrained ones, and this naturally added to my anxiety.

13152. Do you think any of the interruptions which occurred in your communications arose from the same cause?—I think so in some cases.

13153. There were interruptions of the railway communications?—At one time during the early part of June, in fact the whole of the month of June, there were interruptions almost daily.

13154. Did those generally arise where the railway was guarded by those untrained troops?—I think so.

13155. So that the deduction you draw from that is, that in the organisation of the Army for the future we must bear that fact in mind?—I do not think we could venture to put an army into the field of the size we had in South Africa, unless we had more trained troops. It increases very considerably the responsibility and anxiety of a commander to require him to make use of partially trained Militia, and hastily raised Yeomanry.

13156. You have spoken to the character of the Army; what would have happened, supposing your enemy had been a European Power with trained troops?—That is somewhat difficult to judge. I found in Afghanistan that tribesmen were much more difficult to deal with than the Afghan Army.

13157. Yes, but that was scarcely a trained Army?—They were trained in a way and with a certain organisation,

and I think in South Africa our troubles were almost more after the Boer Army broke up and became disorganised than when they were organised. At the same time I think it would be running a very great risk indeed to depend upon insufficiently or hastily trained troops against an organised power.

13158. Would that apply also with regard to home defence?—Yes, to a great extent; but not so much as in a war in a foreign land, for we should be fighting on ground with which we are familiar, and that is a great advantage.

13159. Of course, in home defence you would not have the long lines of communications?—No, and we should have a knowledge of our own country.

13160. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) What would you put as the shortest time in which an infantry soldier could be really trained under severe discipline?—It depends; in a Conscript Army, like the German Army, two years are considered enough; we think it requires three years with the ordinary class of our recruits.

13161. And in France it is one year?—I think those are Volunteers.

13162. In France they have one year for those who are able to pass a certain examination?—Yes, for educated people; that makes all the difference. If we had conscription or educated recruits to deal with one year's training would probably suffice.

13163. (Chairman.) In Question 10,447, in which you speak of the officers you also speak about the staff, and you say: "Officers were often called upon to take up duties of which they had no previous knowledge; and while it was remarkable in the great majority of cases how quickly they became efficient, the mistakes that were made by the staff had most serious consequences. Many instances of indifferent staff-work might be quoted"; that, I suppose, could be done from the narrative you have given us?—I allude to the difficulty I sometimes experienced in getting accurate information with regard to positions, the value of ground, and how troops could best be disposed. It was in such matters that I did not always get sufficient assistance from the staff.

13164. But that there were shortcomings is undoubted?—Undoubted.

13165. But you think that having pointed out that, and also that the entire staff should be thoroughly trained, and that a definite system of carrying out staff duties should be laid down, you do not think it necessary to go into details of personal shortcomings?—No, it would be very inconvenient to do so.

13166. I wish just to bring out exactly the position in which you and we respectively stand on the matter; that is your opinion—that it is better not to go beyond that statement?—I think so.

13167. You mentioned to-day a deficiency in the medical arrangements at Kroonstad?—Yes.

13168. Was that a deficiency which you think ought to have been foreseen and provided for?—I telegraphed to the Principal Medical Officer that I thought he ought to have anticipated our requirements, and sent up medical officers quicker than he did. We were very hard-pressed at Kroonstad to look after the number of men seized with enteric fever. We had great difficulty about beds and mattresses, and had to ransack every little place in the little town for them, and we filled the church, the hotels, and all available houses with the sick. That made me send the two telegrams to General Wilson that I quoted in my narrative.

13169. But that was an event which arose out of the circumstances of the war?—Quite so.

13170. And not a defect of the organisation of the Service?—No, it came on unexpectedly and very severely.

13171. You also mentioned in the same telegram I think, that you desired the appointment of a special officer, practically a sanitary officer, at Bloemfontein?—Yes.

13172. The question has been raised in other evidence, I think, whether that ought not to be the general rule?—I think it is necessary.

13173. That there should be a separate sanitary officer?—Yes, I am not sure whether I mentioned it in the first part of my narrative, that I found hospital tents pitched on what was one of the chief sources of the water supply at Bloemfontein; any experienced sanitary officer would at once have seen that that was a wrong thing to do.

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10 Feb. 1903.

13174. And you would attach a separate sanitary officer to what—every Division?—That would depend on the size of the force, but there ought to be a certain number of sanitary officers and one principal man, who would undertake the work of a Division.

13175. I do not know whether in the course of your evidence you said anything special of the Post Office and Telegraph Services?—I do not know that I did, but they were most efficiently performed; it was really wonderful the way the telegraph kept up with us, and the rapidity with which repairs were made. I allude to the field telegraph, or you mean the main line telegraph?

13176. I mean both?—The main line telegraph was extraordinarily well done, and the way repairs were made, lines renewed, and new lines started was quite admirable throughout. I think the postal arrangements after the first few weeks were as good as they possibly could be considering the enormous difficulties that had to be contended with, owing to the way regiments were necessarily moved from place to place. Just at first and before the Middlesex Volunteers came out in large numbers and some Postal officers, the Post Office at Cape Town was overwhelmed, and things looked very unsatisfactory, but the moment these reinforcements arrived it worked very well indeed. I think the field telegraph was worked very well indeed, also; in fact, I may say extremely well. On every occasion the front of battle was very considerable, varying from 12 to 18 and up to 25 miles, over which I had communication, sometimes by visual signalling, occasionally by heliograph, but in most instances by field telegraph. The work was very well done by the Engineers.

13177. Did the field cable follow up the principal divisions?—Yes; and very well done it was by the Engineers.

13178. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Who had charge of the main line telegraph—the Engineers, too?—The Engineers had charge of the main line telegraph. Lieut.-Col. R. Hippisley was put in charge, assisted by Major Hawkins, Captains Godfrey Faussett, J. Fowler, and C. de W. Crookshank, but it was all done by the Engineers.

13179. (Chairman.) I noticed in your narrative you continually spoke of receiving telegrams from the different generals in different parts of the country. Was that done to any large extent by field telegraphs?—No; that was chiefly by the main lines, and how they were kept up was wonderful work, too.

13180. The field telegraph comes in chiefly in the question of an engagement?—Yes; and also when Generals French and Ian Hamilton were protecting my flanks I communicated with them very often by field telegraph.

13181. There is one other service I should like to mention—the Army Service Corps?—I think I have said throughout that the Army Service Corps did admirably as regards the Supply Department. I mentioned before that the transport department had to be reorganised, but as regards the matter of supply the Army Service Corps throughout did admirably.

13182. You mentioned to-day several cases where the supplies got very near their limit, but you do not attach any condemnation to the Army Service Corps on that account?—No; they are not to blame in any way for that. The supplies were available, as far as they could bring them up. It was the interruption of the railway that prevented the supplies coming.

13183. There is one other question, and that is that you have quoted several telegrams from Sir Redvers Buller about operations from the side of Natal; you said you could not quote at the time what force he had with him?—No; I could send it to you.

13184. But it was a considerable force?—Yes, he had a very considerable force. I judged he had quite enough force to guard Natal and to move forward.

13185. Two Divisions, I think you said?—Yes; he had Warren's Division, which was the Fifth, I think, and the First. He must have had two Divisions. I do not quite know how many men he had altogether.

13186. There was a considerable delay after the relief of Ladysmith in his taking any forward step; was that necessary in consequence of the condition of the troops in Ladysmith?—I understood from him that the troops wanted some weeks' rest—not only the animals, but the men.

13187. On the map, it looks as if a movement from Ladysmith into the Free State might have helped your advance considerably?—Yes. I rather pressed General Buller to send a Division into Vrede; that was to the east of the Orange Free State, and was where Steyn took his Government to. I think it would have been the wisest thing to do, but the General preferred to remain by the railway, and the reason that he gave for it was that he could not find sufficient waggons to carry the necessary supplies and things for a hundred miles' march. That appeared to me to justify the opinion I have expressed as to the necessity for improving our transport arrangements.

13188. Did that advance on Vrede imply his advance, which he afterwards carried out, to Newcastle, or could it have been made further south, by Van Reenen's Pass?—At first it might have been, but I did not care so much about General Buller moving towards Harrismith, because I was not able to help him with General Rundle's force. Rundle had not been able to extend sufficiently north or east to help him. Later on, especially when General Buller impressed on me that Laing's Nek was so very strongly held, I thought that he had better avoid it by going through Botha's Pass, by Vrede, and then from Vrede to Standerton.

13189. Those were the telegrams you have quoted us to-day?—Yes.

13190. You did not press him to advance on Harrismith earlier?—No, I did not, because I did not think I could help him in any way, nor did I think it would have helped me very much at that time.

13191. (Viscount Esher.) In Question 10447, from which the Chairman has quoted, you say: "Staff officers cannot be improvised," and then you go on to say: "I am decidedly of opinion that we cannot have a first-rate Army unless we have a first-rate Staff, well educated." What is your scheme for training Staff officers?—A properly organised Staff College, Staff rides, and manœuvres.

13192. What is the practice in India with regard to the training of Staff officers? Does it differ from that in this country?—No, not materially. Manœuvres are more frequently held in India than in this country, and officers get more practical work in the field, owing to the many expeditions which take place.

13193. Am I right in supposing that you sometimes take a young officer and make him a Quartermaster-General's Assistant—or you did formerly, at any rate—and then that is a Staff appointment, and he continues to hold it?—That used to be so in the old days, when they were appointed to a department and remained in it. But that was knocked on the head when the amalgamation took place, as far back as 1860, and from that time the Staff has been the same as in this country, appointments being held for five years.

13194. Which do you think the better system of the two?—I think the present system better than the other. It gives many more officers the chance of being educated for the Staff.

13195. That is true, of course, but, on the other hand, are the officers that are so educated as well fitted for Staff officers as they were under the old system?—Perhaps not, but under the old system only a limited number of officers received Staff training. Now amongst the juniors you can pick lieutenants, captains, and majors who have had Staff training, and when they become lieutenant-colonels, either regimentally or by brevet, they are always available for Staff employ.

13196. When you speak here of many instances of indifferent Staff work, are you alluding to the superior officers or to the junior officers? What had you in your mind?—I had in my mind that the Staff officers of England were not as a rule so much trained for war as for peace. Too much of their time is spent in ordinary routine and office work in preference to prospecting the country and acquiring knowledge of ground such as can be gained from manœuvres, Staff rides, etc., which are not sufficiently practised. I was often struck with the inability of some Staff officers to read maps well, to explain quickly and intelligently all about the contours and the elevations.

13197. Under the old Indian system, would you not have found that a young man who had been in the Quartermaster-General's Department would probably have been perfectly efficient in reading maps?—No doubt he would, as in my own case. I joined the

Quartermaster-General's Department as quite a young officer, and happened to be promoted in it until I became the head of it. Nevertheless, I do not think it is a good plan. I think that an officer, as a young man, should go back to his regiment, because it gives the regiment the benefit of his experience, and another officer obtains Staff experience. I do not think you want consecutive Staff duties to make a good Staff officer, provided that he is an intelligent fellow and understands what he has got to do.

13198. Would you be in favour of passing a larger number of officers than pass at present through the Staff College?—I have inquired about such a proposal, and found a few more could be provided for there with the present organisation—that is to say, as regards professors and accommodation; but, on the other hand, we would not have appointments to give these officers when they came out.

13199. No, but would you not be training them for the Staff?—Yes; it is an excellent training.

13200. Would you not be able to pass a larger number through the Staff College if you shortened the course?—I am told that two years are not too much.

13201. What do you think yourself? You must have much greater experience than anybody else?—I have been at the Staff College very often to see the officers, and think that all who go there improve immensely by being there.

13202. You are quite familiar with what they teach at the Staff College?—Yes.

13203. Would it not strike you that they would get enough information, which is theoretical information, as opposed to practical training, if they had one year instead of two?—The practice now is to give the theoretical training the first year, and the practical the next. They have Staff rides, go to manœuvres at home when there are any, and to manœuvres abroad, and visit battlefields in the second year.

13204. Is it not rather a waste keeping them at the Staff College for such a purpose as that, when you are cramped for room?—You would train more if they had a one year's course, but I could not say really whether that would be sufficient.

13205. Are the high military authorities agreed upon the question of what they call specialising in the War Office; that is, training officers for special purposes instead of fitting them generally for any work that may turn up during their military career? I mean, for instance, training some officers specially as signalling officers, and others as Staff officers?—I think it is left a good deal to the officer's own fancy. An officer, if an enthusiast in signalling, goes through the course, and if an enthusiast in musketry through that course. If, for instance, I am asked about an officer as an instructor in musketry, I inquire whether he is an enthusiast in the matter, and I think, in that way, every care is taken to put the right man in the right place.

13206. You mentioned your Proclamations. Were those Proclamations referred, before you issued them, to the Home Government? There were two Proclamations which you issued?—Yes; the first one that I issued was before I entered the Orange Free State, and I referred that to Sir Alfred Milner, and I think Sir Alfred Milner referred it home.

13207. Did you get any approval from Sir Alfred Milner or from the Home Government before it was issued, or did you issue it entirely on your own initiative?—I got approval of all the important Proclamations before they were issued, especially the two which dealt with the annexation of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

13208. Were the Proclamations drafted by you?—The first one was, and there were some modifications made in it, I think by Sir Alfred Milner. I think the other two I got straight from Sir Alfred Milner.

13209. Speaking generally of the military lessons deducible from the war of which the Chairman spoke, have they been put into the form of any document by you for submission to the Secretary of State, or to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet?—No, all I have done with regard to the lessons from the war is to see that the Drill-books—the Infantry Drill-book, the Cavalry and the Artillery Drill-books—are all modified from the experience gained in the war.

13210. Have you been asked by the Defence Committee of the Cabinet to state in writing your views as

to what may be called the military lessons deducible from the war?—No.

13211. Have you ever had any instructions at all from the Defence Committee of the Cabinet since you have been Commander-in-Chief?—No.

13212. Take the question of Imperial Defence. Have you seen any correspondence since you have been Commander-in-Chief between the Admiralty and the War Office upon that question?—Yes, on some few points I have.

13213. Has any such correspondence been submitted to you for your opinion?—Yes; more questions that have emanated from the Military Intelligence Department than from the Admiralty, but some have also been submitted to me that have come from the Admiralty as well.

13214. Communications upon that question do take place between the two Departments?—Yes; there are frequent communications between the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty and the Intelligence Department of the Army.

13215. Are you aware whether that correspondence or those communications are ever submitted to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet?—I know they are going to be.

13216. But you do not know whether they have been or not?—No. We meet to-morrow.

13217. The amount spent on the Army amounts now to something like £30,000,000?—Yes.

13218. Do you think there is any probability of an increase?—Judging from what I hear, no. Do you mean whether we shall ask for more, or whether we shall get more?

13219. Whether you shall ask for more?—We are not likely to get more, from what I hear.

13220. Have you been asked to consider the possibility of effecting any considerable reduction?—No, I have not.

13221. I suppose it has occurred to you that that is likely to become some day, perhaps very soon, a very important question?—Yes; but what strikes me is, that it is very desirable before any question of either increase or decrease is raised, the nation should pretty well determine what the Army has got to do.

13222. Whose function do you think it is to define what the Army has got to do?—I suppose the Cabinet.

13223. This celebrated Defence Committee, of which we hear so much?—Yes, I hope that will be done; we meet to-morrow for that purpose. We met to talk matters over, and to-morrow we meet to discuss distinct questions.

13224. Are you going to be present?—Yes.

13225. That has not always been the case; you have not always been present at the meetings of the Defence Committee?—No, but at this reorganised one I must be.

13226. There has been a reorganisation lately?—Yes, I understand, in future, I am always to be present, and also representatives of the Admiralty. I think Mr. Balfour promised to announce this arrangement.

13227. Then I suppose we may take it that they will make it their business to determine the point which you have just put—that is, the actual needs of the country from the military and naval point of view?—That to my mind is quite the most important thing to settle—what is the possible demand that can be made upon the Army.

13228. And you think that all questions as to economy or change of system must wait until some decision has been taken upon that preliminary point?—It seems to me to be essential to decide what the Army is likely to be called upon to do before any settlement can be arrived at as to whether a larger or a smaller Army is required.

13229. You made some very valuable suggestions about decentralisation within the War Office itself. I think you recollect your suggestion was that your office should be divided into a military branch and a spending branch and a financial branch?—Yes. What question is it?

13230. It is Question 10737. If that were done that would mean that, besides the Secretary of State, you would have three great heads of the War Office—the head of the military branch, the head of the spending branch, and the head of the finance branch?—Yes.

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13231. Do you think that it might not effect further decentralisation if you were to divide what you call the military branch in two by separating the actual control of the discipline and the *personnel* of the Army from what you might call the brain of the Army, or what has been called the brain of the Army, which means the Intelligence branch? I only wanted to ask you whether you thought there would be any great objection to it?—There is a minor division in that way—the Adjutant-General.

13232. Do you think there would be any objection to making it a major division; that is to say, instead of having four great heads of these branches, if you added another, and had a fifth? I will tell you why I ask that question: Would you see any objection to those great officers being formed into a Board on the lines of the Navy Board, to meet under the presidency of the Secretary of State?—That is very like what we call our War Office Council, I think. Any question of that sort would be considered by the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, and the Director-General of Military Intelligence.

13233. But you would not pretend that the War Office Council carries the weight of the Board of Admiralty?—Of course not. In the War Office itself the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief more nearly correspond with the Board of Admiralty.

13234. Under this system you have sketched here, when you once begin to decentralise within the War Office, do you not think it might be possible to constitute a Board somewhat on the lines of the Admiralty Board?—Such an arrangement does not commend itself to me. In my opinion the most suitable organisation of the War Office would be a spending department under one officer and a financial department under another, both working directly under the Secretary of State, and the rest under the Commander-in-Chief.

13235. Your idea is that the officer at the head of the spending department should be independent of the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes.

13236. And that he should be responsible solely to the Secretary of State?—Quite. Practically speaking it is so now, that is to say the officers, like the Quartermaster-General, as he is called now—whom I call the Director-General of Supplies—and the Director-General of Ordnance, who are the two great spending departments, are only under the Commander-in-Chief's supervision, and not under his control as the Adjutant-General and the Director-General of Military Intelligence are.

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13278. Are they up to their numbers?—Yes, at the present moment the strength of the Army altogether is over the numbers, particularly the cavalry; we have got 7,000 more cavalry than we are entitled to, and we had to stop recruiting for it; and the infantry is very nearly up to its numbers.

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13231. Do you think that it might not effect further decentralisation if you were to divide what you call the military branch in two by separating the actual control of the discipline and the *personnel* of the Army from what you might call the brain of the Army, or what has been called the brain of the Army, which means the Intelligence branch? I only wanted to ask you whether you thought there would be any great objection to it?—There is a minor division in that way—the Adjutant-General.

13232. Do you think there would be any objection to making it a major division; that is to say, instead of having four great heads of these branches, if you added another, and had a fifth? I will tell you why I ask that question: Would you see any objection to those great officers being formed into a Board on the lines of the Navy Board, to meet under the presidency of the Secretary of State?—That is very like what we call our War Office Council, I think. Any question of that sort would be considered by the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, and the Director-General of Military Intelligence.

13233. But you would not pretend that the War Office Council carries the weight of the Board of Admiralty?—Of course not. In the War Office itself the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief more nearly correspond with the Board of Admiralty.

13234. Under this system you have sketched here, when you once begin to decentralise within the War Office, do you not think it might be possible to constitute a Board somewhat on the lines of the Admiralty Board?—Such an arrangement does not commend itself to me. In my opinion the most suitable organisation of the War Office would be a spending department under one officer and a financial department under another, both working directly under the Secretary of State, and the rest under the Commander-in-Chief.

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13280. Did you personally find any inconvenience from inefficiency of staff during the war?—Yes, I have explained before that in some instances our Staff officers were not sufficiently trained in the knowledge of ground and reading maps.

13281. You told Sir Henry Norman that one of the great lessons to be learnt from the war is that cavalry ought to be trained to fight on foot if occasion requires it?—Yes.

13282. Is there any other great lesson, broadly speaking, that you can mention which is to be learnt from the war?—I mentioned also that we must have a large number of mounted infantry available, too. I do not think there is anything else required beyond that. I also mentioned the individual training of the infantry and the necessity of doing all that can be done to make them efficient shots. We have got excellent material in the men. I also mentioned that we want the officers of the Auxiliary Forces to be better trained.

13283. In point of fact, you want better training of men and officers?—Yes, particularly officers.

13284. (*Sir John Edge.*) Sir Frederick Treves, in giving his evidence the other day, expressed the opinion that our Army Medical Service was a wasteful and extravagant service, basing that mainly on the ground that the highly paid senior officer was frequently employed not in attending to his hospital, but in doing clerks' work, which might be done by a quartermaster at a quarter of the pay. Has that ever come under your notice?—What they call administrative offices?

13285. Yes. I will read you his answer to Question 11977. The question is: "But in an army on a peace footing at home that might be a suitable form of organisation." And he answers: "I think so. It is, however, very laborious, and puts an enormous amount of work upon men. It is an exceedingly extravagant service; it is worked in the most costly possible way. You obtain an officer who is supposed to be a specially qualified man, who receives high pay, and charge pay, and then he is put to do work which is practically much better done by an ordinary clerk for a pound or so a week"; and he mentions in Answer 11986, I think referring to some field hospital after Spion Kop, that they had there an exceedingly good man as surgeon and physician in charge of this hospital, but he could have nothing to do with the sick, as his time was spent in looking after accounts, and so on?—It seems very absurd if that is the case.

13286. That, of course, would not come under your notice at all?—No, I am unaware of it.

13287. You told us that I think in France they put them through the ranks in a year?—That is what Sir George Goldie mentioned—the educated men who come as a sort of volunteers—and it is the case in Germany, too.

13288. Apart from the knowledge of drill, do you think you could impart that thorough discipline into men which will enable them to hold together in difficulty by one year's training?—I think if the men are educated, intelligent men it can be done. I take the City Imperial Volunteers; they were educated men from different Volunteer regiments, and all of them, or the very great majority, were very able, intelligent men, and when they came out I do not think they were more than three or four weeks in the country. I did all I could to get them kept as long as possible unemployed, to get training, and to get together under their officers, with the result that when they came into the field they did extraordinarily well. Then they had a Regular officer commanding them and a Regular officer as adjutant, both as regards the infantry and the mounted infantry, and at that very battle I referred to near Johannesburg, Sir Ian Hamilton had his own old regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, of which he very properly thinks so highly, but he spoke in almost equal terms of the City Imperial Volunteers, who were nearly as much tried as the Gordon Highlanders on that day, and I think that showed that if we have intelligent, well-educated men we can deal with them very much quicker than we can with the ordinary recruit.

13289. I think possibly you could instruct them much quicker—it is a difficult thing for a layman to explain—but what I mean is that feeling that comes from thorough discipline, that men will hang together in cases of difficulty; could you get that into a body of men in a year's training?—It depends upon the class of man.

I think it could be done with intelligent, well-educated men; and, moreover, the training that is needed now is not so much that machine-like training, where you want men to hang together, as you expressed it just now. What is required is to get men to act more individually, and be able to think for themselves; the better educated the men are the quicker this kind of training is accomplished.

13290. There would be the same hanging together, even although they were extended to 20 or 30 paces, because if they do not hang together and some give way the whole may give way probably?—I think I would answer your question this way; if I had 1,000 well-educated men of the stamp of the City Imperial Volunteers, I think in one year I should be quite satisfied that they would be thoroughly well trained; if I had the ordinary recruit who comes into Westminster, I should say he wants two or three. Education and intelligence make all the difference in the world, to my mind.

13291. The City Imperial Volunteers behaved well all through the war?—Very well. They had the great advantage of being commanded by a Regular officer, and they had a Regular Adjutant, and many amongst them were old soldiers.

13292. The majority of them had probably had years of training as Volunteers?—Yes.

13293. With regard to the Mounted Infantry, would the Mounted Infantryman carry his ordinary arms with only a shorter rifle?—Yes, he would carry his rifle; at present they carry the Lee-Enfield rifle, and they will carry the shorter one.

13294. How about a personal weapon—a sword bayonet?—He will have his bayonet. He will be absolutely an infantry soldier, only he will be able to be moved quicker than he could walk to any distant point where he may be wanted.

13295. Your idea is that the Mounted Infantryman should have a personal weapon—his bayonet—with him?—Yes, he would be an infantry soldier, only he would travel on a horse, or a cart, or a bicycle.

13296. (*Sir John Jackson.*) You were speaking about your disappointment with some of the staff officers, and you mentioned that they did not understand maps; do you really suggest that a staff officer would not understand a contour map?—Some much better than others, I think.

13297. Some of them were not smart?—I have seen some staff officers who had really a difficulty in explaining a map; and others, again—and I think those are fewer—could take up a map and explain it intelligently.

13298. At what age do the officers generally pass into the Staff College?—They must pass before they are 35.

13299. How long do they remain there?—Two years.

13300. Then do all the staff officers pass through the Staff College?—With few exceptions; there have been instances after one year of officers being told they need not come back, as there was no prospect of their being good staff officers.

13301. But you have officers on the staff who have not passed through the Staff College?—We have officers on the staff who are considered qualified for staff employment from having done well as staff officers on field service; the names of these officers are shown in the Army List.

13302. With regard to the training, there is a great difficulty, is there not, in England of getting proper training grounds for manœuvres, where you could have long-range firing, and so forth?—There is, but in manœuvres nothing but blank ammunition is used.

13303. But if you come to firing at a target there is a difficulty in getting ranges?—We have great difficulty in getting suitable ranges, as we require them much longer than we have hitherto had, both for artillery and infantry. We are searching all over the country for artillery ranges.

13304. There has been some suggestion of having large training grounds abroad; for instance, in Canada and the Cape?—I have read that in the paper.

13305. And to have great centres there for the training of the troops. Are you in favour of that idea?—I do not think it is practical. I do not know how our system of reliefs or how mobilisation would be carried on under those circumstances.

13306. It was suggested at the Cape, 6,000 miles away.

Would it have any advantage if the suggestion were made with regard to Canada?—I do not know Canada personally, but I daresay Lord Strathcona can say whether there is ground available there for the purpose. I have been told that Canada is very much covered with dense forests, and that it is very difficult to find much spare ground.

(*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) In the eastern portion of Canada; but the western portion, of course, is all plains.

(*Witness.*) When the places have been found barracks must be built for the men.

13307. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What is your chief objection—that these places are too far away?—I think the great difficulty would be about drafts for the armies abroad.

13308. Have you felt satisfied with the efficiency of the Intelligence Department?—During the war?

13309. Yes?—Yes, I was very well served during the war. I think as a rule they gave me—in fact, from my narrative you can see that I had—very good information almost everywhere.

13310. Is it your opinion that in times of peace our Intelligence Department is as efficient as the Intelligence Department, say, of Russia or Germany?—I do not know either of those, but I think our Intelligence Department now works very well indeed. I never ask a question, and I never hear of a question being asked by the Foreign Office or the Colonial Office without a satisfactory answer being given.

13311. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) There is a small detail about handbooks based upon evidence which we had from an officer who was raising Colonial troops; he said that if he had had a handbook on which he could have gone to work, containing a good deal of the information which he had to pick up piecemeal, he would have got on very much quicker; have you any handbooks at the War Office now prepared from the experience of officers doing that kind of duty?—A sort of manual of field service?

13312. Yes?—We are getting a new manual made, something like the one in India, which is better than the one in this country.

13313. I think we had that in evidence too?—I hope we will get ours on the same system as the Indian one.

13314. Would that help you also in operations connected with buying horses, and outside arrangements of that kind?—I am not sure whether it goes to such an extent as the Remount Department. I think it is more for the ordinary instruction of the officer with regard to the payment of the men, et cetera.

13315. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) There was evidence that there was a very good manual in India as to the purchasing of remounts. Colonel Deane gave us that evidence, and stated that it gives information as to where to get horses in every part of the world, and how many can be produced, and so on?—That is so in India, but the Admiral was asking whether our manual here would include that sort of thing, and I do not think it does so in this country.

13316. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Of course, there is a vast amount of information now in people's heads in connection with all these questions which should not be allowed to perish?—And I hope it will not be.

13317. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I wish to revert to the question that Lord Esher raised about the Intelligence and Mobilisation Division at home and the Brain Division of the Army. You said, in answer to one of my questions, No. 10450*: "The Intelligence Department should undoubtedly be under the Quartermaster-General, both in India and in England. In India it is so, and in this country it was so at one time, and it was removed and put under the Adjutant-General. Then, after a time, it was removed again, and put under the Commander-in-Chief, and there it is now": in the Quartermaster-General's Division of the Army, and I am speaking of the Quartermaster-General not as the Director of Supply and Transport, as he really is now, but as you conceive he should be—he would represent the business of the Army?—Yes.

13318. And the Adjutant-General or the Commander-in-Chief would represent the discipline of the Army?—Yes.

13319. The Intelligence and Mobilisation Division is a purely thinking division, is it not? They think out

plans of campaign, offensive and defensive, they acquire information, and they think out schemes of mobilisation, but it is not an executive department in itself?—It is scarcely right to say that it is not in a sense an executive department. On service it certainly is. I used to employ Intelligence officers to let me know where the enemy were, what kind of country was in front, et cetera; very much the same kind of duty as the officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department are expected to perform on service.

13320. I was going to suggest that there seems to be a little confusion in the minds of the public, and even in the minds of some members of the Commission, between Intelligence officers in the field and the Intelligence Division at home, and there is really little connection between the two. As it happens, there were in South Africa some members of the Intelligence branch at home, such as Colonel Altham; but the Intelligence Division in the field has no connection with the Intelligence Division at home at all, and my question was directed, and, I think, Lord Esher's was also, to the Intelligence Division at home. Is that not a purely thinking department—a brain department?—I doubt very much if it would be useful as a brain department unless it had practical experience. I think you would find that a man would do much better in the Intelligence Department if he had practical experience or had been trained under the Quartermaster-General in the field.

13321. That is to say, only the men who have had practical training in the field ought to go into the Intelligence Department at home?—Yes.

13322. But once they get into the Intelligence Department at home, is it not their duty to form plans of campaign?—Certainly, but I think they would be extremely useful in helping to carry on the campaigns, too. I noticed at the German manoeuvres last year that some of the officers who were told off for staff duties came from the Intelligence branch. They were apparently not tied to their desk always, and I do not think it desirable that officers should for ever be employed in forming plans of campaign. Such work must come to an end in time.

13323. Are not conditions constantly varying?—To a certain extent they are, and plans may have to be revised; but I noticed in Germany last summer that the staff officer, of whom I saw a good deal, belonged to the Intelligence Department, and he was excessively smart and clever in the field. My own idea is that the Intelligence Department and the Quartermaster-General's Department are very closely allied.

13324. In the field?—Yes.

13325. But not at home?—I think you must work in peace time much as you do in war time. I should use all my Intelligence officers at home to assist in manoeuvres and staff rides, because from their knowledge of maps and ground they are able to instruct the other officers.

13326. There is no room, you think, in this country for a purely thinking department?—In my opinion the officers of the Intelligence Department would be better able to do the thinking part of their duties, if they were occasionally employed on Staff duties in the field.

13327. My suggestion is rather that in this country in the past we have put thinking aside too much?—I think so, too; but I would not confine the Intelligence Department too much to office work.

13328. The work of a General like Von Moltke was largely that of planning?—Yes; but he was the head of a department. The junior men, I think, lose by being too much in an office.

13329. I was taking Lord Esher's suggestion that there should be an officer of high rank who should have the charge of the thinking department, and who, for that reason, should have one of the independent positions in the War Office?—Yes.

13330. (*Chairman.*) Independent of the Commander-in-Chief?—I do not think so.

13331. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I was going to raise that very point. We might have a Commander-in-Chief who has seen service in many parts of the world, but it might be a part of the national policy to have a Commander-in-Chief who had not had such experience, who might be a member of the Royal Family, or who, for some reason or another, might be highly qualified to conduct the discipline of the Army, and to do what we might call the highest Adjutant-General's

Field Marshal The Right Hon. Earl Roberts, V.C., K.G., K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I. G.C.I.E.

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work, to receive foreign generals and so on when they come here, to carry on the pomp of the Army and to deal with the *personnel* of the Army, but yet who might not be a Moltke or a great general. I only put it to you whether in such a case as that, assuming we had a Commander-in-Chief of high social position of that kind, chosen for that reason, it might not be better that the thinking department of the Army should have, under the Secretary of State, of course, an independent position, like the Quartermaster-General, which you suggest there should be?—I do not think you could organise the War Office so as to fit into different kinds of Commanders-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief might be perhaps a man of great experience, or a man without experience, and the head of the Intelligence Department would assist him more perhaps if he had no experience; but, at the same time, he would also assist him if he had experience.

13332. I suggest whether you could not have a dual system in the War Office, which would apply in the one case to the Commander-in-Chief being an experienced General and in the other to his not being so, and I suggest that there would be less inconvenience in having the thinking department independent when they had a General at the War Office than there would be in having him dependent, when they had not a General as Commander-in-Chief?—Personally, I should not like it at all, and I think it would be a great mistake. I think it is quite enough to have the spending departments independent of him, but the Adjutant-General and the Director-General of Military Intelligence should be under the Commander-in-Chief.

13333. You have admitted that there has been too little thought of thinking in this country in the past, and especially, perhaps, at the War Office, and I wondered whether you would not rather give a *caché* to the thinking department by giving it an independent position?—I am not in favour of it myself.

13334. Not under any circumstances?—No.

13335. Not even if we had another Commander-in-Chief?—I cannot answer for that.

13336. Going partly into another question which Lord Esher raised about the Staff College, officers do not exercise any option when they go to the Staff College whether they will go to the A or B Department?—When they come out it is exercised for them.

13337. But not when they go in?—No, I do not know that they do. When they go in they all pass the same examination, and they all have the same training while there; but I have always found that when they leave, the reports given with regard to them are extremely good and accurate; in fact, from a considerable acquaintance with Staff College reports I should say they hit the officers off exactly. They will report, for instance: "This officer has shown great aptitude for work in the field; he is very quick at staff rides, the orders that he gives to all the subordinate commanders are very clear, and I should recommend him strongly to be a Quartermaster-General"; while another man is said to be "very precise and methodical in his arrangements, and to have a great knowledge of military law and discipline. I should recommend him to be an Adjutant-General." The reports are usually very good indeed.

13338. Do you not find in time of peace that the best officers are anxious to get into the Adjutant-General's Department and in the time of war to get into the Quartermaster-General's Department?—That is because the Adjutant-General's Department has been made the principal one in our Army, and the Quartermaster-General's has been practically done away with.

13339. As the Quartermaster-General's Department is so much the more important in time of war, could you not in time of peace do something that would invert their positions, and make the Quartermaster-General's Department the more important?—That is what I was advocating when I gave my evidence here the first day.

13340. In the same way for the men who exercised an option for the Adjutant-General's Department, would not one year's training at the Staff College be enough, as their duties are comparatively small and easily acquired, while the two years' training might be given to the others?—I daresay that might be done if it was settled beforehand what branch of the staff they were to join.

13341. If they exercised their option beforehand one year might be enough to teach them all the military law and official work. There is only one other point, and that is about mounted rifles or infantry: you are opposed to training mounted rifles or infantry on a large scale in time of peace?—I do not want it to be an organised body; I want to train as many men as possible, so as to have them available in war time.

13342. Under the existing system, if a war broke out again to-morrow we should again have to get men from each regiment to act as mounted infantry?—Yes.

13343. They would not be horsemasters any more than they were in the last war?—As I have said, there is no real necessity for their being on horses.

13344. I think you said you preferred ponies to bicycles?—Yes, because they are more useful as a rule. It is very desirable that the officers should be well trained and understand how to look after horses, but if the mounted infantry were given a permanent organisation, in a year or two they would be aping to be cavalry.

13345. Would not that be a matter for the War Office?—The War Office cannot do everything. Permanent mounted infantry would want to wear spurs, and, as I have said, become cavalry, besides under such an organisation you could not get the great number of men trained as we do by the method which I favour. It is really an officer's question looking after horses.

13346. Is there not another disadvantage in taking men in that manner from infantry battalions in a hurry, that you select probably the best shots and you disorganise the battalion?—You mean when a war breaks out?

13347. Yes?—They would be replaced in the same way by the reservists as the short service men are.

13348. Would they not be losing their best men?—I do not know that they are the best men always.

13349. Commanding officers make complaints on that subject?—It is no doubt a difficult question, but if mounted infantry are made into battalions it means so many more battalions in the Army; except for war, they would not be wanted, and I am sure that if mounted infantry are given distinct organisation they would soon become not mounted infantry, but inferior cavalry.

13350. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Your operations were much interfered with and greatly retarded on more than one occasion, and especially on one occasion, I think, by the destruction of bridges?—Railway bridges—yes.

13351. Do you consider that sufficient consideration had been given to that probability in advance, and that reasonable measures had been taken for meeting any such emergency?—Do you mean with regard to the reconstruction by engineers?

13352. That it had been sufficiently considered in advance? Of course, it was well known that the enemy would naturally destroy the bridges, but had sufficient provision been made, in your opinion, for dealing with such emergencies?—I can only answer that the engineers were surprisingly quick in their renewals. Temporary bridges had to be put up in the first instance over the Orange River at Norval's Pont and Bethulie, and across all the rivers onwards to Pretoria. Diversions had also to be made in many places, and I was thoroughly satisfied with the way everything was done. Besides the Royal Engineers, we were greatly assisted by a Pioneer regiment, composed mainly of civil engineers, miners, and artisans from Kimberley and other places.

13353. You think, then, there was no delay?—No, I think it was very remarkable the rapid way work was done. The engineers knew perfectly well that over the Orange River we should have to make bridges at once, and the very moment the Boers departed they were ready with their material for putting on temporary bridges at both places.

13354. And there was no delay that could have been prevented?—I do not think so.

13355. Would it not have been an advantage to have had a body of men, say from Canada—those who are accustomed to deal with wooden structures on railways? In this country there is no necessity for them, as the structures are always permanent, but in Canada and the States almost everywhere there are temporary bridges on the whole of the railways; consequently, they are well accustomed to deal very rapidly with any damage or obstructions?—We had the great advantage of having Canadians; we had two Canadian officers

—Girouard and Joly de Lothbinière—who were excellent, and they were the chief of our Railway Department, the rest were chiefly excellent men from Kimberley, and I do not know anybody who could have been better.

13356. I thought workmen who had been accustomed to similar work if under the direction of such men as Colonel Girouard and others would have been preferable?—I certainly was not in any way fettered by any unnecessary delay.

13357. Going for one moment to Paardeberg, do you think, Lord Roberts, that the Canadians there, besides showing dash and courage and bravery, acted with discretion and firmness as well?—Yes, I think so. They had a very good commanding officer and some very good officers with them, and I think they behaved very well throughout.

13358. And you consider that was the case generally with the contingents from the oversea Colonies—that besides their intelligence they acted with firmness also before the enemy, and with good discretion on all occasions?—I think they behaved very well.

13359. So that in that respect they came very well up to the Regulars?—Very well indeed.

13360. Sir Ian Hamilton, in speaking of the education and training of officers, says that he himself would prefer taking an officer from the Universities, rather than that they should be trained as they were trained and educated formerly in such schools as Sandhurst. Do you think that it would be better not to have such institutions at Sandhurst, and to look for educated men just from the Universities?—No, I think Sandhurst, properly organised, is a very useful place to get our young soldiers from. At the same time, I would not debar young University men from coming into the Army, because some of them have proved exceedingly good officers; but, as a rule, they come in older, and, of course, in a service where officers are superannuated at certain ages, coming in older may be a great disadvantage. We are improving Sandhurst very much, I hope, since Sir Ian Hamilton spoke of it. This last term we have got an officer whom you may know—Colonel Kitson—who was at the Royal Military College in Canada, and afterwards at Washington. He has taken it in hand now, and I hope he will prove a great success. We have Sandhurst, Universities, and Militia now to draw upon for officers.

13361. May I ask if there was much interception of messages on the part of the Boers from the telegraph?—Yes, I believe they tapped our lines several times; in fact, we know they did.

13362. And there were some marked instances of information having been got?—That is so; they also read our heliographs. I picked up a Boer book full of some of my messages to Kimberley which had been accurately deciphered—messages from me to Colonel Kekewich. They were not, however, of much importance.

13363. (Sir John Hopkins.) And that was in code?—Yes.

13364. (Viscount Esher.) How many men have we got in South Africa at the present time?—We shall have, when the regiments now under order for home leave, about 27,000.

13365. And you say the Army is rather over its strength than under?—Rather over than under.

13366. As to these Army Corps which are under the new organisation, will they be complete shortly when we get these regiments back, with the exception of 27,000?—Yes, practically speaking.

13367. They will cease to be what people call paper Army Corps, any of them?—The 5th and 6th are composed almost entirely of Militia and Volunteers; there are very few Regulars in them.

13368. It was never intended that there should be?—No, they are chiefly Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers. The First will be complete, and the Second will, in a measure, be complete; the barracks are not ready at Salisbury Plain; but the troops will be in the country somewhere.

13369. And to which did the term “paper Army Corps” apply?—I daresay until the troops returned it applied to all of them. Seventeen battalions of infantry are now under orders for home; 12 have started, and five will leave shortly, and the balance left in South Africa will be about 27,000 men.

13370. And that will not disturb the Army Corps system?—No; but the corps will not be quite so strong as they would be if more battalions were at home.

13371. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Will that enable you to complete the Third Army Corps?—The Third Army Corps is in Ireland; that will be practically complete.

13372. So that you will have three Army Corps complete when these come home?—I think so, except as regards cavalry; more of this branch are being kept in South Africa than has hitherto been considered necessary in proportion to the other arms. There will be in South Africa 11 regiments of cavalry to 18 or 20 battalions of infantry, which is a very large proportion.

13373. (Viscount Esher.) Is your First Army Corps complete now?—It will be complete when the battalions now on their way home arrive, except as regards the cavalry.

13374. Is there not a Fourth Army Corps?—The Fourth Army Corps is the London one.

13375. Is that complete?—It is practically complete, except as regards cavalry.

13376. Then the Second Army Corps is the Salisbury Plain one?—Yes. It includes Portsmouth, Plymouth, Dover, as well as Salisbury Plain.

13377. That was very weak when Sir Evelyn Wood gave evidence here, but is that very different now?—Yes, in a very few weeks it will be very different.

13378. And the Third Army Corps is in Ireland?—Yes.

13379. (Sir Frederick Darley.) About what number of men will be left in South Africa after these 27,000 come home?—The 27,000 are to be left there; there are 17 battalions on the way now, which will leave 27,000 there.

13380. Do you think that will be sufficient?—I hope it will be more than enough in a year or two; it depends on how the country settles down. It is all the authorities there have asked for.

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10 Feb. 1903.

APPENDIX.

During the few days I was in Pretoria, before the battle of Diamond Hill, Lord Castletown told me that a Dr. Scholtz, ear and throat specialist, of Cape Town, who had been attached to the Langman Hospital, and came to Pretoria on Major-General Brabazon's staff, was anxious to obtain my consent to go to the Boer camp, as he had reason to believe, from information received from President Kruger's family, that the President would be willing to surrender if he could be assured that he would not be separated from his family and sent to St. Helena. I saw Dr. Scholtz, and told him that if President Kruger surrendered before the 20th June, I promised that he should neither be separated from his wife nor sent to St. Helena, and I said he had my leave to take this message to Commandant-General Botha for delivery to President

Kruger. It was arranged that Dr. Scholtz should be accompanied by Mr. Koos Smit, Chief Commissioner of Railways, and Mr. J. F. De Beer, Chief Inspector of Offices under the Transvaal Government, all friends of the Kruger family. They left Pretoria on the 11th June, and passed from the British to the Boer lines while fighting was actually going on, taking with them letters from Mrs. Kruger and Mrs. Eloff, the President's daughter, also the following letter from Lord Castletown:—"9th June, 1900.—Dear Dr. Scholtz,—I have again seen Field Marshal Lord Roberts, and he allows me to confirm what he said to-day, viz., that if His Honour the President of the South African Republic will come in and surrender unconditionally he will not be separated from his wife, nor will he be sent to St. Helena.—Believe me, yours very truly

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G.C.I.E.*

10 Feb. 1903.

(signed), CASTLETOWN, Lieutenant-Colonel. Please consider this letter as confidential." The three gentlemen were received by Commandant General Botha, who promised to send the letters on to Mr. Kruger, but added that, as war was going on, Mr. Kruger would do nothing without consulting him. Dr. Scholtz returned from his interview with the Commandant-General, and met me on the battlefield on the 12th June, and pressed me to write to the Commandant-General and propose an interview. This I declined to do, but, after being further pressed by Dr. Scholtz, I wrote the following letter:—"To Commandant-General Botha, Headquarters of the British Army in South Africa, Zwartz Kopjes, near Pretoria, 12th June, 1900.—Your Honour,—I address these few lines in the hope that they may have the effect of inducing your Honour, in the cause of humanity, to refrain from further resistance. The British force under my command so greatly exceeds the Boer Army in numbers that, although the war may be prolonged for a few more weeks, there can be but one result. After the gallant struggle your Honour and the force under your command have made, there can be no question of loss of honour should you decide to accept the counsel I now venture to proffer.—I have the honour to be your Honour's obedient servant (signed), ROBERTS, Field Marshal." This was taken by Dr. Scholtz and my A.D.C., Captain Waterfield, to the Boer outposts, whence it was conveyed to the Commandant-General, Louis Botha, who wrote to Dr. Scholtz as follows:—"From Acting Commandant-General Louis Botha to Dr. Scholtz, Donkerhoek, 12th June, 1900.—Circumstances make it impossible for me to meet you, neither this evening nor to-morrow morning. If either you or Captain Waterfield have a letter for me from Lord Roberts, please deliver it to my adjutant, by whom I send this. If an answer to it is required, I can send it under a flag of truce to Lord Roberts. By order.—(Signed) N. J. DE WET, Military Secretary to Acting Commandant-General." On the night of the 13th-14th June I received a letter from the Commandant-General, as follows:—"From Commandant-General Botha to His Excellency Field Marshal Lord Roberts.—Your Excellency,—In answer to your letter of yesterday, wherein your Excellency advises me, in the interests of humanity, not to continue this strife any longer with your army, as your force exceeds ours so greatly in numbers, I wish to give your Excellency the assurance that the subject is receiving my serious consideration. However, for the purpose of arriving at a decision, it is not only absolutely necessary for me to call a General Council of War of my officers, and to consult them, but, above all, it is necessary for me to consider the subject with my Government. I trust that, for the sake of humanity, your Excellency will give me the opportunity for such consideration and consultation. As some of my officers are near the Natal border, and I am also a long way separate from my Government, this will require some time. I ask your

Excellency kindly, therefore, for an armistice for six days, beginning from to-morrow morning at sunrise, during which time no forward movement will be made on either side within the territory of the South African Republic. I should like very much to receive from your Excellency to-day an answer to this request, and, if possible, by the agent who is taking you this letter.—I have the honour to be, your obedient servant (signed), LOUIS BOTHA, Acting Commandant-General, S.A.R." To this I sent the following reply:—"To Commandant-General Botha, Army Headquarters in South Africa, Pretoria, 14th June, 1900.—Your Honour's letter of yesterday reached me during the night. I am anxious to meet your wishes and to enable your Honour to communicate with the Government of the South African Republic, but as the movements of my troops in that Republic are intimately connected with operations in progress in other parts of South Africa, it is impossible for me to accede to your Honour's request that there should be an armistice for six days, during which time there should be no forward movement on either side within the territory of the South African Republic. I am willing, however, to refrain from making further movements in district to the east of the Elands River Railway Station, our present most advanced post in that direction, and also in the district north of the Volksrust and Johannesburg Railway, for a period of five days, commencing at dawn on the 15th June, on the condition that no movement westward or southward is made by the Army of the South African Republic during that same period. This will, I trust, give your Honour the opportunity you desire of consulting your officers and conferring with your Government, and I sincerely hope that the result will be of such a satisfactory nature as to prevent further unnecessary loss of life. I have the honour to be your Honour's obedient servant, (signed), ROBERTS, Field Marshal, Commanding the British Army in South Africa." On the 16th June I received Commandant-General Louis Botha's reply, which was couched in the following terms:—"To His Excellency Field Marshal Lord Roberts, Commandant-General's Camp, 15th June, 1900.—Your Excellency,—In answer to your letter dated 14th June just received by me, in which your Excellency agrees to a cessation of hostilities for five days, with the reservation, however, of the right to move your forces in all directions through the South African Republic, excepting east of Elands River Station and north of the Volksrust-Johannesburg Railway. I have to state to your Excellency, with regret, that this reservation makes it impossible for me to accept the cessation of hostilities, which I so much desired.—I have the honour to be, your Excellency's obedient servant (signed) LOUIS BOTHA, Acting Commandant-General of the S.A.R." I caused the messenger who had brought the letter to be informed that I had received it, but that I had no reply to send to it.

THIRTY-SECOND DAY.

Wednesday, 11th February, 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., (*Chairman.*)

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT
ROYAL G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.
Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLLIE NORMAN, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary.*)

Lieutenant-General Sir WILLIAM F.

BUTLER, K.C.B., called and examined.

*Lieut.-
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.*

11 Feb. 1903.

13381. (*Chairman.*) You held the command at the Cape in 1898 and 1899?—I went out in November, 1898, and I remained in South Africa until August, 1899.

13382. During part of that time, in addition to your command, you were Acting Administrator?—Yes, during the months of December, 1898, and January, and part of February, 1899.

13383. So that it was in consequence of that temporary appointment that you had some correspondence with the Colonial Office?—I was Administrator and High Commissioner there for those three months.

13384. And therefore corresponded direct with the Colonial Office?—Quite so.

13385. I asked that question because in a letter to our secretary you suggested that the Commission should obtain all communications sent by you during that time to the Colonial Office?—Quite so.

13386. The Colonial Office have been good enough to give us the papers, and they are here, but I find on examination that so far as I can see they deal chiefly with the affairs that came before you as Administrator, and not directly with any matter that comes within our Reference?—I did not know what the extent of the questions which the Commission desired to put to me would cover, so I thought it best to let them have every paper that I could.

13387. I mean that our Reference refers, as far as you are concerned, as you were not out there during the War, to the question of the preparations which were made or were not made for the War. We do not enter into the political questions between yourself and the Agent at Pretoria, but at the same time, of course, if there is anything in any one of those papers bearing on the preparations for the War, or any advice which you thought it necessary to give to the Government in consequence, that would be interesting for us to have pointed out. Do you think there is anything of that character?—I thought that these papers might probably put the Commission in possession of my views as to what would happen, or what was likely to happen if certain lines were continued, that was all. I thought they would see the matter as I saw it looking at it at the moment.

13388. Your view, as I understand from other documents, also, was to the effect that if there was a war, it would be of the nature of a civil war?—Amongst other characteristics that it would partake of the character of a civil war.

13389. Would you explain what that means?—The fact that the two Dutch Republics had no Army in the sense that we know an army, led me to think that the operations would be very much of the character of a civil war, and that they would be likely to extend into those parts of our Colonies which had Dutch populations; that the affinity of race, and relationship and family ties would probably produce such combinations as are usual in civil war—our communications interrupted, etc., etc., etc.

13390. The interruption of our communications by disaffection in our own Colonies?—Quite so.

13391. Did you bring the point specially before the Government?—I think so.

13392. Could you point to any particular paper in which you did so?—Yes; in Paragraph 7 of my despatch of 14th June, 1899, (*Vide Appendix to Report Vol., page 205*), I wrote as follows—

13393. Is that to the War Office?—To the War Office.

13394. Is that the earliest reference?—Oh, no. I think there is an earlier one in some of my despatches, but this was in these words: "The detailed disposition of the forces in Cape Colony as sketched above is given below, but I must premise again that this depends on the political situation of the moment, for it is quite possible that if the Dutch population north of the great range extending from Sneeuw Berg on the west, past the Zuur-Berg to the Storm Berg, is actively hostile to us, it might be out of the power of the officers commanding the detached forces to reach the stations they have been directed to occupy." Again, I said, "The foregoing details explain generally the dispositions I would propose for adoption in the event of its becoming necessary to protect the frontier line. I would, however, desire to remark that the consideration of this question presents many possibilities which make it different from preliminary operations which would be undertaken in the event of war between two regular military powers whose populations were divided by defined frontiers. In the case of South Africa, there dwells on our side of the frontier a preponderating Dutch population, closely

connected by family ties and mutual intercourse with the people on the other side. The events of the past few years have served to increase suspicion and racial antagonism, and therefore the possibility that at least the opening stages of war between the Dutch Republics and ourselves might produce active or secret combinations against our communications must be considered." That is one of many I sent of a similar nature.

13395. (*Viscount Esher.*) What date is that?—It was written between the 9th and 12th June, and forwarded by the mail of June 14th, 1899.

13396. (*Chairman.*) That is the first?—No. I would not be sure; the complications in the Colonies I think are alluded to in my despatch to the Colonial Office of January 22nd, 1899.

13397. I have it here. (*Vide Appendix to Report Vol. page 205.*) You did say in writing to the Colonial Office on the 25th January, 1899: "This policy in my opinion can only end if persisted in in producing a war of races, a conflict the ultimate consequences of which no one can adequately estimate." That is the same point, I imagine?—That is four or five months earlier than this more detailed statement.

13398. Yes, this was the 25th January?—Yes.

13399. I referred to it because so far as my examination of the papers of the Colonial Office was concerned that was the reference which you made to the subject at that point?—Yes, I have not got a copy of that despatch, and I am speaking from a memory of four years, and therefore I am rather "out of it" in talking of that despatch of January 25th. I only have "draft" pieces and particulars of that despatch, which I have tried to put together, but I have no detailed copy of it.

13400. We have it before us, and that expression of opinion occurs in it, and that so far as I can see was the first?—Yes, I was only two months in the Colony when I wrote that—not two months.

13401. And indeed during the time you were Administrator it is the only reference to the Colonial Office on that subject, I think?—Yes, I should think it would be.

13402. Then passing to the communications with the War Office, I think that on the 21st December, 1898, the War Office wrote to you on the subject of the whole of the military position; (*Vide Appendix to Report Vol., pages 201 and 202*), do you remember that?—I remember that letter; I have not got a copy of it, but I recollect it.

13403. It was signed by Colonel Stopford; there were two letters of that date, both from the Assistant Adjutant-General?—Yes.

13404. One referring to the military position and the other, I think, more to equipment and stores?—Yes.

13405. Do you remember when you replied to that communication?—I was at the time that communication was received Acting Administrator, Governor, and High Commissioner. It was received, I think, in the middle of January. As soon as I was freed from my civil labours, which were very continuous at that time owing to the strained state of political relationship, the killing of Edgar and the rest of it, I set about the large question that letter involved, that is to say the preparation of a Defence Scheme for South Africa. I started, I think, three or four days after I handed over the civil duties to Sir Alfred, now Lord, Milner.

13406. In February that was?—Yes, he came, if I recollect correctly, on the 13th February, and I left on the 20th for the frontier; I think that would be about it. The first purpose in my mind was to examine the frontier, which, I need scarcely tell the Commission, is an extensive one. It was something like 1,500 miles, and was at its nearest place 700 miles distant from where I then was. However I decided to visit the Natal frontier, and I went to Natal in the end of February, and I visited the northern angle of Natal, and Ladysmith and Glencoe, and about 60 miles south of the Tugela, and then I returned to Cape Town. I intended to visit the other part of the frontier, that large section between Mafeking and Basutoland, a distance of some 700 or 800 miles, later, and then to draw up the Defence Scheme and reply. In June I received a telegram asking me for this Defence Scheme which I had formulated in my own mind in case any cir-

Lieut.-
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11 Feb. 1903.

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11 Feb. 1903.

circumstances should arise to call for action, but I did not wish, as I say, to commit myself to paper until I had visited the whole of the frontier, which was a very detailed business. Meantime, unfortunately, the state of public feeling became so acute that the movements of any body of troops, much less the General commanding, was a matter of some consequence. It was not easy to go to the frontier without exciting suspicion, but in the beginning of June I placed the detailed Defence Scheme in the hands of the War Office.

13407. Then you did not draw the attention of the Government or the War Office to any question connected with the defence of the Colony until the beginning of June?—Oh, I would not say that. I drew their attention to many points.

13408. Can you refer us to the papers, because I have not been able to find them?—I proposed a larger Remounts Establishment, areas for camping troops and exercising them, and there were many things I proposed in the intervening time, which, I may add, were all negatived.

13409. I again ask you, can you refer us to the papers?—I do not know what papers you have got.

13410. If you would give us any reference we could test whether we have got them or not?—Have you got my letter of the 4th November, 1901, addressed to the Secretary of State for War?

13411. 1901! I am speaking of 1898 or 1899?—Yes, but that letter is calling attention to these other matters of which you have asked me.

13412. We have not got that letter?—It is dated 16th December, 1901.*

13413. These later papers the War Office are preparing, but they have not sent them to us yet. Surely if you made them officially they must be on record earlier than that?—Oh, yes; these letters all refer to earlier correspondence.

13414. What points then were raised in that later correspondence?—This point upon which your Lordship is asking me, this Defence Scheme.

13415. Would you tell us the heads of the letter of 1901?—Certainly. The series of these letters Nos. 1, 2 and 3, beginning on the 4th November, 1901, and ending on the 7th February, 1902, about three months, arose out of some statements that had been made by a Cabinet Minister relative to me. I addressed the Secretary of State, as I had previously done whenever any statement was made with reference to me in either House of Parliament. Being debarred from replying in the Press, I thought that the best thing to do to get on record whether I agreed or disagreed with these statements, so I adopted that course, and in following it I got into a correspondence with the Secretary of State, which is covered in these three letters as far as I am concerned. The points your Lordship has just raised about that Report or Defence Scheme are all covered in the third letter.

13416. Would you mind reading us the third letter?—I shall be very glad. The third letter was addressed to the Adjutant-General at the War Office, because I received a communication from the Secretary of State not to address any further letters to him, but to address them to my military superior. I therefore addressed the third letter, which is as follows, to the Adjutant-General:—"Devonport, 7th February, 1902. Sir,—I was recently compelled to draw the attention of the Secretary of State for War to a reference to myself made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in a public speech, to which I, holding His Majesty's Commission, was debarred from making a public reply. In the correspondence which ensued the Secretary of State for War admitted the undoubted warnings I had given the Government, but he subsequently raised a fresh issue upon points, such as the time taken by me in the preparation of the South African Defence Scheme, which he considered might have been the 'work of a few days or hours,' and, again, that 'he is unable to trace any letter in which I made a definite request for an increase of the garrison of South Africa, with a view to repelling the impending invasion of the troops of the Dutch Republics, or that I had submitted an estimate of the expeditionary force

which would be needed to bring the War . . . to a satisfactory conclusion.' I propose to deal with these issues in separate letters. In November 1899, when I was made the subject of attack by a portion of the Press" (in this country) "I wrote to the War Office, asking either that some specific charge might be made against me in relation to my late Command in South Africa, or that they (my military superiors) would themselves defend me from these libellous accusations. I was informed by the Military Secretary that my letter had been carefully considered by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Commander-in-Chief; that it was not desirable that officers should take notice of criticisms in the press as to the manner in which they had discharged their duties; that the Commander-in-Chief was of opinion that I had done well to take no notice of the accusations to which I had referred, and that he trusted I would continue to leave them unnoticed. I concluded, therefore, that my superiors had no charge to make. But now, when more than two years have elapsed since this correspondence, I understand the Secretary of State in his letter of January 3rd to suggest that I failed to furnish the War Office with a detailed Scheme of Defence in due time after the receipt by me of a War Office letter of the 21st December, 1898. I submit that if there had been any negligence on my part in respect to the preparation of the Defence Scheme for South Africa within reasonable time, it should have been made the subject of criticism or charge against me three years ago when the supposed delay occurred. Reference by me to official documents is now in most cases impossible. I was recently informed at the War Office that much of the confidential correspondence of that time had been destroyed by order of the authorities in Cape Town. I have, however, been able, from the papers in my possession, to supply in some degree the want of documents, and I propose now to state the circumstances connected with the preparation and rendering of the South African Defence Scheme. The War Office letter of the 21st December was received at Cape Town about the middle of January, 1899, when I was performing the duties of Acting Governor and High Commissioner in the absence of Sir Alfred Milner in England. The time was one of unusual political unrest and official labour, and, as my constant cable messages and despatches to the Secretary for the Colonies will show, the situation required my closest attendance in Cape Town. Sir Alfred Milner returned from leave a month later, and having handed over the civil duties to him, I immediately turned my attention to the defence questions in South Africa. It is enough to say here that within a month from the date of the Governor's return, I had travelled 3,000 miles, had inspected the Natal frontier, had visited the railway junctions of the northern portion of Cape Colony, and had, in my own mind, decided the outline of the Natal and Cape Colony Defence Scheme. But, as I subsequently reported, 'I had not yet been able to see even the general line of frontier lying between Basutoland and Fourteen Streams' (about 400 miles), and I did not wish to forward to the War Office a scheme on all parts of which I had not formed my opinions from a personal examination of the ground. The Secretary of State suggests that I might have used Staff officers to visit various parts of the frontier; he lays stress upon the 'assistance' given to me in the War Office letter referred to 'by a concise recapitulation of the main features of the frontier'" (that is the letter I think you have before you), "and he thinks that the whole question of the defence of South Africa was capable of being decided 'under circumstances as favourable as those under which a general officer in the field may frequently be called upon to determine within a few days or hours.' I respectfully submit that there is no analogy whatever between the two cases cited. The misconception arises from a confusion of ideas between the plan or forecast of war known as strategy and the operations which involve immediate action called tactics. A glance at the defence scheme for England—which has been for many years in preparation and is not yet complete—will show that a scheme of defence for even a small Island is not to be confounded with the operations which a general in the field may be called upon to 'determine in a few days or hours.' To the suggestion that I might have made use of staff officers for the purpose of visiting various parts of the frontier, I reply

*The letters were subsequently sent in. Vide Appendix, page 88, post.

that I was not disposed to deal at second hand with this important question, even had staff officers been available, but there were none. I do not propose to dwell upon the exception taken to the use of the word 'uncertain' when writing of the attitude of the Orange Free State, in the possible event of war, beyond observing that the official documents of the period speak of the attitude of the State in that term, and there is, I believe, a letter extant, written by a very competent authority, which gives as the reason for the postponement of hostilities from June to October, 1899, that 'we are not yet quite sure of getting the Orange Free State into the Bag.' I pass to consider the presumed assistance given in the letter of December, 1898, towards forming my decisions for defence in South Africa. In the War Office letter of that date lay my principal difficulty for the following reasons: It recommended to me, both in Natal and in the Cape Colony, the initial occupation of advanced positions, the adoption of which would, to my mind, have involved the earliest and the most complete initial disasters. It pressed upon me seizing all the bridges of the Orange River between Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, as well as Van Reenen's Pass and other advanced positions in Natal, by the small force under my command. I had, therefore, not only to write a scheme of defence, but I had to argue it against the War Office proposals, hence the efforts on my part to give detailed reasons for my decisions in my despatch, 7th—12th June, and hence, too, my desire to personally inspect the entire frontier before putting my opinion into conflict with the views of the War Office and of the officers who had been sent from England to inspect and report upon these frontiers 18 months earlier. It was comparatively easy to frame in my own mind my own scheme of defence for Natal and the Cape Colony, but it was another matter to formulate the reasons for my dissent, to show cause for not pushing forward my weak force into the Drakensberg passes on one side, or to within a half rifle shot distance of the Orange Free State on the other. Reference to that despatch will show almost in every line this purport. After proposing to place all available Infantry at De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg, I wrote: 'As it would be impossible to hold all the bridges named by you on the Orange River, except by detachments whose weakness would only invite attack, I propose to hold Orange River Bridge within our territory,' and I pointed out how concentration at that point from the right, i.e., Stormberg, Naauwpoort via De Aar, could be rapidly effected (this movement was afterwards carried out with brilliant results by Earl Roberts), but despite the reiterated warnings of my despatch, so wedded were the War Office authorities to their original ideas of defence, that after my proposals had been received and considered in London I was again urged by a War Office telegram to reconsider my decisions with reference to Natal, and to occupy Van Reenen's Pass on the edge of the Orange Free State—."

13417. Have you got the date of that?—I can place the date within a week; it would be about the middle of June—in the second week in June, I should think between the 9th and 14th.

13418. Of 1899?—Yes.

13419. At that time your despatch could not have reached the Secretary of State?—Yes, it reached him by telegram; the greater portion of the despatch was cablegram.

13420. We cannot find the telegram from the Secretary of State to which you refer?—I should say it was between the 9th and the 14th, but I have not got a copy of it; it was all in the confidential papers at Cape Town.

13421. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You have not the words of that, but have you the substance of it?—I have the substance of it here.

13422. (Chairman.) We will not interrupt you in your reading?—"I was again urged by a War Office telegram to reconsider my decision with reference to Natal, and to occupy Van Reenen's Pass on the edge of the Orange Free State. I declined to do so. These telegrams are doubtless in your possession, and it might be of some interest to compare their dates with that of my arranged supersession in the South African Command in the event of war—I think they

will be found to synchronize. The opinion held by the Secretary of State upon the simplicity of the problem of defence"—

13423. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I beg pardon for interrupting you, but could it have been as late as the 8th of August?—No. I am certain it was the first fortnight of June, and I can localise it between the 9th and 12th.

13424. (Chairman.) Will you finish your letter?—"The opinion held by the Secretary of State upon the simplicity of the problem of defence with which I had to deal in South Africa, is one which was evidently not held at the time by the Intelligence and Mobilisation Authorities in England, as the following extracts from the correspondence of the time will show—"I am afraid that you will find a good deal of work in front of you in connection with defence matters" wrote one Staff Officer in very high position: this has been 'caused' partly by a certain amount of misunderstanding at headquarters." Again, I find, even as late as the month of May, 1899—five months subsequent to the War Office letter referred to by the Secretary of State—the problem of South African Defence thus spoken of: 'It is difficult to unravel the various directions sent to you from the different branches here, each without the knowledge of the other branches concerned!' Again, I find the same subject referred to by another high War Office authority on South African Defence questions, as follows:—"There has been a good deal of confusion at headquarters from various branches having taken action without reference to the Commander-in-Chief's Department. Neither . . . nor . . . knew what was going on. I venture to suggest, Sir, that these extracts, taken from my papers, do not point either to the simplicity of my work in the preparation of the Scheme of Defence for South Africa, or to any large measure of 'assistance' which I could have derived from the collective efforts of the War Office, although I read later on the more sanguine assurance that 'we are all now working together, and hope there will be no more misunderstanding.' I observe too, that the Secretary of State suggests that the letter of December 21st, 1898, pointed so the extreme urgency with which, in view of an 'impending' war, the War Office regarded the preparation of the Scheme of Defence. I have referred to my papers, but can discover no trace of this feeling. I think the War Office letter of December 21st begins with the seemingly unurgent observation that 'the possibility of a war with the Dutch Republics had not wholly passed away.'" (I was quoting from memory as I had not a copy of it).

13425. The exact expression was, 'Her Majesty's Government had no special reason to apprehend any hostilities with the Republics in the immediate future?'—"A sentiment which I find reiterated five months later in a letter from the same source, which reached me late in June, 1899, in the following words: 'Without entering into any close consideration of the political situation, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the possibility of war in South Africa has not yet been eliminated.'" (That was in June, 1899.) "Nor is this forecast much widened when I find the small reserve of rifles in my ordnance store at Cape Town at this period thus referred to: 'There has been a misunderstanding as to the reserve of rifles sent out, and you have a good many more than can possibly be needed.' I quote these sentences, not because of the optimism they reveal even up to June, 1899, but to show what little reason I had to suppose that the War Office authorities were in urgent haste to possess my scheme, and what was the real nature of the 'assistance' I had received from the War Office in its preparation; still, notwithstanding the absence of any indication of urgency, the War Office were in possession of the new Defence Scheme for South Africa within four months of the return of Sir Alfred Milner from England—the scheme itself differing in its most essential features from the previously expressed opinions of the experts whose views were based upon the reports of Officers specially sent out from England to examine the frontiers of Natal and the Cape Colony, a year or two earlier. Had the War Office conveyed to me at any moment between January and June, 1899, the slightest intimation that a diplomatic initiative war

Lieut.-
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F. Butler,
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

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K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903

about to be taken with the Dutch Republics, or that there was an early probability of war, I might perhaps have saved a few weeks in the preparation of this report, and undoubtedly I would earlier have given to the War Office the emphatic warnings which were so often repeated in my despatches and telegrams of the end of June. Had I even been made casually acquainted with the consultations and interchanges of ideas and proposals as to armaments and frontier movements which took place in London in the end of January, 1899, and upon which so many matters of vital importance afterwards turned, I would have devoted myself (as I did later in June, when I became aware of some of those things) to the attempt to show the Home Authorities how inadequate was their conception of what war in South Africa would mean, how deceptive were the assurances, and how dangerous was the advice they had received. In my despatch of July 4th, I stated the circumstances under which I had come out from England seven months earlier, without instructions of any kind in 'either civil or military matters,' nor was it deemed necessary to send me any instructions after my arrival in the country. Indeed, the obscurity in which I found myself in this respect was more than merely negative. Asking in my office at Cape Town, some time after my arrival, for an official book in which my predecessor had kept copies of his confidential correspondence with the War Office, I ascertained that this record had been destroyed. I then found that some 70 or 80 pages of the book had been torn out, and I subsequently discovered that this action had not been taken because of any request made by General Goodenough before his death, nor at the instance of the widow or executors of the late General. One other instance before I quit this somewhat painful subject. Under date 3rd of August, 1899, the following telegram can be read in the Official Blue Book: 'Propriety of moving troops nearer to frontier so as to watch Laing's Nek is being considered by Her Majesty's Government. If it be desired to garrison Laing's Nek, would Colonial troops be sent with British?' This telegram, the execution of which would undoubtedly have produced immediate hostilities, was never communicated to the General Commanding in South Africa, although two months previous to its date, he had officially recorded his opinion that the position proposed for occupation was, for a variety of reasons given, 'a dangerous one.' I do not think I need pursue this subject further. Looking back from the present time to those early months of 1899, the sole sign of impending changes which I can trace is to be found in the obscure movement of the families of some of the officials; the sudden sales of the racing studs of the chief financial millionaires in Johannesburg; and the arrival in South Africa from England of the most noted persons connected with the Jameson Raid of 1895-6. The last named immigration will be found mentioned in my despatches of June, 1899. But who could have imagined that the persons to whom I have referred, could have been the recipients of any information as to a coming war, which had not been communicated to the General in command in South Africa? In the many duties devolving now upon me, I must ask permission of the Commander-in-Chief to refer to another letter, the consideration of the remaining matters touched upon in the Secretary of State's letter, which pertain to the months of June, July and August, 1899. In the present communication, I have dealt with matters relating to the earlier months of that year. I may here state, however, that so far as I have been able to understand the general tenour of the suggestions and criticisms put forward in the letter of the 3rd January, it would seem that while in June, 1899, I was severely censured because I had ventured to warn the War Office in forcible language as to the nature of a war with the Dutch Republics in South Africa, I am now taken to account for not having made my warning of that time still more emphatic."

I then received a communication that I was not to continue the correspondence. I have read that letter 9, because it pertains to the matters as to which you were asking me.

13426. You say you had not during that period any intimation from the Government that they apprehended war?—None whatever.

13427. But, on the other hand, I do not think that except in references to the nature of the war, to which

we have already referred, namely, that it would be a racial war, the Government received any warnings of your apprehension that a war was imminent?—Nor was a war imminent unless certain things were done.

13428. You did not consider that the gradual accumulation of warlike material and stores by the Boers had any bearing upon the subject?—That began immediately after the Raid.

13429. I am aware, but it had been going on?—Well, war was imminent in the sense that you might have had war at any moment, but you might have had it protracted or postponed to any time, too.

13430. You think so; that was your view at the time?—That was my view at the time, and it was based upon many considerations which I was looking at at the moment.

13431. Now with regard to the Scheme of Defence which you were asked to prepare, did you consider that was to take up the Scheme of Defence by your predecessor on the same lines, namely on the conditions of the King's Regulations?—No, Sir. I altered the original scheme very considerably.

13432. Quite so, but I do not think you follow what I mean. I understand that the King's Regulations are that an Officer commanding on the spot, if he is asked for a Scheme of Defence, submits it in relation to the troops which he has at his disposal in his command?—Certainly.

13433. And that was the basis of your predecessor's scheme?—Yes.

13434. Did you consider it was your duty in taking up the revision of the Scheme to consider it from the same point of view?—I was told to deal with the troops there at the time, and I dealt with them.

13435. You did not go further than that; you did not express any opinion as to the adequacy of the garrison?—Oh, yes, I think I did. It was a scheme based altogether on the initial preparations or preliminary steps to be taken pending the arrival of other troops, that was the nature of it.

13436. But looking to the preparations for war which were being made in the Transvaal, to which I have referred just now, it did not impress itself upon your mind that the number of troops in the Colony would be unable to hold their own during that interval?—No, they would have been able to hold their own had the scheme been carried out in its entirety, and they did hold their own as a matter of fact. I do not know if you have the Scheme of Defence before you?

13437. Yes, you mean yours contained in the despatch of the 14th June?—Yes.

13438. Yes, I have it before me (*Vide Appendix to Report Vol. page 205*)?—That Scheme was drawn up by order of the War Office to deal with the troops then in Natal, and they were put in such positions as, to my thinking, would have enabled them to maintain themselves, falling back of course, not advancing until the arrival of such troops as would have turned the tide the other way; in other words, I think we could have filled in at the back behind that scheme anything from 50,000 to 150,000 men.

13439. In time?—In time; we did it on one side and why not on the other?

13440. Your Scheme involved the holding of Ladysmith?—No, you will see that it is based on Estcourt, 30 miles south of the Tugela, and more than 40 from Ladysmith.

13441. But it is based also surely on a force at Ladysmith?—Certainly, it dealt with the force already at Ladysmith. The Scheme was based on the placing of troops in such a position as would enable them either to advance, to stand fast, or to retire, as circumstances would determine. It was based, if you might take the simile of a telescope drawn out to its full length, and that telescope might have been closed at one end, or in the middle, or at the other end as circumstances, which alone could be dictated by the enemy, would determine.

13442. But as I read paragraph 4 of your despatch of that date, you moved up the greater part of the Ladysmith force to Glencoe, and moved up the Maritzburg force to Ladysmith?—Yes; to Glencoe, not to Dundee.

Glencoe is the highest point of the railway running through the Biggarsberg Pass.

13443. And then you say: "The fresh Ladysmith force would then be in a position either to support Glencoe and maintain the line of the Biggarsberg or to operate against Van Reenen's Pass should circumstances necessitate"?—Quite so: "should circumstances necessitate"; as I say, if you will look at the points named in it, Estcourt was the base of it.

13444. And "entrenched posts would be formed at a point between Newcastle and Estcourt"?—Yes.

13445. If you form entrenched posts I suppose you mean to hold them?—Not at all; to hold them from detached raiding parties of six, eight and ten men at night, but you see it is not easy to recreate the position exactly. Let me explain it: you had 120 miles of railroad exposed to danger, and were you going to abandon that railroad from the outset? Were you going to leave it open to the attack of seven or ten men with dynamite, or to a raiding party of 20 men, or were you going to protect it until such time as the enemy came in force? If the Boers did not mean to take the initiative, which was quite possible—and I am not sure that they would not have done better if they had not—we, by abandoning all that line of railroad, left 120 miles of railroad open to them to seize, not even to destroy, but to seize, so that if they meant to invade subsequently they would have had that line to use.

13446. That is what I want to get at; that your idea was to have the garrison of Natal so distributed as to protect the Colony against raids?—Yes, raids on the railroad.

13447. And it was the danger of a raid which you principally had in your mind?—Or of the attack of a small commando or party; circumstances can alone decide when the troops are placed how you will subsequently handle them. The Scheme in its essence was a defensive scheme; when later it was made an offensive scheme the whole value of the scheme disappeared. It was made an *offensive* scheme; it was a *defensive* scheme.

13448. The object of your Scheme was pretty much this, that although the Northern strip of Natal might have been occupied by the Boers, yet it was unlikely that any further serious advance into the heart of the Colony would be undertaken?—Oh, no, I did not consider it unlikely, and I put the troops in the position I thought would meet either of the three eventualities that I have named, either that the Boers would remain within their frontiers and raid us, or that they would invade from the Transvaal and not from the Orange Free State, or that they would invade in force, in which case we should have retired over the Tugela on Estcourt.

13449. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Where would you have accumulated your stores for the extended force?—I did not accumulate any stores, but you are asking me now about a thing after it has occurred. I should have been very loth to accumulate stores in positions where they could be reached by the enemy. I give you that general answer. I would have accumulated them at Maritzburg or Estcourt, or wherever I made my base.

13450. (*Chairman.*) At any rate at that time, as I understand, you did not anticipate the urgency of preparations against an invasion in force such as afterwards occurred?—Oh, no, I would not say that. I did not know the diplomatic initiative would be taken with the rapidity with which it was taken, but nevertheless you notice that despatch begins with the words—

13451. Which despatch do you refer to?—The one you are dealing with of the 14th June. It begins with the words, "On receipt of orders." If I remember aright it begins with the remark that these movements would take place on the receipt of orders.

13452. That is in the telegram, I think. "On receiving instructions"?—Yes, "On receipt of orders from England," it was originally, but the ciphering is a troublesome matter. The initiative of the movement was thrown altogether upon the Home authorities; that is to say these movements would not take place, as proposed by me, there, until they were ready at home. There is the initial idea: the key of the thing

is in these first words. I was not going to move these troops as I proposed until everything was ready behind; that was the meaning of it.

13453. (*Sir John Edge.*) What do you mean by everything being ready behind?—Until the people in England—the Government—had fully made up their minds what they were going to do.

13454. (*Chairman.*) Supposing the Boers did not wait for that?—Then we should have had to make the best hand we could, and I think we could have made a very good hand too.

13455. (*Sir John Edge.*) What arrangements were you proposing with regard to a descent across the Orange River? Did you think you had sufficient troops in South Africa to hold the frontier of Natal and to hold the frontier in Cape Colony until troops could come from India or England?—I never proposed to hold the frontier; the whole gist of my despatch was falling back.

13456. I will put it in another way: Had you sufficient troops to cover Durban and to cover Cape Town?—Absolutely. They did it. Take De Aar: it was never stirred. Naauwpoort was never stirred. Stormberg was abandoned, and needlessly abandoned, because we tried to retake it the week after. These three points, taking Cape Colony first, were never stirred during the War. Orange River Bridge, which was right up against the Free State, was never stirred. De Aar was never taken. Naauwpoort was never taken, and Stormberg, as I say, was abandoned.

13457. If the commandoes that descended on Natal had descended on Naauwpoort and the Orange River they would have taken them, surely?—They would have stood their siege; they were entrenched positions. In the despatch from the War Office I was urged to go forward and I said "No, I cannot do it, they—the detachments—will be overwhelmed at once," and I took up certain positions in the Cape Colony which I maintain were never touched during the whole war.

13458. How many troops had you allotted under your scheme to the covering of Cape Town, that is covering it at any place you like back from the frontier?—It is all stated in that despatch. I had very few troops—three battalions and a battery, and details and Volunteers and Irregulars.

13459. Surely if the Boers had descended with 20,000 men they could have masked your three battalions and marched into Cape Town?—Certainly, no matter what you did at any moment you might have that state of things if the Boers came on in overwhelming force.

13460. Does it not resolve itself into this, that looking at the troops you had under your command in the colonies, you had not a sufficient force to cover Durban or Maritzburg?—Oh, yes, I think I had sufficient force to have delayed any force coming on until such time as reinforcements should be run in. We were 12 days from Bombay and 21 days from England. You apparently forgot the existence of the Natal Colonial troops, and of the 5,000 or 6,000 Irregulars which came to us from the Rand before the war.

13461. Supposing you had been Commander of the Boer Forces and made up your mind to descend upon Cape Town, was there any force anywhere between Cape Town and the frontier that could have held you?—No, they would have cut the communications, as they did later when there was ten times that force in the country.

13462. They would have been in Cape Town?—Cape Town is a strongly entrenched position covered with a fleet. It is a very long march from Bloemfontein to Cape Town, and there was a large fleet there. They could have landed the sailors and covered the place with the guns of the ships by moving them round to Table Bay. Those were again the Colonial Irregulars.

13463. What would have been the result from the military point of view if they had masked the three or four battalions that you had towards the frontier in Cape Colony and had marched down on Cape Town? What would have been the result on the Dutch populated districts of Cape Colony?—I think it would not have been as bad as it was later on. I think the active aggression would have been so blatant so visible

Lieut.-General Sir William F. Butler,
K. C. B.

11 Feb. 1936.

Lieut.-
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

to the world, that they would have met with a considerable amount of local resistance.

13464. In the Dutch part of Cape Colony?—I do think so. I think if there had been an aggressive invasion in the earlier days—sweeping down there—they would not have met with the support they afterwards met with.

13465. I do not want to pursue it, but looking back from your present experience do you conceive that you had a sufficient force in Cape Colony and Natal to cover Maritzburg or to cover Cape Town?—We did cover Cape Town.

13466. Did you consider that you had a sufficient force? You covered Cape Town no doubt in this way, that the Boers descended upon Natal, but looking back on it, do you contend that you had a sufficient force (I am speaking of the time before the Indian Contingent arrived) in Cape Colony and in Natal to cover your capitals?—Yes, until reinforcements arrived, I think so, certainly. As I have said, we did it, and we had no necessity to move the fleet.

13467. (*Viscount Esher.*) Had you as many troops as General Goodenough had asked for?—I do not know what troops General Goodenough had asked for.

13468. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Had you any documents passed on to you from your predecessor?—I told you that all confidential documents were destroyed.

13469. For instance, on the question of transport there was a letter of the 8th June, 1898 (*Vide Appendix to Report Vol., page 195*), from the Quartermaster-General to the General Officer Commanding in South Africa, which stated, among other things, that the Secretary of State for War had "approved of a standing contract being entered into for the necessary animals to horse the vehicles alluded to in preceding paragraph within seven days."—I remember that.

13470. Did you see that?—Yes. It was afterwards annulled.

13471. Because I notice in a later despatch of your own, I think in this very one we have been discussing, you mention that horses could be procured in a period of from one to three weeks?—Yes. What is the date of that telegram?

13472. The original one to General Goodenough is dated 8th June, 1898, whilst this other one is at the end of your letter of the 14th June, 1899, a year later—the letter we have been discussing at length. It is in paragraph 11: "These animals could only be obtained and forwarded to join their units after the expiration of a period varying from one to three weeks." It speaks of the animals as animals that could be procured in the future?—Yes.

13473. But it seems to me rather strange that a year before, on the 8th June, 1898, the Secretary of State had authorised a standing contract being entered into for animals to be ready within seven days?—That contract was sent home and never ratified, and the letter of the Quartermaster-General, to which you allude, was subsequently annulled; you will find allusion to it in several of my telegrams. Have you got my telegram of the 23rd June to the Secretary of State for War?

(*Chairman.*) Yes, I have got it here: "Mules could probably be obtained here, but period of delivery would chiefly depend upon Mr. Weil, who is now in Zambesia, and has been telegraphed for," &c., &c.

13474. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Who was Weil?—A large contractor who had been a contractor in the Matabele War and in the Raid, and who was a contractor during the recent war for great numbers of transport animals.

13475. A horse dealer?—A general contractor for everything.

13476. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) My point really was this, that this telegram and some others all spoke of the probability of mules being obtained as a thing for the future, whereas this letter to General Goodenough of the 8th June, 1898, gave a definite decision apparently of the Secretary of State with regard to a standing contract being made ready for war?—That contract was sent home and not ratified, and the letter, as I have said, was cancelled. It is one of the matters alluded to

in the extract which I read, viz., "There has been a good deal of confusion at headquarters from various branches having taken action without reference to the Commander-in-Chief's Department," &c., &c.

13477. Could you put us in the way of finding evidence of that?—I can trace allusions to it all through my own telegrams.

13478. (*Viscount Esher.*) When you say "sent home" by whom was it sent home?—By my predecessor.

13479. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) This letter to your predecessor of the 8th June, 1898, was a very definite letter which really gives the impression of the Secretary of State preparing for hostilities in case they should break out, and then a year later we find the thing is discussed as a problematical affair again?—I refer to my telegram of the 10th July, 1899: "Referring to telegram of 21st June and subsequent cables received, it is necessary to clear up situation, and so prevent misapprehension. Contracts are now out for 1,470 mules; they are being supplied by about the 20th July at following average rates: Natal, 750 at £30; Cape Colony, 720 at £33," etc. I save on that contract alone £20,000.

13480. Do I understand that the contract which General Goodenough was authorised to enter into was cancelled or not allowed at your request?—No, it was sent for ratification, and it was not ratified.

13481. (*Viscount Esher.*) But before you took over the command?—Before I took over the command, and I must say at once fortunately not ratified, because instead of spending the enormous sum that was spent on mules and horses we should have had to spend double. Remember you proposed starting that contract at £40 in one Colony and £45 in the other for mules that I was getting at the same time at a saving of £20,000 on only 1,470 mules, or some 2,000 animals. If you struck the first note of your contract at that enormous price, I think it might have gone to anything you like later on.

13482. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I am not contending that such a contract should have been confirmed, but that the principle of the letter of the 8th June, 1898, should have been carried out, and that a standing contract should have been entered into for the necessary animals as early as possible, for assuming war had broken out between 8th June, 1898, and the time you assumed command, we should have been without animals?—Yes, by a sudden invasion, of course, but I do not think there could have been a sudden invasion without our knowing what was going on beforehand. We were as free to go into Bloemfontein and Pretoria as you are free to go into Kensington. We were constantly travelling and moving about, and I do not think that that was a contingency to be reckoned. We had tens of thousands of our people in the Transvaal. I will not say it was not possible, but a sudden rush of that sort was certainly most improbable; that it could have taken place in force was impossible.

13483. (*Viscount Esher.*) In reference to the questions the Chairman put to you, it must have been present to your mind in May and June that the policy which the Government were pursuing might lead to war and probably would lead to war?—I think you will find that in my despatches in June particularly, not in May so much.

13484. Having that present in your mind, did you deliberately come to the conclusion that the number of troops in South Africa was sufficient?—No, it was never anticipated for a moment that the number of troops in South Africa was sufficient.

13485. I mean sufficient to make a stand until reinforcements arrived?—No, nor did I think that in all contingencies. If the initiative was pressed to a certain point, then it became a question. We were moving at that time more rapidly in one direction than in another, but that we could have held our own on these lines of retirements in face of advances until reinforcements came I have not the least doubt.

13486. Anyhow, you did not advise the Government to reinforce the garrison in South Africa at that time?—No; if you turn to the despatch of the 23rd June you will see I am censured for even suggesting it.

Have you had that despatch? It is so difficult to get on to a level plane in these things of four years ago that I will read it for you.

13487. (*Chairman.*) What do you refer to?—On the receipt of this telegram, ordering the provision of mules, which I put at 2,000, but which the War Office cut down to 1,340, after a deal of telegraphing they asked for "any observations." I do not know if you have the telegram there, it is a long one. I took stock of the situation then.

13488. What is the date?—It is dated 21st June, from the Secretary of State: "Referring to letter of 8th June last year, and pending the receipt of your Report now on passage home, you are authorised to obtain immediately the animals, with proportion of native drivers, necessary to complete Regimental Transport of the Force in South Africa. We calculate present deficiency on scale of your letter of 24th June last should not exceed 1,340 mules. Can you get these on the spot? Telegraph this as soon as possible." And at the end it says: "Main object of these steps is to increase efficiency of existing force, apart from question of reinforcements, which is not now raised. Do you desire to make any observations?" That mystified me a good deal, because the purchase of these animals could not be done in a hole and corner, it would be known from one end of South Africa to the other, and it seemed to me that it would be a very considerable advance on anything I had got before. Up to that time we had been retrenching, as I have already stated to the Commission. My proposals for the acquisition of a large farm for remounts, drill facilities, hospital accommodation, and Ordnance stores, were negatived; our reserve men—trained men—were taken away from South Africa. A battalion of infantry which had been at Ladysmith for two years and knew all the surrounding country had been removed to India—the experienced officer who had held command at Ladysmith had been recently recalled to England. There was no General in Natal. I looked on the one side, and I saw what seemed to me a very serious political agitation going on with a Party that I have not alluded to yet, whom I had always looked upon as a Third Party; they were pressing on all they knew. The Government did not seem to be aware of that, and this telegram brought matters to such a point that I thought it gave me the opportunity to speak. So I took those words "any observations," and answered in a way which I thought would at least ring the War Office bell. I think you will find my answer there.

13489. On the 23rd June, that is the one we referred to before?—Yes. I had no power to spend a £5 note, but I had power to send a telegram.

13490. Your answer to the observations was as follows: "You ask for my observations: present condition of opinion here is highly excited, and doubtless the news quoting preparations referred to in your telegram, if it transpires, will add largely to the ferment which are endeavouring to reduce by every means. Persistent effort of a party to produce war, forms in my estimation, graver elements in situation here. Believe war between white races, coming as sequel to Jameson Raid, and subsequent events of last three years, would be greatest calamity that ever occurred in South Africa"; that is the one I quoted to you before?—I do not think you read that part to me.

13491. (*Viscount Esher.*) What do these words mean, "Persistent efforts of a party"?—That is what I did not think the Government were aware of at the time.

13492. Who was the third party?—The third parties that were pressing on the War were the Party of the Raid.

13493. You mean the late Mr. Rhodes and his followers?—Well, I am sorry to name anyone, particularly a man who is dead, but I say the party of the Raid.

13494. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The party of the South African League; is that what you mean?—The party of the South African League and of the Raid.

13495. (*Sir John Edge.*) Did you think that party was likely to involve us in war in the immediate future?—No, I knew that as long as certain forces were kept distinct from that Party they would not involve us in war; in

other words, I knew the Boers would sit perfectly quiet, as they did before, but it was a very different thing the minute I, representing the Government or the War Office, came into the field, even with the purchase of horses. That is what I knew. There is one Chairman of the South African League; perhaps your Lordship might like to look at him (*handing in a photograph*).

13496. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You say you were censured?—I read it in that light; have you got the telegram?

13497. It is from the Secretary of State, dated 27th June, 1899: "Concluding paragraph of your telegram of 23rd; you have evidently misunderstood my telegram of 21st. You were invited to offer observations as to suitability of War Office proposals to secure object in view, viz., increased efficiency of existing force, not as to general merits of policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government. You cannot understand too clearly that whatever your private opinions, it is your duty to be guided in all questions of policy by High Commissioner, who is fully aware of our views, and whom you will, of course, loyally support"?—I received that for my attempts to tell them what I thought was the gravity of this course that was then, to my mind, being inaugurated.

13498. (*Sir John Edge.*) Is that photograph a fair sample of the South African League?—It is a fair sample of the up-country Chairman at that time.

13499. It was never in your contemplation that Mr. Kruger would declare War?—My view was this, that as long as I held the neck of the bottle, so to speak, there would be no war. The Boers knew perfectly well the difference between that Third Party that I allude to—the party of the Raid—and the Imperial Government, and they would look on perfectly quietly at any attempts at raiding by that Third Party, but the minute the Imperial Government moved then I looked for the most serious state of things, and I could not put into stronger language than I did that view.

13500. The Imperial Government moving in what way?—I had all along pointed out in my despatches that there was a Party there working all they knew for war. The Imperial Government was distinct from that party, distinct in the eyes of the Boers and distinct all along through South Africa; but to my mind the minute there was the least indication of the Imperial Government coming in, in front of, or behind, that party then there would be a serious state of things. Until then there was, to my mind, no probability—no possibility—of an invasion. That was the state of my mind at the time, and I wished to point it out before final decisions were arrived at. "Let us get our house in order, let us get our stores, and our Staff, let us at least know what you are going to do." You will find urgent telegrams home a few days later asking for a B Staff, as we were being robbed already in contracts, and I said, "Let us make such preliminary arrangements as are necessary to meet the altered condition of affairs if these decisions are arrived at." That was my view, but, as I have said, up to that date, the trend was the other way.

13501. (*Chairman.*) What do you mean by the Reserve men being taken away?—The men who would pass into the Reserve at the expiration of their time with the Colours.

13502. The time-expired men?—Yes, time-expired with the Colours, but a large body of old soldiers.

13503. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Is there any power under the Act of Parliament to retain these men unless there is a state of national emergency?—I think there is. You call out the Reserves in a national emergency, but I think you could have retained them longer without a national emergency.

13504. (*Chairman.*) I think the fact that you could not retain them was proved by this, that in order to retain them in India during the War they had to be offered advantages?—I only give that as an instance of how little the idea of "an impending war" was made visible to us from England.

13505. If I understand your argument aright it is this, that although you wished to have any deficiency in the equipment of your existing force made good, you would have deprecated any additions on the ground that you would have brought about the very contingency

Lieut.
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

which you wished to avoid?—Unless the whole question was to be considered and taken as it was, but merely a reinforcement of a few thousand men, 4,000 or 5,000, or 10,000, would have added to the state of suspicion and tension which existed. As I said before, as long as I held the neck of the bottle there, and made no move with the troops, the raiders might do what they liked, they might go anywhere they liked, and they were going all through the Transvaal at the time, but I knew well that nothing would grow serious, and nothing did grow serious, until we came into line. It was a calculation of chances, as everything in war must be, and see how it turned out! Nothing became serious until we moved the troops. Despite my protests against movement, you will see in the telegram of the 3rd August, a proposal to move the troops to Laing's Nek, in Natal, which I was not even informed of: that, if carried out, would have produced immediate war, and we would have been still less prepared.

13506. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) May we take it that there is not a word of truth in the statement that has been currently reported that you wrote either to the War Office or to the Colonial Office or to some public authority that in the event of a union between the South African Republic and the Orange Free State 100,000 or 150,000 men would be required?—There is no document in evidence of that, but I stated 100,000 men over and over again; to be more particular, I stated 80,000, irrespective of the lines of communications, and the thing was growing. I was asked by a very high authority early in May if it was necessary to bring pressure on the Boers with reference to some political questions, such as the Franchise, could the existing force in South Africa be of any use if moved towards the frontier? I laughed openly at the idea. "No," I said, "the existing force in South Africa could only hold a few positions, which I have in my mind, until reinforcements arrive, and to bring pressure on the Dutch Republics at least 40,000 men will be required." That was early in May—a sudden off-hand question, nothing more. As things went on I put that number very much higher, and I said to my Staff, "80,000 men, exclusive of the lines of communication"; and that was nothing wonderful, as the Dutch were writing to that effect at the time.

13507. Did you put that in an official document of any sort?—I do not know that I put it into any official document.

13508. (*Sir John Edge.*) Did you inform the Government or the War Office?—No, in fact I waited to be asked my numbers, because this question of numbers was a very critical thing; the question of numbers depended on a good many things. First of all it depended on what you were going to war about, what you were to fight the Boers on. A question which would involve the whole of the Boers coming together would be a matter of such a nature that no man could say how many troops would be needed to meet it, because on that question would depend the numbers against you. For instance, if Mr. Kruger had fought on the Drifts question seven years ago, I do not think he would have got one third of the Boers to follow him, but fighting on a question which involved the independence of the country, he would get 95 per cent. of the Boers on his side; so that to say off-hand how many men it was necessary to fight the Boers with was only the work of a tyro, and no man would attempt to state it.

13509. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And as a matter of fact you did not?—To the best of my recollection, I never put it down, because I knew once down it would have been a dangerous thing, but I spoke of 100,000 then.

13510. I ask this question because for the last two years we have heard of a document that went to the War Office or the Colonial Office with that view of yours, and that it bore on the face of it the word "Preposterous," written by a very high authority, and one wants to knock that report on the head once and for all if it is not true?—It was never put down that I know of, but that it was spoken of a dozen times is equally certain. As to the word "preposterous" written on the face of my despatch, I know nothing about it; but such a word or thought would, in the temper of the time, have not been improbable.

13511. (*Viscount Esher.*) You never heard of such a document containing a reference to a statement of yours to that effect having been sent to the War Office?—It is quite possible that the people to whom I spoke of the matter may have mentioned it. I used to say 80,000 men irrespective of the lines of communication, but that was only arrived at late in June when matters had become different. The Boers themselves were putting it at 100,000, and it was in the Cape Town papers: "100,000 men will be necessary to conquer us if it is a question of our independence."

13512. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And your 80,000, irrespective of lines of communication, would mean 100,000 with lines of communication probably?—Yes, but allow me again to make a remark or two. Not only was the question complicated by what you were to fight the Boers on, for on that would depend the resistance of the Boers and the numbers against us, but it was further complicated by what you were going to do. If it was to be a case of "no goldfields and no territory" I think 50,000 men would have sufficed to beat the Boers; but if it was a case of going to the extreme end, then you ran up the numbers by ten and twenty times, you might multiply as you pleased. It is evident that what would take the German Army to Paris would not take it to the Pyrenees, for instance; it is evident that what would defeat the French if the Germans engaged them somewhere within 100 miles of the frontier would not take them over the whole of France, nor would ten times the number; so that talking of the numbers necessary is to me the most intensely foolish thing because it all depends on these varying circumstances. Napoleon when he was invading Spain in 1808 said he would conquer it with the loss of 100,000 men, but he did not conquer Spain with 350,000 men. There is no such "rot" in the world as that forecasting of numbers. Excuse me for using the word "rot," but there is no other word to describe it.

13513. (*Chairman.*) We are getting a little far afield I think, but I would like just to put to you one or two quite precise questions to see if I have gathered your meaning correctly. I understand from what you have said that before the War, during the time of your command, you were of opinion that the force that you had in South Africa was as you have described sufficient to cover the capitals and to act as a defence against raids pending the arrival of reinforcements. Was not that so?—I think that the plan of defence was one, taken strictly as a defensive measure, which would have delayed operations sufficiently to enable reinforcements to arrive.

13514. And although you wished the equipment to be made complete, you did not urge the Government to increase the force by any moderate number of men, because you considered that that would do more harm than good, and precipitate matters?—Not so at all; if you will follow the context of my despatches you will find that when I found that nothing was being done I went on trying to impress upon them what I considered this War would mean, and you will find a despatch of mine on the 23rd August in which I fixed the unit of preparation at "divisions of cavalry."

13515. That is later than I am speaking of?—I know. My attitude was this—I told them on the 23rd June what I thought; "This is going to be the biggest thing you have been in," and as a matter of fact my draft telegram had an allusion to the American War of 120 years ago as a parallel to this war, but I cut it out because historical references might be supposed to impinge on politics.

13516. I do not want to interrupt you, but I really want to keep to the point. I want to get at what your view was in June, at the time you sent in your scheme, and I really did understand you to say that at that time you would have deprecated the sending of a few additional thousands of men because that would have brought about the contingency which you feared?—I would not have deprecated it, in the sense that I would have opposed it, but I do not think a few thousand men would have materially altered the defensive part of the scheme. If you will allow me I will just show you what I thought. I considered the scheme adequate to the conditions contemplated in the War Office letter of the 21st

December, 1898, and existing up to the 12th June, 1899, in South Africa. It was a wholly different matter when its nature, essence and purpose were changed when we assumed the initiative in September, 1899.

13517. Quite so, but I am wanting you to take it at June. At that time you did not urge the Government to increase the force in South Africa, for the reasons you have stated?—And for the fact that they said in their telegram to me that the question of reinforcements would not then be considered.

13518. And I think I gathered from you that you thought that if they had gone on with the accumulations of stores even at that time it might have precipitated matters?—Not exactly: I was urging the preparation of stores and of staffs in July; the necessity to my mind first was to have a staff for these contracts.

13519. In advance of the force you had in South Africa?—No, not in advance—behind, at the base.

13520. I meant in addition—a force in addition to what you had in South Africa?—Yes, you will find my telegrams asking for a full B staff; that was after we had entered into the purchase of the animals and wagons for the force then in South Africa. The idea that the force in South Africa was sufficient never entered one's head; it was always alluded to as a question "pending reinforcements." You will see that in my telegram to the Secretary of State, 11th July, 1899, after summarising the situation to date, I say "These arrangements 'promise to complete all orders received from you relating to efficiency of existing forces apart from question of reinforcements.'" That was the reason why I put my base at Estcourt, to give ample time to fall back on a position which was 30 miles behind the Tugela. I would like to read to the Commission a letter which I wrote, because when I sent what I looked upon as a very important warning about "the greatest calamity possible," in answer to the request for observations, I thought it right to let Sir Alfred Milner know that I had sent that message, and I forwarded a copy of my despatch to him with what I had said, and I received this letter from him; "June 24th, 1899.—I have to thank you for sending me a copy of your reply to the War Office telegram of June 22nd. I regret that you should have thought it necessary, in the observations with which your telegram concludes, to enter into political considerations, especially as the tendency of your remarks is in my opinion calculated to convey a wrong impression of the actual situation here, and of the effect likely to be produced by a resolute attitude on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I have informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies that I entirely demur to these observations." I was then placed in this position to my mind, that if I tried to warn the Government of what I thought was coming I was running counter to Sir Alfred Milner. I wrote to him in reply: "I am obliged for your letter of the 24th inst., in which you thank me for having sent you a copy of my message, answering the War Office telegram of the 22nd June. I regret that the observations in the concluding portion of that message, replying to the Secretary of State for War, should not have commended themselves to you, but I cannot admit that those observations can be fairly defined as 'political considerations.' They refer to the possibilities of war and to war in its worst form. They were made in what I believe to be the highest interests of the Empire and for the honour of Her Majesty's Army." That brought matters more or less to a climax. I found that if I tried to warn my people, as I thought I was entitled, and even bound to warn them, I was running counter to Sir Alfred Milner; so having received that message I said on the 4th July, "If I am not satisfying you I can only place my resignation in your hands." As to saying whether 100,000 or 200,000 men were necessary it never entered my mind to send calculations as to numbers, because, as I say, everything depended on the two things, what you were going to fight the Boers on, and how far you were going to push your conquests. If you were going to dictate terms, 50,000, 60,000, or 70,000 men would do it if properly handled. If you were going on the other hand to pursue matters to extreme lengths, "not a shred of independence," "up to the Limpopo," and the rest of it, then it might take

200,000 men to do it. But to expect a man before you told him you were going to war at all, and when in effect you told him you were not going to war, when you had already told him, as in the message of 27th June, he was not to bother his head about it and was only to make the things that were there efficient, and that the question of reinforcements would not then be considered—to expect him, I say, on such premises, to ask you for reinforcements and give you estimates of numbers required for the conquest of the Dutch States is now rather a wide postdiluvial demand. I come now to another point. You will find that on the 23rd August I placed the unit of preparation at divisions of Cavalry, divisions of Infantry, and divisions of Artillery.

13521. By telegram?—No, by demand on the Ordinance.

13522. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) That was the day on which you left South Africa?—Yes.

13523. There is one question I wish to ask. I think you recommended that we should not attempt to defend the bridges of the Orange River, excepting the Orange River Bridge?—Yes.

13524. That being the case, did you advise that preparation should be made for the destruction of the other bridges so that the Boers could not take possession of them?—No, because the bridges were destroyed by the Boers, which showed they looked upon them as inimical to them.

13525. Did they not, in the first instance, use them to invade the Colony, and then destroy them on retiring?—Yes, they used them to come to Colesberg and to Stormberg, but they never stirred that line that I had taken up with these Infantry detachments.

13526. On the question of bridges, is it not good policy in war, when you have retired, to destroy the bridges, knowing that the enemy will use them?—We were not retiring, although we were not advancing.

13527. You were allowing the Boers to invade Cape Colony?—We were leaving bridges standing that we deemed necessary to our own advance afterwards.

13528. Could we use them for an advance if the Boers took them and destroyed them when they retired?—I may mention that the measurements of all these bridges were sent home in July, I think in case the Boers destroyed them. That shows the view we held.

13529. So as to replace them?—Yes. I think you will find that despatch some time in July or August; about that time the measurements of all those bridges were sent home, and I think the girders were provided.

13530. Did you not afterwards regret that you had not made preparations to destroy those bridges?—No, I did not, because I thought that would at once have brought on a conflict.

13531. I mean after the declaration of war?—No, I did not regret that we did not destroy them, inasmuch as we were fearful that the Boers would destroy them. I do not say we ourselves, but the Intelligence Department were.

13532. (Sir John Jackson.) I think you said in the letter of 7th February that the scheme of defence was spoken of as a thing that could have been got up in a few days?—Yes, that is what the Under Secretary of State stated in his letter. I thought it was a matter of much greater delay, and thought, and consequence, and consideration, than "a few days or a few hours."

13533. And in point of fact you were personally anxious to go over the ground yourself?—I thought that necessary.

13534. You thought that a matter of great importance?—Of the greatest.

13535. When you got the instructions to get up this scheme, was it within your knowledge that the people at home contemplated the probability of war within a short time?—Not the slightest. I cannot give you a better answer to that than that I brought out all my family in March.

13536. But in any case, you got no instructions indicating that the preparation of this scheme pressed

Lieut.
General Sir
William
F. Butler
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.

Feb. 1903.

as a matter of urgency?—On the contrary, I thought it was a matter that required mature deliberation, the more so inasmuch as I had to differ with the War Office on so many points.

13537. And in point of fact I think you told us that although the War Office suggested that a good deal of this work might have been done by staff officers, you had no staff available?—No, I had a very small staff; I think I had an Assistant Adjutant-General, a Commissariat officer, an Ordnance officer, an Engineer and Artillery officer, all fully occupied with their respective duties.

13538. But no men you could have spared for that particular purpose?—Not at all; I had a very small staff and a very large command.

13539. Is it the fact that prior to the War you had an entire absence of modern guns in South Africa?—Except in Natal.

13540. In Cape Colony?—In Cape Colony I had only the old seven-pounder guns. I think you will find a demand for a battery of modern guns to be sent out at once in that telegram of the 9th June.

13541. Do you not think that guns could have been sent out at that time without causing a rupture with the Boers, or do you think it would have been likely to cause rupture with the Boers?—No. The three batteries of Artillery that were at Ladysmith were sent out there a year and a half before the time we are dealing with, in 1897; there were 18 modern guns there for two years before the war began.

13542. As far as I have read, I do not see that you made any particular requisitions for Artillery, but there is something said about the want of rifles; then I think in your evidence this morning you stated that you got a reply to that request that you had more rifles than were needed?—I was told I had more rifles in Ordnance store than could possibly be needed or than were likely to be needed; it was a very small supply of 800 or 1,000, perhaps.

13543. (*Sir John Edge.*) In preparing a scheme for the defence of those Colonies, I suppose you would consider what would probably be the line of advance of a possible enemy?—Quite; it was with that view that the dispositions I proposed were recommended.

13544. Did you consider that the line of advance would be into Natal and not into Cape Colony?—No; I considered it depended on whether the Orange Free State at that time joined or did not join. If we were at war with the Transvaal only, the line would have been undoubtedly Natal, and possibly Kimberley, because the Transvaal approached Kimberley within 40 or 50 miles, but if the Orange Free State joined the Transvaal, then, the Cape Colony would have been liable to attack.

13545. Did you place your forces in your line of defence as far as Cape Colony was concerned, to defend the bridges over which Lord Roberts subsequently advanced?—Yes, I held the Orange River Bridge, and I held Naauwpoort, Stormberg, and De Aar, the lines upon which he concentrated and by which he advanced.

13546. Could you give me even, roughly, the number of men you had; you had one battery of seven-pounder old-fashioned guns; you had no Cavalry, had you?—In Cape Town?

13547. Yes.—None, except the irregular Cavalry and some Mounted Infantry.

13548. How many Infantry had you?—I had four battalions, I think.

13549. In Cape Colony?—I will let you know exactly.

(*Sir George Taubman Goldie.*) In Cape Colony when Sir Forestier Walker arrived there were two and a half battalions, three Mounted Infantry companies, and two companies Royal Garrison Artillery, being one battalion and one Mounted Infantry company less than the peace garrison, owing to the Liverpool Regiment being ordered to Natal.

13550. (*Sir John Edge.*) I suppose, in any scheme of defence, you would allot a proportion of that force to the protection of Cape Town itself, would you not?—No.

13551. Would you leave Cape Town unguarded?—

We had the Volunteers and the Navy, and sailors from the ships; we were not leaving it unguarded there was a wing left in Cape Town. Cape Town is under the fire of the guns of the Fleet.

13552. I want to see how many troops you had in the front?—There were three and a half battalions at the time you ask about, reduced afterwards to two and a half battalions, and reinforced shortly after by two battalions.

13553. Then were these bridges unguarded, and what was to prevent the Transvaal and Free State marching over these bridges and getting right in your rear?—They did it afterwards when we had 300,000 men.

13554. Assuming that they had come on, it was an event you would have to contemplate in drawing up the scheme of defence, and assuming that they did come on, what was to prevent them getting into the rear of your force?—Nothing, and I believe that the army we would have concentrated would have given them an overwhelming defeat somewhere much nearer Cape Town than we subsequently fought at, and I do not think they would ever have got back.

13555. That is another question, but you did not contemplate fighting retiring actions?—Not in Cape Colony; I did in the other direction, destroying the line of railway as I went.

13556. In Cape Colony you could not have retired?—I say, if you look at my despatch, that it might have been impossible that they would ever reach it.

13557. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were you aware of the quantity of ammunition, guns and general munitions of war that the Boers were obtaining during the time you were out there?—We were aware of it. I think we got pretty accurate information as to what they were getting in, except at the last. I think there is a certain amount of misapprehension on that question of ammunition; if we could get an exact return of the Boers' ammunition and armament, I think you would find that they got fifty per cent. of it in the last four months; they were running it in undoubtedly all through August, September, and October. For instance, they had very few Vickers-Maxim guns in the beginning, and they got them in just before, or at the time, hostilities broke out. I happen to know from an agent of Vickers-Maxim when they were shipped from here.

13558. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Were those pom-poms?—Yes, I think they went out at the same time from the Docks here that the first Artillery went out.

13559. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Large quantities of that material came through Cape Town?—No, none of it through Cape Town; they may have smuggled some in, but 80 per cent. of it came through Delagoa Bay.

13560. But during your time there did not large quantities come through Cape Town?—Not that we knew of; there may have been something smuggled, but we knew nothing of ammunition coming through Cape Town. There was a certain amount of ammunition found to have gone through Port Elizabeth, but that is 500 miles from Cape Town.

13561. You are not aware of its coming through Cape Town?—No.

13562. But you were aware there had been large quantities of ammunition and guns reaching the Boers?—They were duly reported home to the Intelligence Department every week.

13563. Did you know of these large guns of position, the 4.7 guns?—Yes, our despatches were mostly put together in June for the Intelligence Office book, but I think the greater part of the armament or a great portion of it was received subsequent to June.

13564. Did you form any opinion as to what the Boers required those large quantities of guns and ammunition for?—There is no doubt that when they determined to offer resistance to the end they provided for it with ammunition, and they had the forts round Pretoria to arm with big guns.

13565. Resistance against whom?—Against us; when they made up their minds that they were going to

resist, to fight for certain points, I think they laid in a stock of ammunition that appeared to many excessive, but as the war went on they always seemed to have enough of it.

13566. It was not only the question of ammunition, but the large quantity of guns, rifles, and heavy artillery?—Yes.

13567. What was your opinion as to why they required that armament?—I do not know their minds. I suppose they thought they would need them in a protracted war, and it was also expected they would stand a siege in Pretoria.

13568. Against whom?—Against us.

13569. Then you must have thought at that time that they intended war against us?—No, I did not think they intended war against us. I always held that if certain forces that were working for war went on, war must come. They, I believe, thought the same, that is to say as to the action of the Third Party I have alluded to. They prepared to meet that contingency after the Raid, and they continued on to the very edge of the war.

13570. And you think then that the Boers were simply getting all this ammunition, and providing themselves with all this heavy artillery, rifles, and so forth, for the purpose of defence?—I do not know that they had so very many of these heavy guns. Their plan of attack was to invade Northern Natal.

13571. In point of fact they had only four, but they had ordered sixteen; it was believed by the Intelligence Department that they were in possession of 16 heavy guns?—They had ordered them, but they had not been delivered. We knew of the delivery of at least two large guns, but I knew that, whatever might be the amount of their armament or ammunition, we must have one hundred times more.

13572. It was believed by the Intelligence Department that 16 had been delivered?—The evidence received was very conflicting; one man wrote that they had 22 in July, but one knew what that meant in transport, and never believed it. The reports we were getting were very mixed, and one had to run a line through them. On the whole I think the intelligence that was transmitted to the Intelligence Department was fairly accurate, only it did not cover the guns received during the last two months.

13573. You are of opinion that, notwithstanding the Boers provided themselves in this way, war might have been staved off?—That is a very difficult question to answer. I do not know whether it could have been staved off or not for ever, but that it could have been delayed I have not the smallest doubt.

13574. If you were of opinion that it might not be staved off, did you not think it would be prudent to make provision for the contingency of war?—I do not say it might not have been staved off; I say it is a difficult matter to decide, and I would not like to answer the question yea or nay. Time will answer its prudence.

13575. Under those circumstances do you not think it would have been well to advise the home people as to the number of troops that might possibly be required even for defence?—I have already explained what the numbers of troops meant. I certainly should have attempted to say what I considered necessary had I been asked, but I was not, and numbers are very deceptive things, as they proved over and over again in the war. I could only talk of the general nature of the war if it was to come, and I could scarcely exaggerate the impression of its importance that I held, not only to the War Office, but to everybody with whom I spoke. It was the common subject of many pessimistic views. I was laughed at and ridiculed and villified for it, but as to numbers I was careful because, as I say, it depended on circumstances and eventualities over which I had no control or knowledge.

13576. Was there nothing in the state of affairs of political parties in the Cape Colony at the time which would indicate that there was some combination existing here as between the political party known as the Bond and people in the Transvaal and Orange Free State?—Between what parties?

13577. The Bond?—No, we did not know of any.

13578. Were no reports of that kind made at the time?—I do not think there were any reports; I do not know at this distance of time. Of course, there were remarks and newspaper assertions to any extent.

13579. And you did not know of any?—I did not know of any. There were a great many Intelligence documents sent home on the matter, but I do not know that any definite statements were made naming any people or bodies by reliable persons.

13580. Were the documents that were sent home by the Intelligence Department not supplied to you?—They should be sent by the Intelligence officer through me. That they were all thus sent I cannot say, nor can I say that all the reports were laid before me.

13581. You knew it was their opinion that the Boers were preparing for war against us?—We knew that the Boers were armed.

13582. Were preparing for war against us; that was the Intelligence Department's view?—Yes, that was frequently stated—preparing for war.

13583. But you did not agree with that?—No, I do not say I did not agree with it; I thought the Boers were arming, had armed, and had ammunition.

13584. And were preparing for war against us?—And were preparing for the eventuality of war.

13585. I quite see your point about the number of troops, and its being very difficult indeed to foretell the number required under certain conditions, but you might have apprehended that a certain number would be required for the purpose of defending the frontier?—The essence of the Boer position was this—suspicion; they suspected everything we did, and you will find that running through all my despatches. The essence of the difficulty of the position was suspicion on the part of the Boers that they were going to have repeated a Raid or series of Raids, and they had not been prepared in 1895-96; as a matter of fact they had hardly any ammunition at that time, and the first thing they did after the Raid was to begin to lay in rifles and ammunition, to build forts and order guns. In that sense they were preparing for war, but according to my belief, in that sense only. You will find all through this suspicion on the part of the Boers that they were to be raided; you will find it in the Proceedings of the Bloemfontein Conference; you will find it in the telegrams which I had to send to Natal where they were making preparations with armoured trains and running them about the railway. On June 17th I sent the officer commanding in Natal, Colonel Chisholm, this telegram: "General Officer Commanding, having received from High Commissioner your letter of May 26th, requires full explanation by telegraph as to recent proposals and recommendations made by you to the Government of Natal involving important military action on the frontier without any previous reference to him. This action has been taken in the face of orders and rules to the contrary. Send by mail detailed statements of your proposals for mobilisation. No movement is to be made or order issued without General Officer Commanding's authority." The Boers we knew were in a state of constant watchfulness and alarm along that frontier all that time. I doubt if the members of the Commission know exactly the state of the frontier at that moment. In July Colonels Hore and Baden-Powell arrived on the frontier and raised two regiments within sight of the Transvaal, at Mafeking. They were not under my command; they were acting under the High Commissioner. At this time, 17th June, that telegram marks the state in Natal: "No movement is to be made or order issued without General Officer Commanding's authority." But it was not so on the other frontiers—Bechuanaland and Rhodesia. You will find in these telegrams orders to send arms and ammunition to Rhodesia. I objected to these because they were outside my command, and therefore I could not have authority over them after they crossed the frontier, so I asked the Secretary of State's authority:—Would I send these rifles and ammunition wanted by the Rhodesian forces, which were being raised in Rhodesia and in the Protectorate, volunteers and others? And after a few days I got the sanc-

Lieut.-General Sir William F. Butler, K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
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F. Butler,
K.C.B.

11 Feb. 1903.

tion to do so. I think you will find in the beginning of July these various armaments going up. All that set the Boers in a state of unrest greater than they had been in before, which I think you will find repeated in my despatches. I have many telegrams and letters of that nature, but I do not want to weary the Commission with them, but I will give another letter which shows the state of the Western frontier, and how completely it was out of my control. In my telegram of the 12th June, I say: "South African Dutch community form very suspicious views as to intentions of the British Government." The essence of the situation was intense suspicion. With regard to the armoured train in Natal, I believe they had the idea that that would go raiding up into Pretoria.

13586. The point I was wanting to bring out was that everything at this time was really pointing to the Boers intending an attack upon us at some time?—I demur from that. Let us go to fact and not to opinion. We moved up in the middle of September those troops I was urged to move in June, and I declined, saying I would not do it. I said I would do it by order of the Secretary of State, but I said to Sir Alfred Milner, when other movements were suggested: "If you write me an order I shall do it," but that was not done. Then the raising of the two regiments took place on the frontier at Mafeking. The arrangements for the raiding from Tuli took form in June or earlier; they were to be 1,400 strong, to make a movement on the Transvaal, on Pretoria, or Pietersburg. I am afraid I laughed the thing to scorn; it was like throwing bits of bread at a stone wall; in fact many of the Third Party never got beyond the idea of the Raid of 1895-96. Baden-Powell went up to Rhodesia and came down to Mafeking and raised 250 men, and Hore raised 200 men, with the intention of invading the Transvaal, and their wagons were loaded up to march the day the Boers cut the railway, on or about the 11th October. These are facts that cannot be denied; they are not opinions but facts. The raid from Tuli I objected to. I said, "If I arm these people this Raid will be brought off by people not under my orders, the lines will be cut, and in the absence of information or communication they will carry out war on their own hook." My telegrams and letters are snapshots taken at the moment. My scheme, which you talk of now, and which does look so small, was a defensive scheme, but it was made an offensive scheme, and the whole nature of the thing was changed. The attitude of the Boers was one of intense suspicion; they thought they were to be raided and invaded, and they armed up to the eyes, but they did not move one man or cut the railway until we had encircled them round by troops. You will see that telegram of the 3rd August urging an advance on Laing's Nek. Of what? Of my little force in Natal—a telegram which I was not even shown. You will see that in September the garrisons from Cape Town and King Williams Town were moved to Stormberg, Naauwpoort, and De Aar and into Kimberley, where I never wanted them to go. I will give you, if you wish, the reasons why I objected to these "entanglements" at Ladysmith and at Kimberley. Following on the movements of the troops to the frontier the Boers did not make a move until we had 10,000 additional troops in Natal from India and the Mediterranean; they did not even move then. What was it made them move in the end? The mobilisation of the Army Corps and the appointment of Sir Redvers Buller to command.

13587. (Sir John Edge.) And, I suppose, food for their horses being on the veldt at the time?—The idea that the Boers wanted to produce war is to my mind wrong; it is a wrong reading of the situation, and on that all my preparations were based, and I was right. As a matter of fact the Boers never did move until the reinforcements had arrived and the Army Corps was mobilised.

13588. (Sir Frederick Darley.) In point of fact your opinion is that the action of England provoked the war?—No, I will not say that. We moved up a number of troops round the frontier.

13589. And in doing that provoked the war?—We sent a dozen officers from England into the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in July, raised troops at

Mafeking, reinforced Natal with 10,000 or 12,000 men, organised a raid from Tuli, moved troops to the frontiers and, finally, mobilised an Army Corps, and then the Boers moved. My calculation of the chances was the right one; I said, they will not move as long as certain things are not done. Now I wish to make one statement to the Commission. When I came back I thought I should have been seen by the Ministers. I had many papers marked to be shown, but I saw Lord Lansdowne alone, and only for ten minutes. He asked me the question: "If we move to the Biggarsberg, what will happen?" I said, "If you move the force now at Ladysmith?" and he said "Yes." "Out of a hundred there are forty chances that that will bring on war," was my reply. "And if we cross the Biggarsberg," was his next question, and my answer was, "Then out of a hundred there are seventy-five chances that it will bring on war." That conversation took place on the 12th September. I was treated with suspicion; they would not send for me or ask me anything. Of course at that time they were being told it was a case of ten millions of money and the whole thing over at Christmas, or at furthest at Easter. Every officer in the Army knows that; any one who told them the opposite was called names, ridiculed and laughed at, he was either a fool or a knave, or, as they said of me, I was both. I may talk with heat, my Lord, perhaps more than I ought to, but things were said of me which I believed were wholly unjust, and for years I have been silent.

13590. (Chairman.) I quite appreciate your position, Sir William, and I have not interrupted you for that reason, but I think now if you have any other document to give us we might have it, and then we will get on?—I had a great many, but this matter of the Tuli Raid I suppose the Commission never heard of before.

13591. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You were to read a protest against the Tuli Raid?—I thought it was to be a Raid again. My position was this: "Let my Chief at the War Office tell me what I am to do, and I will do it, but I cannot be dragged by Syndicates in South Africa, and I will not obey them, they are not my Chiefs. They brought us into terrible trouble in 1895, and then left us in the lurch." I refused to have anything to say or do with them, and they turned on me the Press which they commanded.

13592. (Sir Henry Norman.) I think I have only one question to ask. When you were in command in South Africa, you found already a pretty considerable garrison at Ladysmith, three batteries of Artillery?—I could give you the exact figures—three batteries of Artillery, a regiment of Cavalry, one battalion of Infantry, a company of Engineers, and details.

13593. Then, of course, before the siege of Ladysmith took place there was an immense accumulation of stores of various kinds, Ordnance stores, and so on, there?—The first thing I did when I got out was to put two months' supplies into every place; I found they had a month or less, so I took the precaution of placing two months' reserve supply at every station in the place.

13594. That was calculated, I presume, for the force then there?—For the existing force.

13595. And not calculated to provide for the large force that came from India?—No.

13596. And it would not have been your intention to hold Ladysmith as a defensive post?—Certainly not; but, again, circumstances alter cases; if the Boers did not invade, yes; but if the Boers invaded in force, decidedly not; I should have fallen back behind the Tugela.

13597. And I presume that is where you would have accumulated your reserve stores?—I should not have accumulated any reserve stores until I knew what I was going to do, because in war, as I need not tell the Field Marshal, the point of concentration is everything, but the point of concentration is just the problem to find out. I put the troops so that I had room and liberty and opportunity to concentrate in three or more different positions. Once you are concentrated you are done so far as choice is concerned. I never meant Dundee nor Glencoe to be a concentration, nor did I mean Ladysmith to be a concentration. That would depend on after circumstances, when the War

opened, but I placed my men so that I could concentrate here, here, and here, as the War developed, but to run up the supplies first, and then, as it were, to be forced to concentration within easy reach of the enemy, in a place which could be cut off, I could not believe to be safe strategy.

13598. To the best of your belief, there were only those reserve stores for the actual garrison of the place?—Stores that three trains would have carried. We had a railway there, and a very well-equipped railway, and three or four trains—a dozen trains certainly—could have carried them anywhere you wished.

13599. (*Viscount Esher.*) You say that the essence of the difficulty was suspicion on the part of the Boers; I suppose you also found considerable suspicion on the part of our own people there?—Of invasion?

13600. Yes, or did you find any trace of that?—None, except in the extreme angle of Natal, which we put outside the zone of possibilities from the beginning; there the farmers wrote asking what protection would be theirs in the event of war. I have many memoranda on the subject, but, as I say, I do not want to weary the Commission.

13601. Again, you talk of a Third Party, the Third Party being persons who were Englishmen?—The Third Party, openly, was Mr. Rhodes, and those who acted under him.

13602. And your point is that they were egging on a war?—I did my best to keep Cæsar separate from Cecil.

13603. Did you ever hear of a Fourth Party in the Transvaal?—Absolutely; we all knew there was the extreme Dopper party represented, I suppose, by Mr. Kruger at the head, but I do not think the extreme party in the Transvaal were more than 10 or 15 per cent. of the Boers.

13604. As you knew of the existence of a Fourth Party—I only want to get this clear—did it not occur to you that possibly they might get their way and provoke a war?—If they did I thought we should have coped with them.

13605. You thought, with the force you had in Africa, you could have coped with them?—With the force I had to act on the defensive and fall back I do not think they would have got as far down in Natal or in Cape Colony as they did when we had first 50,000 and later on 200,000 men in South Africa. I do not think they would ever have got beyond Beaufort West on one side or crossed the Tugela on the other, because they would not have had the hold they afterwards had.

13606. The point is this: Do you think, in view of the policy which the Government were pursuing, and which you knew they were pursuing, they were justified in leaving that small force in South Africa, and not adding to it larger reinforcements than the Indian contingent?—I have never said anything which would lead you to suppose that, nor do I think it, but I think, in the position matters had then reached in South Africa, if they filled in that drop they must have been prepared to fill in the whole bucket. That was but a drop.

13607. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Of what time are you speaking?—Of September and October.

13608. But before the Bloemfontein Conference?—Before the Bloemfontein Conference there was nothing.

13609. Could not the garrison have been filled up then, when they had made up their mind?—Absolutely.*

13610. (*Viscount Esher.*) For some years previously the Intelligence Officers had been making reports to our Government, and you think that, as we were adding to the force we had then, the Boers were justified in taking any steps on their part?—I should be sorry to criticise the Government in that way, but what I would say is this, that they appeared during these months to be at the parting of the ways; the parting of the ways ceased if they reinforced the Army in South Africa, owing to the suspicion then existing in the

country. They were on one road then; the minute the troops were augmented to even the proportion of 20,000 men the balance was turned. I do not know if I explain myself right.

13611. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There again you are speaking of after the Bloemfontein Conference?—Yes, I am speaking of after the Bloemfontein Conference.

13612. But prior to that?—Prior to that all depended on the number sent out.

13613. If we had sent out 10,000 men?—That would have been a serious addition to the state of suspicion then existing, 10,000 men coming out. The point was this—that there was a school there, I do not want to mention names, which held that the Boers would never fight. How often it used to be said to me, "Ten Boers killed at Laing's Nek, and there is an end to the War." Some persons put it at 40, and they were rather fond of saying, "Forty Boers killed at Laing's Nek, and there is an end of the War." That was the sort of thing I could never understand. I could never believe it, and I said, "No, the Boers will fight to the very last man if you menace their independence." I also mentioned the women and children; and when I spoke previously of a civil war, I meant that the women would help and the children would fight.

13614. (*Viscount Esher.*) The phrase you used to the Government was that the War Office appeared to think that the situation would be a purely military one as between military powers, and they did not realise how many civil war conditions such a crisis would involve; that really sums up the whole advice you gave to the Government?—Oh, no.

13615. Was not that really your whole point?—Excuse me.

13616. What is the essence of it?—There was a great deal more than that.

13617. What was the essence, in one sentence, of the whole of your advice to the Government?—Perhaps I might take these sentences here where they are collected together in another communication I made to the Secretary of State: "Following the close of the Bloemfontein Conference, I sent a series of telegrams and despatches to the War Office in which I extended to the utmost limits of official language my warnings of what war with the Dutch Republics, and the Dutch race generally in South Africa, would mean. These opinions will be found chiefly under dates 12th, 21st, and 23rd June, and I think I am within the meaning of those communications when I aver that the gravity of the warnings therein given could not easily have been greater." Have you my despatch of the 21st June?

13618. Yes?—It is summarised there.

13619. I remember that, but really what does it all come to? It comes to this—that you warned them of the seriousness of the war upon which they might possibly enter; was that not it?—That the war would be of a nature which they had not the smallest idea of. Look at my despatches of the 12th, 21st, and 23rd June and of the 4th July.

13620. Is it for that reason that when you came home you were treated with suspicion. Is that your point?—Well, you know the suspicion with which I was treated; the papers told you that.

13621. And, as I say, it arose out of that?—No, I believe it arose because I failed to confuse Cecil with Cæsar; that is my answer to that question. Had I merged Cæsar into Cecil I should have been a very different man to-day.

13622. You see you told us that the Government had been told that the whole thing would be over by Christmas, and it was to be a comparative walk-over, and it was in consequence of your not having taken that view that you were treated with suspicion. Is that so?—Yes, I think that is a very fair deduction to make. I believe

*Lieut. -
General Sir
William
F. Butler,
K.C.B.*

11 Feb. 1903.

* Witness subsequently stated that this answer had not been correctly reported, and asked for leave to alter it as follows:—"Impossible to say what the result of filling up then would have been. That they might have been ready to fill up is another matter, provided the readiness did not involve publication by the Third Party. They published everything: you will find my telegrams to the War Office dealing with that fact. But we must not forget that the Government were negotiating with the Dutch Republics all through July and August. On July 19th a telegram from London announced, on the authority of the 'Times' that all had been arranged, and that the crisis was over."

Lieut.-
General Sir
William
Butler,
K.C.B.
Feb. 1903

that in order to reduce the gravity of my warnings, motives were attached to them. I wished to do the best I could by my employers, and to tell them the thing I was looking at, but when I came back to the War Office I was told, "You are the best abused man in London." I knew nothing about it, but I found I was.

13623. It has been recognised since in the penultimate paragraph of the Adjutant-General's letter to you: "I understand that the Commander-in-Chief considers it unnecessary and inexpedient further to discuss this subject. His Lordship has no reason to doubt you acted to the best of your judgment and ability during the period in question, and he observes that your recall from South Africa was not due to any neglect of military duty on your part, but to your own resignation on the ground that your presence at Cape Town was likely to be a source of embarrassment to Her Majesty's High Commissioner?" (*Vide Appendix, page 92 post.*)—I have already told the Commission and read to them the correspondence which took place between me and Sir Alfred Milner on the 24th and 25th June, but when I received a communication to the effect that I was running counter to what Her Majesty's Government wished (it was a private communication, but I allude to it because it was an important question) I at once went to Sir Alfred Milner and said, "Have I been a hindrance to you, Sir, in the prosecution of your designs or your plans?" He said frankly that I had, and he named three occasions upon which I had been a hindrance to him. One was in not taking up the proposed Tuli Raid: another was in not employing a Mr. Wools-Sampson who came to me in the middle of June, who was a very active, energetic man and who visited me at the request of Sir Alfred Milner to see if I could propose anything to him. I saw him in the presence of my military secretary and told him frankly, "Mr. Sampson, I have the greatest respect for your services" (because he was a very brave soldier and had fought well in the first Boer War), "but I know nothing from my chief in London of a war; if there is to be war I have not the least doubt you will receive a good command, but I can say nothing to you whatever." And the third was about the remarks I had sent to the Secretary of State on the 23rd June in reply to his query of "any observations?" I said it would be easily managed, and I wrote the first letter offering my resignation that night.

13624. When did you come home?—I wrote that letter on the 4th July, and I think at the end you will find expressed my position. It was accepted on the 10th August by cable. I got two or three telegrams

to hasten my departure, which I did. I do not know whether they are there or not.

13625. When you got home did you see Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes; I had a long conversation with him.

13626. And you saw the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes.

13627. And the Secretary of State?—I saw the Commander-in-Chief, and he took me to the Secretary of State for about ten minutes.

13628. When did you get a fresh command—how soon after?—I got it in South Africa. On the 10th August they sent me a telegram accepting my resignation and telling me to hand over, and I communicated with Sir Alfred Milner, and the same day I received the offer of the Western District, which I declined with thanks. Two days afterwards I received a personal telegram, very kindly worded, from Lord Lansdowne begging me to reconsider my decision with regard to the Western District, and I thought it would be churlish to refuse it although I would sooner have refused it, and I accepted it in the terms in which he offered it.

13629. So that when you came back here you took up your command?—At once.

13630. And you hold that command now?—I hold it now.

13631. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There is only one question I should like to ask: Can you remember about what date you first learned that the Government intended to make the Franchise question a vital question at the Bloemfontein Conference?—Not until the proceedings of the Bloemfontein Conference were published; I forget what date that was.

13632. Not before?—Not before, except what the London papers may have told us.

13633. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I understand you to say that previous to the Boers entering Natal, crossing the frontier, you understood that there was a force at Mafeking, or about Mafeking, ready to invade the Boer territory under Baden-Powell?—From July Colonel Baden-Powell was at Mafeking and north of it raising a force.

13634. But not to invade before war was declared?—I have told you already that the wagons were actually spanned ready to march.

13635. Waiting for war to be declared, I suppose?—Yes. There are many other points, my Lord, and in threshing so much ground it is not easy to cover it all or to see things to-day as one saw them then, but I have endeavoured to state them as well as I could

Sir William Butler desires to add the following statement as a note at the end of his evidence.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA, 1899.

The position with reference to reinforcements, so far as I could judge it in June, July, and August, 1899, was as follows:—

I had sent the War Office my Scheme of Defence on June 9th–12th, 1899. The only reply from the War Office was a suggestion by cable that the preliminary movements of the force under my command should, in the event of a crisis, include the occupation of Van Reenan's Pass. I demurred to this suggestion. On June 23rd I received the telegram directing the provision of mules and transport for the garrison then in South Africa, the telegram ending with the observation that the question of reinforcements was not then being considered.

A fortnight later I reported the completion of these orders, and added that they were for existing forces only "exclusive of reinforcements."

I have already stated the essence of the situation then and before was the intense suspicion on the part of the Dutch Boers. This feeling dating from the Raid had been largely increased in 1897 by the sudden arrival in South Africa of reinforcements from England and India, consisting of three batteries Royal Field Artillery, one regiment of Cavalry, and one Battalion of Infantry. All these were placed at Ladysmith, which, until then, had not been occupied by troops. At this period (June, July, and August, 1899) negotiations were in active progress between our Government and that of the Transvaal. On the 19th July the London *Times* announced as an official communication that the diplomatic crisis was satis-

factorily ended by the concessions of the Boer Government on the question of the Franchise. That announcement telegraphed to Cape papers only seemed to redouble the efforts of the "Third Party" already mentioned.

It seemed to me that if I asked for reinforcements under such conditions, and when I had not received any intimation from the War Office that war was contemplated, when they had even markedly told me in the message of the 25th–26th June that I had exceeded in my mind the meaning of their message of the 23rd, it seemed to me to say such a demand at such a time would be to force the hands of the Government, play into the hands of the "Third Party," and render myself liable to the accusation in the future that I had by this premature action produced or hastened hostilities.

I have already tried to explain the work of the "Third Party" through its telegrams from London, how even the movements of the Intelligence Officers, 10 in number, and the embarkation of Colonels Baden-Powell and Hore were made the subjects of immediate cablegrams to the Cape Press.

My letter of July 4th must have been received in London about the 24th July. No response came from the War Office until the 11th August. Even then there was no intimation that war was likely, but before I embarked for England on the 23rd August I had signed the Ordnance Demand for Stores, which had made the limit of preparation at Divisions of Cavalry.

(Signed) W. F. BUTLER

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR W. F. BUTLER, K.C.B., THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR, THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR, AND THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL, BETWEEN 14TH NOVEMBER, 1899, AND 18TH FEBRUARY, 1902.

Government House,
Devonport,
14th November, 1899.

SIR,
In view of recent circumstances connected with the command of the troops at Bristol to-morrow, I beg to bring to the notice of the Secretary of State for War the fact that for some time past persistent attacks have been made by a section of the London Press upon my character as an officer and upon my conduct of military affairs while in command of Her Majesty's troops in South Africa.

These attacks began at the time of the publication of the South African "Blue Book," in June last, in which a despatch addressed by me as Acting High Commissioner to the Secretary of State for the Colonies appeared. They have increased in violence since the opening of hostilities in South Africa.

In conforming with the rules of the Service, I have taken no notice of these libellous accusations, but I now find that in the immunity which my silence gives my libellers I am more and more pointed out to the people as being responsible for the existing state of military affairs in South Africa, and I have been, in consequence, threatened with insult or violence during the visit of Her Majesty to Bristol. It is said that I am responsible for the surrender of the Gloucester Regiment at Ladysmith, and that it is on that account the feelings of the Bristol mob are incensed against me.

I respectfully submit that the time has come for some action by my military superiors in the matter of these continued attacks—either that I should be given the opportunity of meeting some specific charge in relation to my late Command in South Africa, or that they (my military superiors) should do something to vindicate my character.

In suggesting either course, I would beg, however, to add that if there should exist any reasons of public expediency or State policy why no steps should be taken at present to put a stop to these libellous attacks, I shall still deem it my duty to bear them in silence.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
W. F. BUTLER, Lieutenant-General.

SIR,
I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th November, which has been carefully considered by him in consultation with the Commander-in-Chief.

In reply, I am to state that it is not desirable that officers should take notice of criticisms in the Press as to the manner in which they have discharged their duties. In the Commander-in-Chief's opinion, you have done well to take no notice of the accusations to which you call attention, and he trusts that you will continue to leave them unnoticed.

I am, etc.,

From Lieutenant-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B., to
the Under Secretary of State for War.

Devonport,
4th November, 1901.

SIR,
In his speech at Edinburgh on the 25th October, the Secretary of State for the Colonies thought fit to designate as "another fable" the idea that my despatches, written from South Africa before the war, had in any respect differed in opinion or forecast from the general belief held by the servants and advisers of the Government regarding war with the Dutch Republics in South Africa.

In consequence of this assertion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, it has become my duty to break the rule of silence which I have observed for more than two years upon this subject, and to state, officially, the nature of the convictions expressed by me to the Colonial Office and to the War Office between December, 1898, and July, 1899.

I affirm that in December, 1898, and in January and portion of February, 1899, I pointed out in numerous telegrams and despatches, and in unmistakable language, the efforts that certain parties were then making to produce and inflame racial feeling in South Africa, and to bring about racial conflict at all costs. I showed the utterly unreliable nature of the information which was being sent to England by the agents of these parties, and I distinctly warned the Colonial Office of the consequences which must inevitably follow their intrigues.

That the telegrams and despatches in which this information was conveyed were duly noted at the time is shown by the terms of the cypher message sent to me from the Colonial Office on the 21st-22nd January, 1899, as well as by the proposal made to me four months later by Sir Alfred Milner, under the direction of the Secretary of State, that I would consent to the elimination of certain passages from my despatches of the previous January for the Blue Book then in preparation for Parliament.

The cypher message of 21st and 22nd January was replied to by me in a despatch dated the 25th January, and the proposal made in May, 1899, relative to the omission of passages from my despatches was declined in my telegram of the 26th May, 1899.

I now turn to the communications which I addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

Following the close of the Bloemfontein Conference, I sent a series of telegrams and despatches to the War Office, in which I extended to the utmost limits of official language my warnings of what war with the Dutch Republics and the Dutch race generally in South Africa would mean.

These opinions will be found chiefly under dates 12th, 21st, and 23rd June, and I think I am within the meaning of these communications when I aver that the gravity of the warnings therein given could not easily have been greater. The message sent on the last-mentioned date contained the following words: "I believe that a war between the white races, coming as a sequel to the Jameson Raid and the subsequent events of the last three years, would be the greatest calamity that ever occurred in South Africa." It is unnecessary to do more than call attention here to the manner in which that message was replied to on 27th June, but it is of grave interest to note the sense in which it was regarded by Sir Alfred Milner.

I sent the High Commissioner a copy of the cablegram received from the War Office on the 22nd June, and I added that a copy of my reply would also be sent to him.

I subjoin his answer:—

"Mount Nelson Hotel,
"24th June, 1899.

"DEAR GENERAL BUTLER,

"I have to thank you for sending me a copy of your reply to the War Office telegram of 22nd June.

"I regret that you should have thought it necessary in the observations with which your telegram concludes to enter into political considerations, especially as the tendency of your remarks is, in my opinion, calculated to convey a wrong impression of the actual situation here, and of the effect likely to be produced by a resolute attitude on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

"I have informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies that I entirely demur to these observations.

"A. MILNER."

I replied as follows:—

"Erinville,
"25th June, 1899.

"DEAR SIR ALFRED MILNER,

"I am obliged for your letter of the 24th instant, in which you thank me for having sent you a copy of my message, answering the War Office telegram of the 22nd June.

"I regret that the observations in the concluding portion of that message, replying to the Secretary of State for War, should not have commended themselves to you, but I cannot admit that these observations can be fairly defined as 'political considerations.' They refer to the possibilities of war, and to war in its worst form. They were made in what I believe to be the highest interests of the Empire, and for the honour of Her Majesty's Army.

"I remain, etc.,
"W. F. BUTLER."

Whenever reference has been made to me or to my opinions and despatches—in either House of Parliament—during the last two years, I have been content to write unofficially to the Ministers concerned, pointing out inaccuracies or mis-statements made in their respective replies. I did so in the hope that this course would have sufficed to prevent a repetition of such mistakes. It has not done so, as the phrase, "another fable," used by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his recent speech proves.

I regret that I am thus compelled to write at some length on a subject which, notwithstanding the historical interest given to it by subsequent events, is still largely personal to myself.

I have, etc.
W. F. BUTLER, Lieut.-General.

From the Under Secretary of State for War to Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B.

War Office,
27th November, 1901.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 4th November in reference to remarks made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in reply to an interruption during his speech at Edinburgh on 25th October.

Mr. Brodrick has made a careful examination of the documents to which you refer, and fails to find that the language of the Colonial Secretary of which you complain traverses the information conveyed in those documents.

In your despatches you undoubtedly warned the Government that for reasons which you stated the outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and the Dutch Republics in South Africa might, in the existing state of feeling, produce a racial war, which you pointed out would be "the greatest calamity that ever occurred in South Africa."

But the passage to which you take exception in the Colonial Secretary's speech was to this effect:—"As far as I know, there was not one single man who was entitled to the slightest confidence, or even pretended to be an authority upon the subject, who anticipated the prolonged resistance which we have incurred."

Your warning to the Government was directed to the political effect likely to occur, which you held to be calamitous in the highest degree, whereas the Colonial Secretary spoke of the nature and extent of the military resistance likely to be offered.

Had you held the opinion that the war would not be concluded in two years, by the employment of 200,000 British troops, Mr. Brodrick cannot doubt that you would have advised the then Secretary of State for War that the racial war which you apprehended would have involved preparations of this magnitude; but Mr. Brodrick cannot trace that you made any demand of the kind upon the Government, or that you at any time pressed for the employment of a larger force than that put under orders upon the first outbreak of hostilities.

On the contrary, the Secretary of State observes that on the 21st of December, 1898, your attention was called by a secret War Office letter to the extensive military preparations of the South African Republic, to the fact that the Free State was in close alliance with the Transvaal, and to the great numerical inferiority of the British garrison in South Africa to the formidable force which the two Dutch States could put in the field for

offensive operations beyond their frontiers. You were directed, therefore, to submit, at an early date, a report on the distribution of the troops under your command which you would make in the event of hostilities. To this letter you made no reply, until more than five months later an answer was called for by cable. In the report you then submitted (telegram dated 7th June, and letter dated 14th June, 1899) it does not appear that you pressed for further reinforcements, or that you assisted the Secretary of State for War with any advice as to the military force needed to defend Cape Colony and Natal, or the additional force that would be required to bring a war with the Republics to a satisfactory conclusion. On the contrary, the force which you proposed for Natal, consisting in all of three battalions, eight squadrons, and four batteries, was far inferior to that which the Government decided to dispatch. You pointed out, it is true, in a subsequent letter to the War Office, dated the 21st June, 1899, that, "in the event of the crisis of war being reached, the situation which would probably have to be met would be one more of civil conflict than of regular military operations"; but general observations of this character cannot be held to be of the nature of a definite warning or advice to His Majesty's Government as to the military preparations which, in your opinion, should have been made to meet the contingency of war with the Dutch Republics, or as to the probable duration of such a war.—I am, etc.,

E. W. D. WARD.

From Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B., to the Under-Secretary of State for War.

Government House, Devonport,
16th December, 1901.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th November last in reference to the remarks made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 25th October.

You characterise the warnings given in my dispatches as directed to the political results likely to occur and not to the military resistance likely to be offered in the event of a war. To this statement I respectfully demur.

In one sense, no doubt, my dispatches dwell upon the political aspects of the matter, but not in the sense which your letter seems to assume.

It is a soldier's duty, as a rule, to ignore politics, but it is equally imperatively his duty to recognise and to draw to the attention of those in authority any political conditions which affect the military situation. The state of feeling of His Majesty's subjects, the attitude of the non-combatant population of the country through which, of necessity, the troops would have to pass, and in which the military base must be situated, are amongst the more important of such conditions, because of their bearing upon the difficulties to be encountered, and, consequently, upon the duration of resistance. The greatest military authority the world has seen laid it down that in war the moral was to the physical as three to one, having primarily in his mind such matters as I have alluded to.

Such is my conception of the duties of a soldier, and what were my warnings when it suddenly, in June of 1899, became clear that the Government were bent upon war?

You have quoted some but not all of these warnings. Briefly, they may be summarised as follows:—

On the 12th June, 1899, I telegraphed—"In the event of a crisis arriving situation would be more that of civil war than of military operations free from complications."

On the same day (the 12th June, 1899), I wrote: "The War Office appear to think that the situation would be a purely military one, i.e., as between two military powers; they do not seem to realise how many civil war conditions such a crisis might evolve."

On the 21st June, 1899, I repeated this warning in almost identical terms, pointing out "that the inhabitants on both sides of the frontier, both in the Cape Colony and in Natal, were composed of similar Dutch elements. That there was no abstract political situation in South Africa as distinct from a military one, but that both were involved together."

And again, "that the war might commit the white races of South Africa to a possible internecine struggle wherein about one million of men and women, scattered over an area nearly as large as Europe, might be involved."

On the 23rd June, 1899, I cabled that: "I believe that a war between the white races coming as a sequel to the Jameson Raid, and the subsequent events of the last three years would be the greatest calamity that ever occurred in South Africa." Again, on July 4th, I wrote that "I could not accept the responsibility which might justly be mine if I failed to bring to your notice powerful outside influences, which might, at any moment, prove of the gravest military importance to South Africa, and to the Empire."

And in the same dispatch I wrote that "as matters seemed shaping themselves in England and South Africa towards results which did not appear to me to be realised at home in their fullest gravity, I had endeavoured to place the exact position before you as it appeared to me at the moment."

Such were some of the clear and emphatic warnings which I gave. They were addressed by me, in my military capacity, to my military superiors, and were intended to be, and I contend were, military warnings which could have no other meaning, coming from a man in my position, than that the conflict would partake of the nature of a civil war, and that the prolonged resistance and the peculiar difficulties which always attend civil war must needs be prepared for.

The warnings were emphatic enough, and I can only put down their not being understood to the infatuated conviction which, it seems, at that time was prevalent at home, that the display of "a resolute attitude" would speedily cow the Dutch-speaking population throughout Africa.

That my warnings were understood in the sense they were intended by Sir Alfred Milner there can be no doubt, for, in reply to my letter sending him one of my cable dispatches, he, on the 24th June, 1899, protests against that dispatch on the ground that it would convey a wrong impression "of the effect likely to be produced by a resolute attitude on the part of Her Majesty's Government."

I conclude this portion of my letter by protesting that the words of the Colonial Secretary which I complain of, although carefully picked and chosen, convey a false impression of the facts of the case.

I would willingly not continue my letter further, having dealt with the point which seemed the only one at issue, but it has been thought right to introduce a new matter with which it is my duty to promptly deal.

You make a suggestion that I neglected for five months to answer a request from the War Office as to the disposition of the troops in the event of a war, and that I suggested that the force needed in Natal in the event of a war should only consist in all of three battalions, eight squadrons, and four batteries.

If it is really believed that there was anything in the complaint it should have been made long ago, and not after a lapse of two and a half years. But what are the facts?

I was, in December, 1898, asked to make a report as to the disposition of the troops then in South Africa, and under my command, in the event of war, and, as my report in answer to such requests will show, I dealt as I was requested with such troops, and with such troops alone.

This was a subject upon which my predecessors in command had also reported, and it was of the usual defence scheme character common to all military commands.

But why did I not make my report, such as it was, earlier? The answer is simple. Five weeks after my arrival in South Africa I was asked to report upon a question embracing a frontier of more than 1,000 miles in length, and in some places 1,500 miles distant from where I was living, and to deal generally with defence matters over an area almost as big as Europe, and I was asked to report on these matters "at an early date."

Secondly, when the request arrived I was, as the authorities sending the request well knew, conducting, in the absence of Sir Alfred Milner, the civil duties of High Commissioner and Administrator, and was, therefore, not free to make any journeys to the points which it would be necessary for me to visit before reporting until Sir Alfred Milner's return from leave of absence.

As soon as Sir Alfred returned I took up the matter and dealt with it as promptly as possible.

As regards your suggestion that I proposed the force I have above quoted for Natal, this is wholly incorrect and misleading. I did not propose this force; I found it there, and I proposed to dispose of it in certain positions.

I have no desire to unnecessarily prolong the length of this letter, but, if the complaint you suggest is to be fully discussed, the subject shall have my further attention and consideration.

During the months of March, April, and May, 1899, my proposals as to field manoeuvres, training grounds, remount establishments were negatived or reduced; we were directed to give up ordnance establishments and to diminish hospital accommodation. Reserve men were withdrawn from South Africa; a battalion of infantry which had been at Ladysmith for two years, and had become acquainted with the surrounding country, was removed to India; the experienced officer commanding at that station was recalled to England; and at the time these reductions, retrenchments, and removals were being made it is now suggested that I, without being acquainted with the aims or objects of the Home Government, should have divined their minds and pressed for further reinforcements. And, further, this suggestion is put forward although your cablegrams expressly informed me, late in June, 1899, that the question of reinforcements would not then be considered.

May I conclude by saying that I much regret having had to abandon the attitude of silence which I have so long maintained, but when statements are put forward in public such as that of which I complain I shall continue to protest and prove their inaccuracy, as I have done in this letter.—I have, etc.,

W. F. BUTLER, Lieut.-General.

From the Under Secretary of State for War to Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B.

War Office,
January 3rd, 1902.

SIR,

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and to communicate the following observations thereon:—

2. The Secretary of State for War agrees that it may at times be the duty of a General Officer Commanding to call attention to political conditions affecting the military situation. I am, however, to point out that beyond somewhat vague statements that, in your opinion, certain sections in South Africa were making efforts to bring about a racial conflict at all costs, and that a civil war, which would be the greatest calamity that ever occurred in that country, was impending between the two white races, the Government does not appear to have received from you any specific warning which gauged the military situation with more accuracy than the forecast made in War Office secret letter No. 266/Cape/30, of December 21st, 1898. Indeed, in your letters addressed to this Department you referred to the attitude of the Orange Free State as uncertain, whereas in the War Office letter above quoted you were informed that in a war with the Transvaal "it is probable that we should find the sister Republic ranged against us." You pointed out, it is true, the possibility of the natives of Basutoland, Pondoland, and the Transkei being a "source of trouble to us," but your anxiety on this score has not been justified by the events of the war. Moreover, predictions of the nature indicated above are of little military value unless accompanied by definite recommendations and estimates; yet the Secretary for War cannot trace any letter in which you made a definite request for an increase in the garrison of South Africa with a view to repelling the impending invasion of the troops of the Dutch Republics or in which you submitted to Her Majesty's Government an estimate of the strength of the expeditionary force which would be needed to bring the war, if war took place, to a conclusion.

The Secretary of State must therefore adhere to his opinion that a careful examination of the reports made by you to this department fails to indicate any inaccuracy in the statement of which you complain, made by the Colonial Secretary at Edinburgh on October 25th last.

3. With regard to the latter portion of your letter now under reply, I am to observe that, although the Secretary of State for War is aware that during a portion of the first six months of 1899 you were acting as High Commissioner of South Africa, in the absence of Sir A. Milner, he cannot accept that fact as a sufficient explanation of the delay which occurred in replying to

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the request from this Department for a statement at an early date of the dispositions you would propose for the defence of the frontiers of Cape Colony and Natal in the event of invasion. The War Office letter of December 21st, 1898, impressed on you the possibility of hostilities with the Transvaal and the Free State, and besides assisting you by a concise recapitulation of the main physical features of the frontier, called your attention to secret publications which contained accurate information regarding the military forces of the Republics and the more important strategical points. These publications were in your possession, you had personally the advantage acquired by previous service in the country of a general knowledge of the military geography of South Africa and its methods of warfare, and it was open to you to despatch staff officers to examine any particular localities about which you desired further detailed information. Under these conditions the Secretary of State for War is unable to admit that a general officer of your standing and experience needed five and a half months to decide what dispositions he would make to meet a contingency which might arise at very short notice. It seems to Mr. Brodrick that the circumstances under which you were asked to consider your dispositions were at least as favourable to a decision as those under which a general officer in command in the field may frequently be called upon to determine his plan of operations within a few days or hours.

4. I am further to remark that if you were of opinion, having regard to the military situation in South Africa, that the various decisions, communicated to you in the early months of 1899, impaired the efficiency of the garrison for war purposes, it would have been to the benefit of the public service, had you, as the General Officer in responsible command, made a special representation of your views for the Commander-in-Chief's consideration. In connection with this point I am to say that you are under a misapprehension in thinking that the War Office telegram of June 20th, 1899, expressly precludes the consideration of reinforcements. The telegram in question indicated certain preliminary steps which were being taken to increase the efficiency of the force then in South Africa, and to avoid misunderstanding you were informed that the "question of reinforcements is not now raised," i.e., in relation to the particular measures then under reference. Mr. Secretary Brodrick cannot understand how this sentence could have been interpreted as prohibiting you from making any representation which you might have thought necessary to Her late Majesty's Government on the subject of reinforcements.

5. The Secretary of State for War having dealt with the questions raised by your letter of November 4th, which was prompted by a reference to yourself in a speech on general politics by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, thinks it will be more convenient if any further correspondence on a matter so largely military were addressed to the Adjutant-General in the ordinary course.—I have, etc.,

G. FLEETWOOD WILSON.

From Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B., to the Adjutant-General.

London,
7th February, 1902.

SIR,

Having been directed by the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for War to address to you any reply I might desire to make to his letter to me of the 3rd ultimo, I have now the honour of forwarding the accompanying answer to you.—I have, etc.,

W. F. BUTLER, Lieut.-General.

From Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler, K.C.B., to the Adjutant-General.

Devonport,
7th February, 1902.

SIR,

I was recently compelled to draw the attention of the Secretary of State for War to a reference to myself made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in a public speech to which I, holding His Majesty's commission, was debarred from making a public reply.

In the correspondence which ensued the Secretary of State for War admitted the undoubted warnings I had given the Government; but he subsequently raised a fresh issue upon points such as the time taken by me in the preparation of the South African Defence Scheme, which he considered might have been "the work of a few days or hours," and, again, that "he is unable to trace any letter in which (I) made a definite request for an increase of the garrison of South Africa with a view to repelling the impending invasion of the troops of the Dutch Republics, or that I had submitted an estimate of the expeditionary force which would be needed to bring the war to a satisfactory conclusion. I propose to deal with these issues in separate letters.

In November, 1899, when I was made the subject of attack by a portion of the Press, I wrote to the War Office asking either that some specific charge might be made against me in relation to my late command in South Africa, or that they (my military superiors) would themselves defend me from these libellous accusations.

I was informed by the Military Secretary that my letter had been carefully considered by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Commander-in-Chief; that it was not desirable that officers should take notice of criticisms in the Press as to the manner in which they had discharged their duties; that the Commander-in-Chief was of opinion that I had done well to take no notice of the accusations to which I had referred, and that he trusted I would continue to leave them unnoticed.

I concluded, therefore, that my superiors had no charge to make. But now, when more than two years have elapsed since this correspondence, I understand the Secretary of State in his letter of January 3rd, to suggest that I failed to furnish the War Office with a detailed scheme of defence in due time after the receipt by me of a War Office letter of December 21st, 1898. I submit that if there had been any negligence on my part in respect to the preparation of the defence scheme for South Africa within reasonable time, it should have been made the subject of criticism, or charge against me three years ago, when the supposed delay occurred.

Reference by me to official documents is now in most cases impossible. I was recently informed at the War Office that much of the confidential correspondence of that time had been destroyed by order of the authorities in Cape Town. I have, however, been able, from the papers in my possession, to supply in some degree the want of documents, and I propose now to state the circumstances connected with the preparation and rendering of the South African Defence Scheme.

The War Office letter of December 21st was received at Cape Town about the middle of January, 1899, when I was performing the duties of Acting Governor and High Commissioner in the absence of Sir Alfred Milner in England.

The time was one of unusual political unrest and official labour, and, as my constant cable messages and despatches to the Secretary for the Colonies will show, the situation required my closest attendance in Cape Town.

Sir Alfred Milner returned from leave a month later, and having handed over the civil duties to him, I immediately turned my attention to the defence questions in South Africa. It is enough to say here that within a month from the date of the Governor's return, I had travelled 3,000 miles, had inspected the Natal frontier, had visited the railway junctions of the northern portion of Cape Colony, and had in my own mind decided the outline of the Natal and Cape Colony Defence Scheme. But, as I subsequently reported, "I had not yet been able to see even the general line of frontier lying between Basutoland and Fourteen Streams" (about 400 miles) and I did not wish to forward to the War Office a scheme on all parts of which I had not formed my opinions from a personal examination of the ground. The Secretary of State suggests that I might have used Staff officers to visit various parts of the frontier. He lays stress upon the "assistance" given to me, in the War Office letter referred to, "by a concise recapitulation of the main features of the frontier"; and he thinks that the whole question of the defence of South Africa was capable of being decided "under circumstances as favourable as those under which a General Officer in the field may frequently be called upon to determine within a few days or hours." I respectfully submit that there is no analogy whatever between the two cases cited.

The misconception arises from a confusion of ideas between the plan or forecast of war known as strategy, and the operations which involve immediate action called tactics.

A glance at the Defence Scheme for England—which has been for many years in preparation, and is not yet complete—will show that a scheme of defence for even a small island is not to be confounded with the operations which a General in the field may be called upon to determine in a few days or hours.

To the suggestion that I might have made use of Staff officers for the purpose of visiting various parts of the frontier, I reply, that I was not disposed to deal at second hand with this important question, even had Staff officers been available; but there were none.

I do not propose to dwell upon the exception taken to the use of the word "uncertain" when writing of the attitude of the Orange Free State, in the possible event of war, beyond observing that the official documents of the period speak of the attitude of the State in that term; and one competent authority was reported to have stated as the reason for the postponement of hostilities, from June to October, 1898, that "we are not yet quite sure of getting the Orange Free State into the bag." I pass to consider the presumed assistance given in the letter of December, 1898, towards forming my decisions for defence in South Africa.

In the War Office letter of that date lay my principal difficulty, for the following reasons:—

It recommended to me, both in Natal and in the Cape Colony, the initial occupation of advanced positions, the adoption of which would, to my mind, have involved the earliest and the most complete initial disasters.

It pressed upon me seizing all the bridges of the Orange River between Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, as well as Van Reenan's Pass and other advanced positions in Natal, by the small force under my command. I had, therefore, not only to write a scheme of defence, but I had to argue it against the War Office proposals—hence the efforts on my part to give detailed reasons for my decisions in my dispatch 7th—12th June; and hence, too, my desire to personally inspect the entire frontier before putting my opinion into conflict with the views of the War Office, and of the officers who had been sent from England to inspect and report upon these frontiers 18 months earlier.

It was comparatively easy to frame in my own mind my own scheme of defence for Natal and the Cape Colony, but it was another matter to formulate the reasons for my dissent to show cause for not pushing forward my weak force into the Drakensburg Passes on one side, or to within a half rifle shot distance of the Orange Free State on the other.

Reference to that dispatch will show almost in every line this purport.

After proposing to place all available infantry at De Aar, Naauwport, and Stormberg, I wrote: "As it would be impossible to hold all the bridges named by you on the Orange River, except by detachments, whose weakness would only invite attack, I propose to hold Orange River Bridge within our own territory"; and I pointed out how concentration at that point from the right, i.e., Stormberg, Naauwport, via De Aar, could be rapidly effected (this movement was afterwards carried out with brilliant results by Earl Roberts); but despite the reiterated warnings of my dispatch, so wedded were the War Office authorities to their original ideas of defence that, after my proposals had been received and considered in London, I was again urged by a War Office telegram to reconsider my decision with reference to Natal, and to occupy Van Reenan's Pass on the edge of the Orange Free State. I declined to do so. These telegrams are doubtless in your possession, and it might be of some interest to compare their dates with that of my arranged supercession in the South African Command in the event of war; I think they will be found to synchronise.

The opinion held by the Secretary of State upon the simplicity of the problem of defence with which I had to deal in South Africa, is one which was evidently not held at the time by the Intelligence and Mobilisation authorities in England, as the following extracts from the correspondence of the time will show: "I am afraid that you will find a good deal of work in front of you in connection with defence matters"—wrote one staff officer in very high position—(this has been) "caused

partly by a certain amount of misunderstanding at headquarters." Again, I find even as late as the month of May, 1899, five months subsequent to the War Office letter referred to by the Secretary of State, the problem of South African defence thus spoken of: "It is difficult to unravel the various directions sent to you from the different branches here, each without the knowledge of the other branches concerned." Again, I find the same subject referred to by another high War Office authority on South African defence questions as follows: "There has been a good deal of confusion at headquarters from various branches having taken action without reference to the Commander-in-Chief's department, neither nor knew what was going on."

I venture to suggest, sir, that these extracts taken from my papers, do not point either to the simplicity of my work in the preparation of the scheme of defence for South Africa, or to any large measure of "assistance" which I could have derived from the collective efforts of the War Office, although I read later on, the more sanguine assurance that, "We are all now working together, and hope there will be no more misunderstanding."

I observe, too, that the Secretary of State suggests that the letter of December 21st, 1898, pointed to the extreme urgency with which, in view of an "impending" war, the War Office regarded the preparation of the scheme of defence. I have referred to my papers, but can discover no trace of this feeling. I think the War Office letter of December 21st begins with the seemingly unurgent observation that "The possibility of a war with the Dutch Republics had not wholly passed away"—a sentiment which I find reiterated five months later in a letter from the same source, which reached me late in June, 1899, in the following words: "Without entering into any close consideration of the political situation, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the possibility of war in South Africa has not yet been eliminated." Nor is this forecast much widened when I find the small reserve of rifles in my Ordnance Store at Cape Town at this period thus referred to: "There has been a misunderstanding as to the reserve of rifles sent out, and you have a good many more than can possibly be needed."

I quote these sentences, not because of the optimism they reveal, even up to June, 1899, but to show what little reason I had to suppose that the War Office authorities were in urgent haste to possess my scheme, and what was the real nature of the "assistance" I had received from the War Office in its preparation; still, notwithstanding the absence of any indication of urgency, the War Office were in possession of the new defence scheme for South Africa within four months of the return of Sir Alfred Milner from England, the scheme itself differing in its most essential features from the previously expressed opinions of the experts, whose views are based upon the reports of officers specially sent out from England to examine the frontiers of Natal and the Cape Colony a year or two earlier. Had the War Office conveyed to me at any moment between January and June, 1899, the slightest intimation that a diplomatic initiative was about to be taken with the Dutch Republics, or that there was an early probability of war, I might perhaps have saved a few weeks in the preparation of this report, and undoubtedly I would earlier have given to the War Office the emphatic warnings which were so often repeated in my dispatches and telegrams of the end of June. Had I even been made casually acquainted with the consultations and interchange of ideas and proposals as to armaments and frontier movements which took place in London in the end of January, 1899, and upon which so many matters of vital military importance afterwards turned, I would have devoted myself (as I did later in June, when I became aware of some of these things) to the attempt to show the home authorities how inadequate was their conception of what war in South Africa would mean, how deceptive were the assurances, and how dangerous was the advice they had received.

In my dispatch of July 4th, I stated the circumstances under which I had come out from England seven months earlier without instructions of any kind in "either civil or military matters," nor was it deemed necessary to send me any instructions after my arrival in the country. Indeed, the obscurity in which I found myself in this respect was more than merely negative. Asking in my office at Cape Town some time after my arrival for an official book in which my predecessor

had kept copies of his confidential correspondence with the War Office, I ascertained that this record had been destroyed (some 70 or 80 pages of the book having been torn out), and I further ascertained that this had not been done because of any request made by General Goodenough before his death, nor at the instance of the widow or executors of the late General.

One other instance before I quit this somewhat painful subject. Under date August 3rd, 1899, the following telegram can be read in the Official Blue Book:—

"Propriety of moving troops nearer to frontier, so as to watch Laing's Nek, is being considered by Her Majesty's Government. If it be desired to garrison Laing's Nek, would Colonial troops be sent with British?"

This telegram, the execution of which would undoubtedly have produced immediate hostilities, was never communicated to the General Commanding in South Africa, although two months previous to its date he had officially recorded his opinion that the position proposed for occupation was for a variety of reasons given "a dangerous one."

I do not think I need pursue this subject further. Looking back from the present time to those early months of 1899, the sole sign of impending changes which I can trace is to be found in the obscure movement of the families of some of the officials, the sudden sales of the racing studs of the chief financial millionaires in Johannesburg, and the arrival in South Africa from England of the most noted persons connected with the Jameson Raid of 1895-96. The last-named immigration will be found mentioned in my despatches of June, 1899.

But who could have imagined that the persons to whom I have referred could have been the recipients of any information as to a coming war which had not been communicated to the General in Command in South Africa?

In the many duties devolving now upon me, I must ask permission of the Commander-in-Chief to defer to another letter the consideration of the remaining matters touched upon in the Secretary of State's letter, which pertain to the months of June, July, and August, 1899. In the present communication I have dealt with matters relating chiefly to the earlier months of that year.

I may here state, however, that, so far as I have been able to understand the general tenour of the suggestions and criticisms put forward in the letter of the 3rd January, it would seem that while in June, 1899, I was severely censured because I ventured to warn the War Office in forcible language as to the nature of the war with the Dutch Republics in South Africa, I am now taken to account for not having made my warning of that time still more emphatic.

I have, etc.,

W. F. BUTLER, Lieut.-General.

From the Adjutant-General to Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Butler K.C.B.

War Office,
18th February, 1902.

acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 59337/82, dated 7th February, 1902, forwarding a communication dated 3rd idem, on the subject of your action when commanding the troops in South Africa.

2. In reply, I am to remark that in a letter, dated 4th November, 1901, addressed to the Under Secretary of State for War, you took exception to a statement made in a speech at Edinburgh on 25th October by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the following effect: "As far as I know, there was not one single man who was entitled to the faintest confidence, or even pretended to be an authority upon the subject, who anticipated the prolonged resistance which we have incurred." In consequence of an interruption, Mr. Chamberlain, who, in the first instance, had not mentioned your name, characterised as "a fable" the suggestion that you formed an exception to his general statement.

3. Your letter was answered by the Under Secretary of State, who informed you that, after a careful examination of the documents to which you had referred, the Secretary of State for War was unable to find that the language of the Secretary of State for the Colonies was at variance with the tenour of those documents.

4. You again addressed the Under Secretary of State on the 16th December, 1901, demurring to the Secretary of State's reply, and dealing at considerable length with your proceedings while in command in South Africa.

5. This letter was fully answered under Mr. Brodrick's orders in a communication from the Under Secretary of State, No. 59337/81, dated 3rd January, 1902, in which you were informed that the Secretary of State for War was unable to admit any inaccuracy in Mr. Chamberlain's statement at Edinburgh. It was added that, as the question raised in your letter of 4th November had been dealt with, any further correspondence on subjects unconnected with Mr. Chamberlain's speech should be addressed to the Adjutant-General.

6. In your letter to me under immediate reference you review the course of events in South Africa while you were commanding the troops in that country, and give your reasons for the delay which occurred in furnishing the defensive scheme called for by the War Office. In discussing this matter you ascribe to the Secretary of State opinions as to the "simplicity of the problem of defence" which are not to be found in his letters, and you cite correspondence with officers at home whom you do not name, which appears to have been of an unofficial character.

7. In reply, I am to say that the Commander-in-Chief considers it unnecessary and inexpedient further to discuss this subject. His Lordship has no reason to doubt that you acted to the best of your judgment and ability during the period in question, and he observes that your recall from South Africa was not due to any neglect of military duty on your part, but to your own resignation on the ground that your presence at Cape Town was likely to be a source of embarrassment to Her Majesty's High Commissioner.

8. I am to add that the Commander-in-Chief directs that this correspondence should now terminate.

I am, etc.,

T. K. KENNY, Adjutant-General.

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SIR,

I am directed by the Commander-in-Chief to

(After a short adjournment.)

General Sir F. W. E. F. FORESTIER-WALKER, G.C.M.G., K.C.B. : Colonel J. K. TROTTER, C.B., C.M.G., called and examined.

General Sir
F. W. E. F.
Forestier-
Walker,
G.C.M.G.,
K.C.B., and
Colonel J. K.
Trotter,
C.B., C.M.G.

13636. (Chairman.) (To Sir F. Forestier-Walker.) You have been good enough to send us some notes (*vide Appendix, page 590 post*) upon which I will ask you questions. You arrived at Cape Town and took command there on September 6th, 1899?—Yes.

13637. And you were there throughout the War, I think?—Not for the whole of the War. I came away in April, 1901. I came away on three months leave, and then I was told within a week of the expiration of my leave that I was not to return.

13638. During the time that you were out there you were in command of the communications?—I was in command of the Lines of Communication, but only in the Cape Colony during the latter part of the time. From the time when Lord Roberts arrived at Bloemfontein I was only in command of the Cape Colony. He sent for me to Bloemfontein, where I met him and the High Commissioner, Lord Milner, and it was then decided that my command should be in Cape Colony as regards the Lines of Communication.

13639. The other part of it was under another officer?—The Orange River Colony, I think, was put under General Kelly-Kenny. Lord Roberts considered that there would be sufficient for me to do in Cape Colony, and I was to remain at the base with Lord Milner practically.

13640. Would you give us the state of the forces at the time of your arrival?—The combatant forces in Natal then under me were two regiments of Cavalry, three batteries Royal Field Artillery, one Mountain Battery, and four Battalions with four companies Mounted Infantry, being one battalion, and one company of Mounted Infantry in excess of the peace garrison which had existed since May, 1897. In Cape Colony there were two and a half battalions of Infantry, three companies Mounted Infantry, two companies Garrison Artillery, this being one battalion and one Mounted Infantry company less than the peace garrison. The difference was caused by the transfer from the Cape to Natal of one regiment, the Liverpool regiment. Then there were two battalions at the time on the sea for the purpose of reinforcing the South African garrison, one for the Cape and the other for Natal, but the one for the Cape was not to provide a Mounted Infantry company, I was informed; so that on its arrival I felt that the garrison would still be deficient of that unit, a Mounted Infantry company. Then there were two companies of Engineers above the normal strength in Cape Colony, and one in Natal. At Kimberley there were three officers of the Royal Engineers, but no troops; there were also two Corps of Mounted Infantry, which had been raised in Mashonaland and Bechuanaland, 450 strong each; but when I arrived at the Cape those were not under my orders, they were directly under the High Commissioner. The horses for these had been purchased, but the authorised number of recruits was not at the time complete.

13641. And all the troops had regimental transport?—They had all complete regimental transport, but there were no Field Auxiliary services, such as bearer companies, field hospitals, or ammunition columns.

13642. Then as to the purchase of horses and mules, that had been put before the authorities for some time?—Yes, the authorities had been pressed to allow us to purchase horses and mules.

13643. Before you arrived?—Before I arrived.

13644. But that recommendation had been refused?—The recommendation to purchase in excess of our requirements at the time had been refused.

13645. Was everything complete for the requirements of the force that you had in the country?—Yes, practically; but just about the time, or shortly after I arrived, we were ordered to purchase a certain number of mules and of horses too, and Colonel Bridge (I do not know whether he has been examined before the Commission) had been previously sent out in the time of Sir William Butler with that object to act as transport officer; but he was very short-handed, he had only one officer to help him at Stellenbosch, where we had a

Remount Depot, and consequently we could not send round the country to purchase horses which resulted in our having to pay very much more for horses than we should have done otherwise. If we could have sent round we could have purchased them in large numbers for much less.

13646. You think a large number were available?—Yes, and we ought to have been able to purchase horses in the Orange Free State before the War and in the Transvaal. It would have been of great importance to reduce the number of horses in those two countries.

13647. But I think some witnesses have said that it would have made the situation more acute if we had purchased horses?—It might have been so; that I cannot say; it might have made the situation more acute.

13648. That might have been the reason?—It probably was. I merely mention it as a fact that it would have reduced the price. But whilst I am speaking of the horse question, I might say that we did not get Martial law in Cape Colony practically throughout until the beginning of 1901, and the result of getting it was that I was able in Cape Colony to get, between the 1st of January and the end of March, 1901, 32,000 horses without much difficulty. I believe a second haul was being made at the time I left, and I believe a considerable number again were obtained by commandeering, which, of course, we could not resort to before.

13649. That, I think, some of the transport officers called our attention to; that we ought to have purchased more horses. I think Sir Wodehouse Richardson mentioned that?—He would know all about it.

13650. He went out about the same time as you did?—Yes, he arrived about three weeks or a month after I did.

13651. And he was in charge?—He was in supreme charge of the supply and transport, but his duties were mainly with supply; transport was left with Colonel Bridge almost entirely.

13652. Subject to your direction?—Subject to my supervision.

13653. I think we had it from Sir Wodehouse Richardson that at the time the troops began to come out he had collected sufficient transport for the corps as they arrived?—Yes, sufficient transport was collected for the corps as they arrived. And we had also received instructions from home to have 700 ox wagons ready, which were to be ready for wherever they might be required to go at a certain time.

13654. How was that arranged for?—That was arranged for by contract, and, I think, speaking from memory, it was done through the Weil contract; I think that was the 1st of December.

13655. Was that contract made after you arrived?—That contract was made after I arrived. There was nobody else who could do it but Weil.

13656. At that time did the Home Authorities make up the Field Auxiliary Services, which you say were deficient at the time of your arrival?—Yes, so far as possible.

13657. When you arrived, you had no definite information as to any outbreak of war?—None whatever.

13658. You had no instructions when you came out in September to meet any emergency?—I had no instructions whatever. I was told, of course, to report fully home, which I did accordingly by cablegram.

13659. But in taking up your command at the Cape at that moment you simply succeeded as in the ordinary course?—Yes, I succeeded Sir William Butler in a time of peace, practically.

13660. Without any distinct or special instructions from home?—I had no distinct or special instructions from home.

13661. You were not instructed to consider and scheme of defence of the Colonies, or anything of that

11 Feb. 1903.

General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., and Colonel J. K. Trotter, C.B., C.M.G.
11 Feb. 1903.

kind?—No, but I naturally, on arrival, as any General would be bound to do, went into the question of defence. Sir William Butler had reported shortly before; he had also made proposals for a frontier defence of the Colony with the force that then existed, and practically for the defence of Natal. I wrote home that so far as I could see those views were sound and that I did not think I could improve upon them with the force that I then had. That was for the occupation of the frontier posts, Naauwpoort, Stormberg, and so on.

13662. That was dealing with the matter in the way in which these defence schemes are dealt with, namely, with the existing garrison?—Yes.

13663. There had been certain reports upon bases and depôts, and so on, by Intelligence Officers, had there not?—Yes, that had been carried out; I think, some time beforehand.

13664. And I think among others there was a report upon the defence of Kimberley by Colonel Trotter?—Colonel Trotter went to Kimberley, and drew up a scheme for the defence of Kimberley; I believe I am correct. (Colonel Trotter.) Yes, that is so.

13665. (To Sir F. Forestier-Walker.) That was before you arrived?—That was before I arrived, and then Colonel Trotter returned to his post, and his scheme was the one which, in the main, was carried out.

13666. And was successful?—And was successful.

13667. Had you any information about troops from India at the time of your arrival?—Yes, I had. I will not be certain, but I think I heard of it first upon my arrival at Cape Town.

13668. And also the four battalions from the Mediterranean?—Yes.

13669. What did you gather was the intention with regard to these troops?—I gathered that of the four battalions two were for Natal and two for Cape Colony, practically to strengthen the garrisons, and I regarded the force from India as being for the purpose of preventing probably a raid into Natal, which was very vulnerable. Of course, their destination was to be Natal.

13670. I think you say in your *précis* that general indications rather pointed to an advance through Natal on the Transvaal?—Yes, because we did not know at that early time whether the Orange Free State, as it was then, would be involved in war, whether they intended to join the Transvaal, and if they had not joined them, it was felt that we should not be able to go through their territory.

13671. But you speak more of an advance than of a defence?—I thought the advance would be through Natal. I did not know that I had spoken more of an advance.

13672. You say, "I gathered from the general indications given, that in case of war, the troops would advance through Natal to the Transvaal"?—Yes, it was so, that in case of war the advance would be made, I thought, probably through Natal, and very probably from Kimberley, because they were the two most northerly points in our possession at the time.

13673. But what I rather meant by my question was the general impression at the moment?—You meant that I might have thought from the force coming from India, that it was probable that there would be hostilities?

13674. Yes, but that the hostilities rather pointed to an advance by our troops into the Transvaal, than, as it turned out, a defence by our troops of our own territory against an advance by the Boers. You had rather an impression of an advance by our troops at that moment?—I should not think we should advance unless we got further reinforcements than the force coming from India.

13675. But you looked forward to an advance through Natal to the Transvaal?—It was proposed, I believe, by the Secretary to the Colonies to the High Commissioner that we should occupy Laing's Nek, and I pointed out that I thought it would be an extremely dangerous proceeding, certainly until those reinforcements had come from India. But I had no notion that we should entertain the idea of moving further until we got much larger reinforcements than that.

13676. Had you formed any idea of the number of troops that would be required?—I certainly did not think so large a number would be required as were required, but I do not think I had formed really any idea of the number of troops that would be required. I knew later on that it was proposed that an Army Corps was coming, and I heard, before I left England, I think, rumours that an Army Corps would be sent in case of war.

13677. Natal, at the time of your arrival in Cape Town, was still under your command?—Yes.

13678. Did you go into the question of a defence scheme then?—No, I had not really very much time to do so, and I rather trusted to General Penn Symons, who had been there some time, and who knew the country, and to what Sir William Butler had reported with regard to it before.

13679. Your general impression was that the force that was there might have been sufficient against a raid, but not against an invasion?—No, not against an invasion certainly.

13680. Did you think that an invasion in force was a possibility?—Yes, I thought it certainly was possible.

13681. And in that case were the dispositions of the forces in Natal satisfactory at the time of your arrival?—I think they were satisfactory at the time of my arrival. Ladysmith was our most advanced post.

13682. Was Dundee not occupied then?—No, Dundee was not occupied.

13683. Dundee was not occupied during the time that Natal was under your command?—Yes, it was; Dundee was occupied at the instance of the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, I believe. I have telegrams here, which I can show, from General Penn Symons, asking information, saying that he had been requested to occupy Dundee for the purpose of defending the coal fields, and asking permission to do so. The High Commissioner, Lord Milner, spoke to me on the subject, and also in reference to a further advance to Laing's Nek. I distinctly deprecated any advance to Laing's Nek, but I said that if it was so pressing I would not forbid an advance, as General Penn Symons seemed to recommend, to Glencoe and Dundee.

13684. And that was done?—And that was done. I thought myself at the time that the object was to keep the coal fields open, and it appeared to me that the force could fall back, that we should have plenty of time to occupy our former position if it was considered necessary to do so, and of that General Penn Symons, on the spot, was much better able to judge than I could be at the distance I was.

13685. Did you consider the question of the occupation of Ladysmith at all?—No. You mean, practically a permanent occupation?

13686. Yes; that you had not considered?—No, I had not considered it.

13687. Then as soon as the Indian Contingent arrived Sir George White also arrived, and the command passed out of your control?—Yes. Sir George White arrived in Cape Colony, and deprecated the troops remaining at Glencoe, and the dissemination of the troops, and I quite concurred with him about it. He found that the most rapid way of going to Natal, with no ships starting at once, was to go up through Cape Colony, right round to East London, and embark there, and so to Natal. He left the day he arrived in Cape Town with that object in view, and having arrived, as you are aware, he left the troops as they were; he did not move them.

13688. Then, after that your command was restricted to Cape Colony. Would you tell us how the matter stood with regard to the defence of Cape Colony?—I think perhaps I had better say, first of all, that immediately after I arrived, or within two or three days, Lord Milner being very anxious indeed about the condition of Kimberley, was anxious to send troops up to Kimberley. The Colonial Government were extremely averse to any troops advancing at all, and they almost absolutely, I may say, refused to allow any local troops to be organised at Kimberley at the time; that was in the first instance. I sent up Colonel Keke

wich to Kimberley to report upon the situation, and shortly afterwards, in consequence of what he said, I sent up half a battalion of his regiment; and I think I sent up six guns and some garrison Artillery from Cape Town to man them, and that practically was all the force that we sent to Kimberley altogether. In addition to that they raised a local force up there, which the Cape Government allowed them to do a little later on. I have pointed out, I think, in the *précis* exactly what was done in regard to Kimberley. Lord Milner was very anxious that another half battalion should go. I thought that half a battalion was all we could spare, and that if the inhabitants put their shoulders to the wheel it ought to be sufficient for the defence of Kimberley, as it practically proved to be. At Mafeking, General Baden-Powell, as you are aware, had practically his two regiments under him, and he brought one of those into Mafeking, which he organised as a place for defence, and, as you know, it held out in the most splendid way.

13689. There had been a proposal to occupy the bridges?—There had been a proposal, but it did not seem to me to be wise to occupy the bridges with the very small force of two and a half battalions that I had in Cape Colony. In the first instance, Lord Milner was very averse to troops being sent up through the Colony at all. However, I got permission to occupy De Aar, and I sent half a battalion up there, gradually reinforcing them, and as I reinforced them I sent the troops I could spare on to Orange River. I felt that it was of the greatest importance to hold the Orange River Bridge, because it was the main line of advance to Kimberley and Mafeking. It was a railway bridge, and I had it made available for all arms to pass over it. The only other forces I had available were a battalion in the east, at Grahamstown and King Williams Town, and I sent half of that battalion to Naauwpoort and half to Stormberg; that was practically in accordance with Sir William Butler's suggestion for the defence of the frontier. But I thought it would be very rash, and most unwise, and would rather invite attack, if we were to hold the bridges with an inadequate force; therefore I did not equip either Naauwpoort or Stormberg for some time. In fact, I do not think that Stormberg was ever equipped at all, but I threw a quantity of stores into De Aar, because I knew that De Aar would be a place of great importance, and, from what I saw of it, I thought it was very unlikely that the Boers would come there, and it was more or less easily defended by a small force.

13690. With regard to the bridges, your force was quite inadequate to hold them?—Quite.

13691. And the general result of your evidence is that with the forces at your disposal you could not do more than hold certain points without reinforcements?—It was quite impossible, and when Sir Redvers Buller arrived, he said, after a few days, "I do not think we are strong enough to occupy Naauwpoort and Stormberg," and he withdrew the garrison from both Naauwpoort and Stormberg, and ordered me to destroy the works there. I had, in the meantime, strengthened Stormberg by a detachment from the Navy—I got 300 blue-jackets there—as I felt rather anxious about Stormberg. Those two garrisons were withdrawn, and shortly afterwards Sir Redvers Buller re-occupied Naauwpoort, but, as you know, Stormberg was left for a considerable time, till General Gatacre endeavoured to get it back from the Boers who had meantime occupied it.

13692. You say that the attitude actually taken up was only justified by the belief that the Boers would not take the initiative by invading Cape Colony?—Yes, I personally always thought that Mr. Schreiner, who was then Prime Minister, had very great influence with the President of the Orange Free State (as it was then), and that that, to a great extent, prevented the troops in the Orange Free State from crossing the border. I may be wrong, but it has always seemed to me that that was the case, because he was so particularly averse to our moving a single man away from Cape Town. With the greatest difficulty I got him to let me have two guns, which were really very good; they were up to date field guns, belonging to the Volunteers, but it was only with difficulty.

13693. Are those the two guns that you have mentioned as being sent up to General Baden-Powell?—No, those were mountain guns. The guns I mean got as far as Orange River. I meant to send them as far as Kimberley, but we could not get further than Orange River. We were stopped by the War breaking out.

13694. Were they used during the War?—Yes, I think they were. I do not remember where they went to from Orange River, but afterwards, when the Volunteers took the field, I know we got a battery together in the end, and the other four guns were sent up either to Naauwpoort or Stormberg. I am not sure which, I know they were used.

13695. And most of the guns, I think you say, were obsolete?—Yes, they were. They were muzzle loaders.

13696. They belonged to the Volunteers?—Yes.

13697. I see you state that the actual dates when the troops detailed for the defence of Kimberley and Orange River Bridge were despatched were the 18th and 19th September, and on the 25th September the De Aar detachment left?—That is so.

13698. At the same time you were purchasing horses. and so on?—Yes, we were doing our utmost.

13699. And you did get some from the Republics?—Yes. We had first of all to remount one squadron, or a great part of one squadron, of the 9th Lancers, who lost their horses on the way from Natal. I cannot state the exact number of horses we had in the dépôt, because I do not remember, but I fancy we had about a thousand—a very small number compared with what we afterwards got together.

13700. But after the end of September, of course, you could not go beyond your own borders in that matter?—No. The first shot was fired, I think, on the 13th of October; that was when the two guns were captured at Kraaipan.

13701. Were any Irregular Corps levied in Cape Colony?—We were anxious to call out the Cape Town Volunteers, the Cape Town Highlanders, and other Cape Town corps, but the Ministers were very averse to it, and they were not practically called out until after War had been declared. But before that I had got permission with very great difficulty to raise a force of scouts under Colonel Rimington. I asked leave to raise I think only 200, and that was refused in the first instance, but afterwards Lord Milner put a little pressure on the authorities, I think, and it was granted. In the first instance for Rimington's Scouts the number was 200, and afterwards Lord Milner himself wired home and asked permission that we might have 2,000 men raised, and that permission was given.

13702. Were the 2,000 men raised?—They were.

13703. In the Cape Colony or in Natal?—In the Cape Colony and in Natal; they were gradually raised; they took some time to raise.

13704. Now the first information about the Army Corps and your position in command of the line of communications came to you from General Buller?—Yes. I do not think I have sent that telegram in. Would you like me to read it? I do not think you have it.

13705. Will you read it, please?—I received it from the War Office, from General Buller.

13706. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) What is the date of it?—The 29th September: "Government have decided to send out an Army Corps, a Cavalry Division, seven battalions for Communications, and to make the main advance on Pretoria through the Orange Free State. The concentration of the troops will, therefore, be in Cape Colony. You are appointed General Officer commanding the Lines of Communication, which I hope will suit you. You had better disembark Richardson on his arrival at Cape Town, he will not be wanted in Natal. Tell George White to send to Cape Colony any of the Indian contingents he can spare as they arrive. He will not suffer now by his going to Natal." I do not know what that paragraph meant; I never could understand it. "I hope you will be able to arrange for details to disembark at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London simultaneously, but leave this to your own judgment. I expect to start on the

General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., and Colonel J. K. Trotter, C.B., C.M.G.

11 Feb. 1903.

General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., and Colonel J. K. Trotter, C.B., C.M.G. 7th, certainly on the 14th October. Keep the intention to move through the Orange Free State secret as long as you can. Treat your preparations as for defence of Cape Colony, and always speak of Natal route as being the main objective. Major Girouard, R.E., leaves on the 7th October to help you with the railways. (Signed), Redvers Buller, 29.9.99."

13707. (*Sir John Edge.*) This was a telegram to you? —Yes.

11 Feb. 1903. 13708. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) From London?—Yes.

13709. (*Chairman.*) Had you any official intimation then about the coming of the Army Corps?—I cannot say. That was the first intimation that I got. The next telegram, which I got the next day, was from the Secretary of State for War ordering me to "confer with General White and disembark for Cape Colony, ex 'Tantallon Castle' and 'Gaul,' such Army Service Corps personnel as he concurs with you in thinking necessary. Nineteen Transport Companies Army Service Corps, 1 Supply Company, about 270 strong all ranks, with 86 Army Service Corps officers, including 12 for Staff, embark in the 'Braemar Castle,' 6th October, calling at Cape Town for orders. One more Transport Company, about 50 all ranks, with some 30 Supply details, follow on the 13th instant. Those sailing on the 6th and 13th are for an Army Corps and Lines of Communication." So that that was, on the 30th September, practically informing me specially that there would be an Army Corps. Then in answer to General Buller's telegram I sent the following. I do not know whether this has been handed in; it is no use my troubling you with reading it if it has.

13710. I do not suppose we have those from Sir Redvers Buller?—This was from me to Sir Redvers Buller on the 30th September, acknowledging his telegram of the 29th: "Your instructions will be carried out. I propose to establish depôts for disembarkation at Port Elizabeth and East London as well as at Cape Town as soon as administrative officers become available; and advanced depôts at Naauwpoort and Stormberg Junctions. An advanced dépôt is now being formed at De Aar, and a rest camp at Stellenbosch. Every effort will be made to indicate as line of advance Natal. I think it would be a good plan to make home papers announce all troops embarking as proceeding to Natal."

13711. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Were all these telegrams between London and the Cape sent by a private code?—They all came in cipher. Then on October 2nd Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to me: "Your proposals are just what I wished, but I feared suggesting depôts at Naauwpoort and Stormberg, as I did not know if you had sufficient troops to safely guard them. It will not do to risk a loss. I leave this to your local knowledge. I sail on the 14th inst.—(Signed) Redvers Buller." I then telegraphed to him, telling him exactly what I had done, and in answer he telegraphed to me from Madeira: "I fully concur in your dispositions. Orange River Bridge is the most important at this moment. Do not risk much at Naauwpoort or at Stormberg until you feel yourself strong enough. If the sailors are going to Stormberg, send good Royal Engineer officers with them, as sailors are inclined to select posts exposed to long range fire." That was practically a private telegram.

13712. (*Chairman.*) In order to carry out those arrangements you had to confer with the railway people?—Yes, I did so far as I could confidentially. I pointed out that under any circumstances it would be necessary to establish bases at East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, and that one would really like to know what facilities for railway transport, and so on, for movements in the Colony there would be.

13713. And you had to arrange for the sites for the collection and despatching of troops at Cape Town, and for sidings and huts?—Yes, we had to do all that.

13714. Nothing had been done to prepare for that beforehand at all?—Nothing had been done before I arrived. I thought about it, of course, when I got to Cape Town, naturally, from the time of my arrival.

13715. But there was no scheme for making preparations for the landing of a large force?—No, there was no scheme, but we drew out a scheme so far as we could, for landing the force at those three points. We did not know whether the whole Army Corps was coming to Cape Town, or going to Port Elizabeth or

East London; we did not know how it would be divided, or whether it was all going to Natal. In the first instance it would seem as if the whole landing would take place in Natal.

13716. I mean that up to the 29th of September, when you got that telegram from Sir Redvers Buller, nothing was in preparation at all?—Except in our own minds. One was not justified in doing anything else.

13717. But if there had been an apprehension of sending an Army Corps previously to that date, would it not have been a reasonable precaution to have made some arrangement, say, with the railway companies which could have been done confidentially?—Most certainly; but I conferred with the railway authorities confidentially as soon as ever I could with regard to all those things in order to find out the facilities that there were and what they could do. I found out that it took six trains to convey an Infantry regiment, and it took nine trains to convey a cavalry regiment, so that only a limited number of troops could be sent up on one day.

13718. That meant that you had to provide for their camping somewhere near the base?—Yes, and we had to consider the possibility of having to provide rest camps en route.

13719. And all that had to be done in a state of emergency?—Practically.

13720. If it had been possible to inform the General Officer Commanding at the Cape two or three months earlier that there was a possibility of an Army Corps coming out, some of that emergency work might have been saved, might it not?—Yes, it might undoubtedly, but at the same time I think his common sense would have induced the General Officer Commanding to take into consideration what he should do, even if he could not consult very much, because I conclude that with the condition of affairs at the Cape, it was not thought desirable even to take the Ministers into one's confidence, so little could be said. Of course I used to see Lord Milner and discuss the situation with him, but I think, as regards the preparations, that everything was all ready at Cape Town when the troops arrived, and everything was ready at Port Elizabeth, and everything was ready at East London. I do not think there was any unreadiness.

13721. The preparations were made, but made with an extra strain upon yourself and your staff, I suppose?—Yes. Naturally if the preparations could have been extended over a longer time there would not have been so much pressure.

13722. And you were able to get ground?—Yes, we got everything. We got a hospital at Wynberg, and we got stores at the docks, which was a very important matter; we made arrangements for them to give us priority of entry into the docks, and we got increased accommodation for our Ordnance stores, which was also very important; and we got a rest camp established at Stellenbosch. I think everything that could be done was done, and I do not think the troops suffered on arrival. We got a very large camp established at Green Point.

13723. And you had armoured trains and ambulances?—Yes, the armoured trains were put under way, and the ambulances.

13724. Still if the exigencies of the political situation had not prevented it you might have done a good deal by a moderate expenditure of money beforehand, might you not?—Yes, I think we might. I think it is always the case that if you can only be allowed to spend money before war, it will save a great deal of expenditure afterwards, because a General is allowed to do nothing of his own initiative before war.

13725. If the General Officer Commanding on the spot could have dealt with some matters without reference home it would have saved a good deal of money?—Yes, I think it is of the very greatest importance that he should be allowed to do so. That is why I mentioned the question which I had on my mind of Rimington's Scouts, because it was such a very small matter, 200 intelligent men that he could get hold of at the frontier at the time. But they would not listen to me at home when I first proposed it, although I thought it was of the greatest possible importance.

13726. After the troops began to arrive they all in a way passed through your hands on their way up country did they not?—All those that arrived at Cape Town. Some went straight on of course to Port Elizabeth and others to East London.

13727. But whether they went to Port Elizabeth or East London they all passed through your command?—Yes, they passed through my command but they did not come under my eye as it were.

13728. But I mean they passed through your command as being in charge of the line of communications; all troops and everything passed through your command?—Yes, but as a matter of fact Sir Redvers Buller arrived before his Army Corps and he was at Cape Town for some little time; he arrived, I think, on the 2nd of November, and he left on the 23rd for Natal; so that for those three weeks he was in command at Cape Town; he was living in Cape Town and had his own staff there. The Army Corps was arriving almost every day from the time he arrived until he left, and as they came in he used to say where they were to go, because the Army Corps arrived a good time after the war broke out.

13729. What was your duty at that time?—My duty was practically to work under Sir Redvers Buller; it was a little involved, but my duty was generally to look after the Cape Colony, mostly Cape Town. While General Buller was on the spot he used to tell me what he wished done as far as possible, and worked through me.

13730. And afterwards it was entirely through your hands?—It was in a way. Sir Redvers Buller went to Natal on November 23rd, when the Cape Colony was in my hands, and the troops arriving were in my hands; but I had instructions from Sir Redvers Buller what he wished me to do.

13731. You had charge of all the troops landed?—Yes.

13732. We have had some evidence that the officers in charge of the disembarkation appealed to you in cases of difficulty?—Yes, they were all under me, of course.

13733. You are of opinion, I gather, that that part of the work that was done by the Admiralty was well done?—Yes, it was very well done. I think the embarkation work was extremely well done. We were fortunate in having a very good embarkation officer, who got on extremely well with the Naval Transport Officer there, and everything worked most harmoniously.

13734. And you are of opinion that on special occasions that part of the work is best left in the hands of the Admiralty?—I am; what the Admiralty had to do is best left to them I think. They must work in well of course with the Army. It is no use to have a senior embarking officer who does not get on with the Naval officer. If I found he did not get on well with the Naval officer I should move him and get someone else who did.

13735. But you would not wish to dispossess the Admiralty of the control?—No.

13736. (Sir John Edge.) Your embarking officer was not under the command of the Admiralty was he?—No, he worked directly under me, but he had to be in constant communication with the Naval people. In fact the work was so hard for my embarking officers at Cape Town that they had shake downs at the Docks, and they used to sleep there and be up the first thing in the morning and work all day and all night, too, at times; they used to get a snack of dinner on some ship coming in. I had three or four officers working as hard as any officers could work, but they got on extremely well with the senior Naval officer; but then he was a most admirable officer too.

13737. (Chairman.) Did requisitions for supplies and stores from England go through you?—Yes.

13738. Were they carried out satisfactorily?—Yes, they were carried out very well.

13739. You had not any difficulty in getting what you wanted?—No, I think they were extremely well carried out.

13740. (Sir Henry Norman.) Do you refer to Sir Edward Chichester?—Yes, he was at Cape Town.

13741. (Sir John Edge.) Was he your embarkation officer?—No, he was the Naval officer.

13742. Who was your embarkation officer?—Major Lascelles.

13743. (Chairman.) You have given us a note as to a variety of reports, which you have submitted from time to time to the Secretary of State?—Yes, I thought that they would show more clearly than anything else what was done, but I am sorry to say I cannot find the first of them, one written on the 13th of September, in which I sent home what were General Butler's proposals for the defence of the frontier. I have them all here if you would like me to hand them in, except that one of the 13th of September. There are seven I think. I may say that I wrote a private letter to Lord Wolseley each week, also, which contained a certain amount of matter which is not in the reports. (*The Reports were all subsequently handed in and will be found in the Appendix at the end of this Volume of Evidence, vide pages 592 to 611.*)

13744. Are these official reports to the Secretary of State for War?—Yes.

13745. (Sir Henry Norman.) Why do they end in November, 1899?—Because Sir Redvers Buller came out, and I was no longer in supreme command, so that I did not report direct to the War Office.

13746. But after he went on to Natal, did you not resume reporting direct to the War Office?—During the three weeks he was in Cape Town I did not write to the Secretary of State, except immediately after his arrival; but after Sir Redvers Buller went to Natal I used to communicate with him, and I think my communications with the War Office were almost entirely done by cablegram. The operations were chiefly in Natal. And with regard to what Lord Methuen was doing, I forwarded Lord Methuen's report to Sir Redvers Buller, and also sent copies home. I sent cablegrams home, but I did not send home any special reports of my own. I thought General Buller would do that as he was Commander-in-Chief.

13747. (Chairman.) And then you reported to Lord Roberts after that?—Yes.

13748. And these reports which you have handed in are the reports which went direct?—They are the reports which went direct while I was in command in South Africa and while I was in command at the Cape, after Sir George White arrived and before Sir Redvers Buller arrived.

13749. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) There is one report I should like to see, that of the 11th October, reporting weakness in the Army Service Corps officers?—That is one that I hand in.

13750. (Sir Henry Norman.) That weakness I suppose was weakness in numbers?—Yes. "As I am so weak in Army Service Corps officers and men I am not able to send staffs to Port Elizabeth and East London to perform B duties." I was certainly under the impression that when it was decided to send an Army Corps out, and when the authorities had made up their minds where that Army Corps was to land they would also send me out an organised staff for the Lines of Communication both for Base Commandants and for various other positions for which Lines of Communication officers are wanted. In the first instance I wired home to ask for a certain number of officers, and I was allowed to keep some of those that Sir George White brought out. I kept three—one of whom I appointed to Port Elizabeth, one to East London, and one I sent up to De Aar. Afterwards certain officers were sent out and handed over to me, but there was no special organisation for the Lines of Communication, and I certainly thought that would be arranged for at home, and it was very much wanted.

13751. (Chairman.) But that was not done?—No, and that of course rendered us very short-handed at the base for a considerable time; we had not an officer to send.

13752. How did you supply the want?—They sent out a certain number of officers afterwards and I appointed them just as I best could.

13753. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did you fill up the gaps by Volunteers at all there?—I think I had one or two Volunteer officers, but we managed afterwards to get sufficient officers. What I mean is that one's difficulties in the first instance were considerably enhanced by a want of organisation as regards the lines of com-

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11 Feb. 1903.

munication officers and staff. There is a book which I daresay you know, a pamphlet on the lines of communication, pointing out what the lines of communication of an Army Corps should be, and what staff there should be. And I was under the impression that when they found at home that war was almost a certainty they would send out an organised staff; that is to say, they would send out so many Base Commandants, so many officers for Station Commandants, and Assistant Adjutant-Generals, and so forth; but they did not do it.

13754. What was the intention, do you know; had they intended you to secure men there?—I cannot quite make out. I wired home to say that I must have five special service officers. I kept three of Sir George White's, as I have told you. Then they sent out five more younger officers, who were really too young for what I wanted. But I do not think the authorities at home grasped the situation as I had been hoping that they would. I am bound to say that I did not ask to have the whole organised staff sent out because I thought they were sure to come. But I think there is always a sort of idea that lines of communication can get on some how.

13755. (Chairman.) That is not your experience?—Certainly not.

13756. I suppose that perhaps not so formally, but you did report to Lord Roberts in the same way as you made these reports?—Written reports do you mean?

13757. Did you not send written reports to Lord Roberts?—No, there was not time. Everything almost was carried out by cablegram or telegram. We were telegraphing all day long backwards and forwards, in fact.

13758. From your experience in command of the line of communications in this important campaign are there any suggestions that you wish to make to us?—I think the General Officer who is in command of the lines of communication should be supreme in his command; that is to say, that all the troops on the lines of communication should be under him, and that he should not have anyone who is not under him practically—for instance, the Chief Ordnance Officer. I am bound to say that he worked with me because he found it was better to do so, but he was not under me; he was on the Headquarters Staff, but was stationed at Cape Town. The Chief Paymaster, again, was on the Headquarters Staff, but was stationed at Cape Town; he used to come and tell me what he was doing, but practically he was not under me. Lord Roberts left an officer, Colonel Herbert, who was his representative as Assistant Adjutant General on Headquarters Staff; he left him at Cape Town for the purpose of opening correspondence which might come for him, and I do not know what other duties there were for him to perform—nothing, in fact, very much; but he was on the Headquarters Staff, and so much did he consider himself to be on the Headquarters Staff that he once or twice sent me memos, "By Order, Herbert, Assistant Adjutant General." I pointed out to him the impossibility of the situation. I told him, "There cannot be two of us in command here. If you are here you must be under me or else I must get somebody else who is." I am not mentioning this as a grievance or as anything personal against Colonel Herbert, but I think in future it would be better that there should be nobody to interfere with the General Officer—the General Officer should be supreme. Then I think, looking at the importance of the lines of communication, it is very necessary that the Chief Staff Officer to the General belonging to the lines of communication should be left there when he has mastered everything. Colonel Trotter, who was my Chief Staff Officer, was of the greatest assistance to me, but it was found necessary at home to send for him to take up a position in the Intelligence Department at the War Office. I asked Lord Roberts to let me keep him, but he said he was afraid the authorities wanted him at home, but I might keep him for a month. He was succeeded by an officer who was an excellent fellow but who had had no experience but commanding a battalion; he came out knowing nothing of the work to be done, and it took me all my time to try and help him through his work instead of his being of assistance to me. I think that is a very great mistake. I do not think there are any other points that I wanted

to mention. I have mentioned about the necessity for a proper organisation beforehand, and I do not think there is anything else that came within my province that I ought to allude to.

13759. (Sir Henry Norman.) When the heads of Departments at Cape Town were sending on stores to their respective depots did they do that after communicating with you or did they send them on independently?—They communicated with me. I used to have a meeting of all the officers of the various departments, about 20 of them, every morning, and I saw them together in my office, so that we could arrange for whatever was being done during the day. I had my own staff there at the same time, and the various heads of departments and the officers who were not directly under me found it in their own interests convenient to attend too, so that practically I knew everything that was going on. And that had its advantages in this way. Supposing that the Ordnance Officer was anxious to send up a quantity of ordnance stores, and the Supply Officer was anxious to send up a certain amount of supplies, the representative of the railway, the railway staff officer there, could tell us whether it was possible to get sufficient transport, and then I would decide as to which should have precedence; and in that way it saved a great deal of time, so that really I saw everything that was going on.

13760. Did the various heads of departments receive requisitions direct from the front, or did they come through you?—They received all requisitions direct from the front.

13761. And I suppose they informed you of them?—Yes, they did.

13762. You had entire control of the prison, I suppose—all prisoners of war?—Yes, I had.

13763. Did that give you much trouble?—We had the camp at St. Helena, of course, and afterwards those prisoners abroad; one could not have much to say to them. But as regards all prisoners in the Colony I had a good deal of trouble.

13764. There was altogether a considerable collection of prisoners?—Yes, and of course that took officers; we had to find officers and assistant staff officers for prisoners, and it was a very difficult matter at times to find the officers, because an officer in the lines of communication is peculiarly situated. Lord Roberts told me, and Sir Redvers Buller told me at the beginning of the War, "Impress on your lines of communication officers that they will never suffer from being on the lines of communication." And Lord Roberts quoted his own example; he had been on the lines of communication in Abyssinia. Of course I did impress it upon them, but I found that the officers naturally were keen to get to the front, and therefore one was always fighting, so to speak, with one's officers, who were anxious to get away. And in some cases officers were taken away from me without my being consulted, and once or twice I had to replace them as best I could. Then again an officer on the lines of communication gets a medal after the war, but he gets few clasps, and he naturally feels that he has not the chances of distinction that officers at the front have. So that I think really all the junior officers deserve special consideration. It does not matter about the General, but the other officers I mean.

13765. Under these officers did you place army non-commissioned officers, or did the staff officers directly deal with the Boer prisoners?—We had interpreters.—I do not think that we had many soldiers working with them. We had of course a guard over them every day, but we managed to get several good men who spoke both English and Dutch, and who were absolutely loyal, to look after them and to act as interpreters.

13766. I suppose you must have had a great accumulation of sick men, invalids, and so on, at Cape Town or in the neighbourhood?—Yes.

13767. Men who wanted to go home?—Yes, we had a very large number waiting to go home sometimes at Wynberg, and coming down the line; we were often crowded in that way.

13768. And I suppose the senior medical officer was constantly communicating with you as to how many men were ready to go or ought to be sent?—

Yes, he always communicated with me in regard to everything, practically.

13769. You must have had a great variety of duties to perform when you were at Cape Town?—It was all right when we got into the swing of it, but of course it is being so shorthanded in the first instance that is the trial. But I had a most excellent base commandant at Cape Town, Colonel Cooper, who did extremely good work.

13770. Then I suppose as to sending drafts for regiments up the country you had some general instructions from the Commander-in-Chief as to when to send them or how long to keep them?—Yes. Unfortunately as regards horses in the first instance (that is a different question, perhaps) the horses were sent off long before they were ready, but that could not be helped, because they were wanted; they were ordered to be sent to the front, and once at the front they were used. But one difficulty at that time was in getting our drafts to the front at all; one officer on the way up found that he was likely to have a raid, and he used to take the troops out of the train, and another officer would help himself to the horses. At one time I found it desirable not to send the horses up by one line because they never reached their destination, and yet one was powerless to get at the people who took them.

13771. You did your best, I suppose, to keep the horses until they were thoroughly rested?—We wanted to keep them all until they were absolutely fit for work, but it was impossible. We were always just one lot of horses behind. We never could get quite up to date with our horses practically, so that we were always a little behind, and it was most unfortunate, because the consequence was that the horses were worked to death. Even when, as I say, we got to 32,000 they were taken off by all the columns in Cape Colony—it was at the time the Boers were in Cape Colony—and they were dead in a week, galloped off their legs.

13772. The evidence that we have had has shown us that sending up the horses so quickly caused an enormous mortality?—Yes, it was a very great pity.

13773. In fact, it was not worth sending them up, really, because they died so soon. I suppose it was a choice of evils?—Yes, you could not help it.

13774. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You had, I think, communication also with the oversea colonies, had you not?—Yes, with Australia and New Zealand.

13775. I think I have seen some of your correspondence from time to time?—Yes, it covered all the oversea colonies.

13776. At one time you reported all the casualties of the oversea men and so forth?—Yes, and all about the contingents embarking and re-embarking.

13777. Afterwards there was a casualty officer appointed, I think?—Yes, but practically it all came through me, although he was appointed.

13778. I think you gave instructions to communicate with the casualty officer?—Yes, we appointed him in order to try and decentralise a little.

13779. But at that time it was all done from your Department—it all came from you, in fact?—Yes.

13780. I think all the letters were signed by you?—Yes.

13781. What would you propose with respect to officers and staff for lines of communication in any future campaign; how would you prepare for it? I suppose they ought to have some training for the position?—I think we require to have something better than the present book. This is the book drawn up by the War Office for organization; but it is for an Army Corps. I pointed out to Lord Kitchener the necessity for working on this book, and he said it was only intended for small expeditions. We departed from it and worked to a certain extent, I think, in rather an unsystematic way. I think it is necessary that we should have something more elaborate than this book for any larger force than this in the event of any future campaign. It would be rather long to go into the whole question, but I think you require to have so many officers for the different positions on the lines of communication, and if they know when they come out that they are for the lines of communication and that once

there they ought to stop there I think they would be more content than if they knew there was always a possibility or a probability of their getting moved and getting to the front. Those three officers who came out with Sir George White came out fully expecting to go to the front, and they were greatly disappointed when I got hold of them. Afterwards they did of course succeed in getting on.

13782. Officers for the lines of communication ought to have some previous training, ought they not?—Yes, I think you should select officers who are suitable for the places. But I think even Lord Kitchener had an idea that any officer was good enough for the lines of communication, because sometimes if an officer did not do well at the front he used to say, "Send him down to Cape Town," and I had one or two sent down to me whom I did not dare to employ: officers who had lost their nerve not from any fault of their own.

13783. And sometimes very critical work may devolve on the lines of communication?—Yes, but it is always, of course, very difficult to get the right man in the right place. I daresay they found that out in the War Office in sending out officers in charge of horses. For instance, one Artillery officer on arriving said that the whole of his horses had been suffering from glanders, that he had already thrown 50 overboard and regretted that he had not had time to throw more over. On a veterinary examination it turned out that there had not been a single case of glanders on board; one or two horses had suffered from something or other and he threw them over the side wholesale, and the horses adjoining and the horses two or three off. That was an accident: the man had gone off his head; but such things will happen. They told me "on no account employ this man with horses again." Naturally I should not have done so, but they wired that out to me from the War Office.

13784. (Sir John Jackson.) When you went out you approved of that scheme of defence that General Butler had got out?—I did. I thought it was perfectly sound with the force that we had.

13785. Getting out a scheme of defence like that at that time was a little more difficult than usual, was it not, having regard to the fact that there were no thoroughly good maps of the country?—I think so far as Cape Colony is concerned our maps were all right.

13786. And you would say the same up in Natal?—I believe the maps for Natal proved very defective; Sir Redvers Buller found them so.

13787. Sir William Butler has told us that he considered it necessary to go personally over the ground; would you have considered it necessary at that time to go personally over the ground?—I should like to have done so. As a matter of fact immediately before the War, when I had got all the advanced posts there, I went round to Naauwpoort and Stormberg. I had great difficulty in getting away, but I wanted to see the country and see what the positions were like.

13788. If you had been asked to get out a scheme of defence in that case, and you had had time to go over the ground personally, would you have thought it the right thing to have done, or would you have relied upon your junior officers?—If it had been possible I should have gone round myself, otherwise I should have had to rely upon my junior officers.

13789. You spoke of the advantage of having a little money spent in early preparations. We have been told a great deal to the effect that the reason why the Government held back from providing the money for making preparations was that they did not wish to precipitate a war. Do you think that if in June, 1899, we had had say 40,000 men out in South Africa, the Boers would ever have ventured an attack?—I think it would have been a very great advantage to have had 40,000 men in South Africa in June, 1899.

13790. Do you think the Boers would have ventured to attack us if we had had such a force out there at that time?—No, I do not think they would have ventured at all. I do not know, of course. I may say that I had a conversation with Mr. Rhodes immediately before the War broke out, and he told me even then that he did not think war was likely to take place, and I am sure that if we had had a large number of troops in the country it would not have done so.

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11 Feb. 1903.

13791. So that if we had had 40,000 or 50,000 men in the country at the time, the Boers would have felt it was no good going to war?—I think they would.

13792. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) There have been some complaints about the undue detention of transports, and so on, and we have had it in evidence from transport officers that there was no help for it: that they had to take the ships inside. Would that be your view?—Yes, we had to take them inside, and sometimes we could not get them discharged for some time.

13793. So far as you know there was no delay which could have been avoided?—No, we did all we could to get them off, because we knew how much they were wanted, and there was a heavy charge for demurrage; and also a vessel pitching about outside might be in a very bad way. There was one hay ship wrecked.

13794. So far as you are aware are the War Office going to get out a more extended hand-book in connection with the lines of communication work to replace that small one?—I should think they probably would. I really do not know; I have no means of knowing.

13795. It is of course very important now that these things are fresh in everybody's mind that advantage should be taken of that information?—Certainly.

13796. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Can you remember, approximately, how long a time elapsed, how many days, between your first receiving orders to go to South Africa and your sailing?—Four days.

13797. Did you go to the War Office at all in that interval?—Yes. I saw Lord Wolseley the day before I sailed, I think.

13798. Did he go into any questions with you as to your line of conduct out there?—No, he asked me to write to him directly I got there and by every mail, which I did.

13799. There was no question whatever raised as to your policy?—No, there was no question raised.

13800. You were there such a short time before hostilities commenced that perhaps it is hardly fair to ask you the question, but did you consider the question of preparing to destroy the bridges that you were not going to hold?—Yes.

13801-2. What conclusion did you arrive at—not to do so?—Not to do so.

13803. On what ground?—It is difficult to say. I do not know quite, but I came to the conclusion that it would not be wise to destroy the bridges.

13804. Do you hold that opinion still?—Yes, I do.

13805. Would you mind explaining why?—As you are aware one bridge was blown up; it was blown up without my knowledge, and it was reported to me. It is an extraordinary thing that Lord Wolseley wired out to me, "Remember Hopetown bridge," and I could only reply, "Hopetown bridge was blown up to-day," but he did not mean Hopetown bridge really, he meant Orange River bridge, which we kept intact, and which was of the very greatest importance.

13806. Bearing in mind that a bridge allows the enemy to advance first and then he has it in his power to blow it up so that it will be of no use to you, will you explain why it was that you came to the conclusion not to attempt to blow up the bridges?—You may say that bridges were easily repaired, but the rivers there are for the greater part of the year fordable at any particular point, and on many grounds it did not seem to be worth while.

13807. But as a matter of fact when we did make our advance the fact of those bridges having been destroyed hindered us very considerably, did it not?—It hindered us in a way, but they were rapidly made usable. I do not say that they were rapidly restored but temporary bridges were put in their place.

13808. But you will remember that it occasioned considerable delay?—It did cause some delay. I do not consider that the delay was really considerable from the destruction of the bridges.

13809. But you approve of the general principle that in war it is a good thing to destroy bridges, because the enemy can cross by them and can destroy them?—Yes, I think it is a good general principle. It is

difficult to say why, but I certainly was of opinion, and am still of opinion, that it was not desirable.

13810. You do not feel that you can state the reasons?—No.

13811. You cannot support it by argument?—No, I cannot.

13812. I will not press you any further upon that point. Then another point is, have you the correspondence with the Attorney General—that was Sir Richard Solomon, I suppose?—Yes.

13813. And Lord Milner about commandeering, about putting the Local Burgher Act in force, because we have not got it?—No, I have not got it.

13814. But you remember that at the time, October 1899, the question did come up?—Yes, I wanted it put in force, but the Colonial Government would not hear of it. You must remember that Lord Milner and I were working with the utmost difficulty with these people.

13815. I understand that thoroughly. But you have not got the correspondence?—No.

13816. Then we shall have to get it from the War Office?—Yes, I do not think I ever saw it.

13817. There is only one more point I want to put to you. I will not of course take you into the question of the merits of regimental transport as opposed to general transport, and the change made by Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, but as regards the regimental transport which was supplied to you by the Regulations before the change was made, would you say that it was up to all requirements as far as it went?—Yes, I certainly thought it was. I have heard it quoted for instance, that it was not, because Lord Methuen was unable to leave the line when he went to Kimberley, but then it must be remembered that Lord Methuen was not sent up to relieve Kimberley; he was sent up with the object of throwing supplies into Kimberley and bringing away all the population that was useless, not occupied in the defence of Kimberley—all the women and children he could bring out. In order to enable him to take supplies to Kimberley and bring back that population his transport was absolutely insufficient, therefore he required to hold on to the railway and equally he required the railway to bring away the women and children.

13818. Then without pronouncing definitely on the merits of one system of transport against the other, speaking generally, you would say that on the system then established for regimental transport the units were satisfactorily supplied?—Yes, I would. I thought they were. I considered that the transport was satisfactory, and that that system was satisfactory.

13819. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I think you have mentioned that you were satisfied with the arrangements for the debarkation of troops, and for discharging the stores and cargoes generally?—Yes, I was quite satisfied.

13820-1. Was it not the case that there were very great detentions occasionally, that it was impossible to land the stores and leave them under proper shelter?—It was a difficulty, but we did get them under proper shelter, and I do not think there was much delay in landing them. They were not exposed. Of course the Cape Town docks were limited in extent, and ships coming in one after another and being disembarked with great rapidity necessitated a large number of things lying about in the docks, but they were not articles that would suffer from lying about.

13822. Even with an immense quantity of stores being broken you think that upon the whole the arrangements were good?—Yes, I think they were distinctly good, both at East London, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town. I visited all the places at various times, and I always found that the stores were being very well dealt with.

13823. Did you consider the constitution of Green Point Camp good and satisfactory from a sanitary point of view?—I do not know that it was a spot that I should have chosen, on account of its vicinity to the town, but it was the only spot available.

13824. It was on the whole a poor place for a camp?—
—I think it was, but I do not think that anybody
can point to a better one.

13825. A better one could not be got there?—No, and
it was very convenient for the docks, for troops arriving
or invalids just starting, to have a camp close at
hand.

13826. Was it infected with glanders and other
diseases from which horses suffer: did many of them
suffer from glanders?—No; we did at one time have
an outbreak there, but I think it was nothing—not
extensive.

13827. And there were no other horses introduced
during that outbreak of glanders?—No.

13828. (*Chairman.*) (*To Colonel Trotter.*) Is there
anything that you wish to say in addition to what Sir
Forestier-Walker has told us?—I do not know that I
have anything particular to say beyond what Sir
Forestier-Walker has said. I could answer Sir Taub-
man-Goldie's question about not destroying the bridges.

13829. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) If you please?
—The real reason why the bridges were not destroyed
was that in the first instance we were not allowed, by
particular request of the High Commissioner, to go
anywhere near the frontier. Up to the last moment
he hoped to keep the Orange Free State neutral. The
original scheme was to occupy the bridges, but on that
ground he said that it should never be done, and, as Sir
Forestier-Walker has said, we had not troops enough
to do it. Therefore we never went anywhere near the
frontier, and at the end of the time when the bridges
might have been destroyed it would have been impos-
sible to have sent anybody up there because it was
practically in the possession either of Boers or of disloyal
people about.

13830. Military occupation of bridges, of course, is
one thing, but taking steps to blow them up is another
matter?—We never could have blown them up at any
rate until we had permission from the High Com-
missioner, which would practically not have been until
war had broken out because up to the last moment we
kept away from the country, and even then when that

time came it would have been impossible to have got
near them.

13831. With a military force no doubt it would have
been impossible, but could you not have got them blown
up by anybody?—No, not by anybody. The tele-
graphists you know were captured and were in
Colesberg

13832. But among the Dutch-speaking population
would not a certain sum of money per bridge have pro-
duced their destruction?—Possibly.

13833. There are very few things that you cannot do
in South Africa with money?—Yes, it might have been
done in that way.

13834. From a military point of view, at any rate, you
would have approved of its being done?—Yes, but then
again there is another question to be considered. We
had almost an assurance from Mr. Schreiner that the
Orange Free State would not invade Cape Colony so long
as Cape Colony did not invade the Orange Free State,
and I believed the High Commissioner believed that, and
we did.

13835. But not after the outbreak of war?—Up to
the actual outbreak of war.

13836. I think it is a little earlier than that; I think
Mr. Schreiner's assurances were rather discounted
towards the middle of September?—Speaking from
memory I am almost confident that we believed up to the
very last moment that the Orange Free State would not
invade Cape Colony unless Cape Colony invaded the
Free State.

13837. Then might I just ask you about Kimberley
and your report that you made. Were the suggestions
that you made in that report fully carried out?—Yes, I
believe so. I went up originally to Kimberley in 1898,
the year before the war. Then I went up again in June,
1899, with an Engineer officer, Major Scott-Turner,
who was afterwards killed there, and I think the pro-
posals that we made then were most of them carried out
as soon as possible.

13838. Substantially, what you recommended has
been carried out?—Exactly.

*General Sir
F. W. E. F.
Forestier-
Walker,
G.C.M.G.,
K.C.B., and
Colonel J. K.
Trotter,
C.B., C.M.G.*

11 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-THIRD DAY.

Thursday, 12th February, 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Honourable The-EARL of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Honourable Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Lieut.-General SIR IAN S. M. HAMILTON, K.C.B., D.S.O., recalled, and further examined.

*See Q. 10857 to 10940, Vol. I. for Sir Ian Hamilton's previous Evidence.*13839. (*Chairman*.) You went out first with Sir George White, I think?—Yes.

13840. In what capacity?—As Assistant Adjutant-General. I was his Chief Staff Officer.

13841. Until what time?—Until we landed in Natal. One day after landing in Natal I was superseded by Sir Archibald Hunter, who had gone out in advance, and was to be Sir Redvers Buller's Chief Staff Officer, but in Sir Redvers Buller's absence he took up my position with Sir George White.

13842. And then what did you do?—For two or three days I helped in the Staff work, and then I got a brigade of troops—of Infantry.

13843. And you held that position throughout the siege of Ladysmith?—Throughout the siege.

13844. After the siege of Ladysmith, you joined Lord Roberts, I think?—After the siege of Ladysmith Lord Roberts telegraphed for me. I had got rather anæmic during the siege, so I went round by sea and stayed about a fortnight at Cape Town, and then went up to Bloemfontein.

13845. And after that what position did you hold?—After that I was given the command of the whole of the Mounted Infantry, which command I never assembled, so to say, under my own hand—they were always split up; but I usually had at least two corps of Mounted Infantry with me; and by a succession of rather curious events I gradually came to be in command of a large column, called Hamilton's force. I was sent out to try and clear some waterworks at Sanna's Post with my Mounted Infantry alone. Lord Kitchener told me that he was very doubtful if I should be able to do so as the enemy were probably too strong, but I must make a demonstration there. However, if I did succeed I might call upon Smith Dorrien's Brigade of Infantry to make good and occupy the waterworks. I succeeded in clearing the enemy out of Sanna's Post Waterworks with my Mounted Infantry, and I called upon Smith Dorrien's Brigade to come up to me. I left Bloemfontein thinking that I would be away for two days; I left my papers and everything on my table, and a good deal of my kit. I never went back there. I got a telegram in the middle of the night after getting to Sanna's Post, to say that the enemy were retreating in front of General French through Thabanchu from Wepener. What would I suggest? I suggested an advance on Thabanchu to try and cut them off. I moved out to Thabanchu; we had some fighting there, and I got another Infantry Brigade sent to me, Bruce Hamilton's, and from that time forward we moved up on the right of Lord Roberts's advance.

13846. All through to Pretoria?—All through to Heilbron, when we were brought across the front of the main advance from east to west.

13847. Then you came home, I think, with Lord Roberts?—Yes.

13848. And for a time you held an appointment in the War Office?—Yes, I was appointed Military Secretary at the War Office.

13849. Then, again, you went out?—Yes. I went out as Chief of the Staff to Lord Kitchener, arriving on the day that Lord Roberts had handed over the command in the previous year, the 29th of November.

13850. And, after some time on Lord Kitchener's Staff, you again had a command in the field?—After Lord Methuen's business in the Western Transvaal, Lord Kitchener sent me off at a few hours' notice to take command of the Forces in the Western Transvaal, where I remained for the last two months of the war.

13851. So that you saw a great many phases of the war?—Yes, I did.

13852. To go back to the first period of your service in Natal, you commanded, I think, at Elands-laagte?—I commanded the Infantry.

13853. And in Ladysmith itself you held a separate command?—A section of the defence—five miles.

13854. Was that separately allotted to you?—It was, on the evening after our repulse or defeat on Mournful Monday.

13855. And when you say that command was separately allotted to you, does that mean that you were responsible for the command in every way?—Yes, in every way.

13856. The question has been raised whether it would have been possible (I do not put it as a question of strategy, whether it would have been a proper thing to do) to have withdrawn from Ladysmith behind the Tugela at the time when the siege was imminent. Have you any opinion upon that point?—It would certainly have been possible to withdraw behind the Tugela, but at the sacrifice, I should think, of the greater part of our stores.

13857. At what date do you mean?—I thought you meant immediately after our repulse on Mournful Monday, the 27th.

13858. It has been put at two dates, I think. In the first place it would, I suppose, have been practicable to have taken up a position behind the Tugela on Sir George White's first arrival in Natal?—I think it would.

13859. We had it from Sir Edward Ward, who was in charge of the supplies at the time, that at that moment the supplies in Ladysmith were two months' supplies for the normal garrison, and that the supplies which you had eventually in Ladysmith, were pushed up afterwards?—That is so.

13860. Therefore, at that moment, I suppose, it would have been possible, at the sacrifice of the smaller amount of supplies, to have withdrawn behind the Tugela?—Yes, and probably even without the sacrifice of the smaller amount of supplies, because having got up the greater amount, you could have got down the smaller.

13861. Then there was a later date also put, namely, at the time when it was clear that the Boers were closing in upon Ladysmith. Do you think it would have been practicable then to have withdrawn behind the Tugela?—I wish to distinguish very closely between practicable and advisable. I think it would have been practicable certainly.

13862. Practicable at the loss of a large portion of the stores?—Yes.

13863. As to the advisability of so doing, what do you say?—I think it would have been most disastrous.

Lieut.-
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
12 Feb. 1903

without a long previous preparation, especially in making lateral communications along the south bank of the Tugela. To hold the Tugela you would have had to hold it along a very broad front, and you would have had to have good communications to reinforce threatened points, and to feed your troops, and there was no such communication. It is very hilly, broken, bad country, indeed. If we had taken up such a position, either our line would have been pierced at some point, or it would have been turned. If it had been turned as effectively as it was when we were driven back at Ladysmith on Mournful Monday, well, then, we should have been in a very different position if we had been ringed up there from what we were in Ladysmith.

13864. In what way do you mean?—I mean that in Ladysmith we had a centre, we had houses, and we had all these provisions stored; whereas if anything had happened to us on the Tugela, and we had been surrounded by the Boers, we could not have stood a siege.

13865. On the south bank of the Tugela?—On the south bank of the Tugela; because we must have been extended along a very broad front in order to hold the Tugela.

13866. I think one way in which it was put to us in evidence was, that there might have been a central place selected, but south of the Tugela, which you might have held in the same way as you held Ladysmith, such as Estcourt?—Having seen the country, I do not believe that we could have prevented the Boers crossing the Tugela or turning our right flank; and, of course, they would have been greatly encouraged by our having fallen back so far.

13867. You used the expression, "If we had been driven back in the same way as we were on mournful Monday." What did you mean exactly by that?—I mean to say, that we returned to Ladysmith in a state in which a large number of the troops were discouraged, and in which for a day or two we had lost the power of any vigorous initiative.

13868. It took them that time to recover?—Yes.

13869. But the Boers did not press?—No, the Boers did not press.

13870. If they had pressed it might have been serious?—If the Boers had really pressed, if they had had some disciplined body to which they could have given the order to vigorously attack and pursue, I think it might have been a bad business.

13871. But that, I suppose, was a quality which the Boers did not display?—They did not possess it.

13872. All through the war?—All through the war.

13873. And especially through the siege of Ladysmith?—Especially through the siege of Ladysmith, extraordinarily so.

13874. I suppose it was an exception, perhaps, on the 6th January?—Yes, I think so, especially from conversations which I have had since with men who were on the Boer side who were in it, such as Commandant Truiter, and men of that sort. He commanded the Harrismith Commando, and he told me that they were getting very much exasperated and disappointed at the delay in the fall of Ladysmith, which they had confidently anticipated would occur very quickly, and that they hardened themselves to make a big effort.

13875. The point on which the attack was principally developed was the point of your command, I think?—Yes, the point of Wagon Hill.

13876. And that was a serious attack?—It was a very serious attack.

13877. They did come on as an attacking force?—Oh, yes; they came on well, and not only did they come on well in the first instance, but they made several strong efforts during the day to turn us out.

13878. That was an exceptional case?—Quite exceptional until towards the end of the campaign. I saw at the very end of the campaign a most dashing charge of the Boers in Delarey's commando against Colonel Kekewich, which showed that they were gradually becoming veteran soldiers; but in all the part of the campaign, which is now under consideration, I did not see anything more determined than their behaviour on Wagon Hill day.

13879. Was their holding back due to a want of discipline, to their not being disciplined troops?—I think it was, because if you have disciplined troops, men may not be very keen, they may perhaps even try to make

excuses; but if they are told they must go, they must go.

13880. So that if the siege of Ladysmith had been carried on by disciplined troops it would have been a different matter altogether, probably?—It probably would have been.

13881. I think some witnesses have said with regard to that question that towards the end of the war the Boers had become encouraged by the absence, particularly in the case of Mounted Infantry, of any personal weapon of offence. Do you think there is anything in that argument?—How do you mean "any personal weapon of offence"?

13882. I mean that the Mounted Infantry only carried the rifle, and therefore they were not like Cavalry, who had a personal weapon with which to make a charge?—But the Mounted Infantry carried the bayonet.

13883. Yes, they did?—On the day after Doornkop there was a desperate Irishman on the Boer side with two or three comrades who were running about the sand-heaps taken out of the mine and firing, and a Mounted Infantryman fixed his bayonet, galloped straight at him, and brought him to his knees at once. The Mounted Infantry could on occasion charge as well as anyone else.

13884. I only put the question as arising out of an answer that you gave, because I remembered that it had been a particular argument for arming Mounted Infantry or Yeomanry with some personal weapon, some officers said preferably with the sword, so that they might be capable of shock tactics, which I think is the proper expression; have you any opinion on that point?—I am quite against giving Mounted Infantry a sword; I am very strongly and clearly in favour of Mounted Infantry being Infantry. I think that on a rare occasion, if a Mounted Infantryman wanted to charge he could fix his bayonet and charge.

13885. That is as an individual?—As an individual in a loose swarm. You could hardly charge with the bayonet in serried mass.

13886. I think what was meant was a charge in mass to check the approach of a force like that of the Boers, who had no personal weapons, I presume?—No, they had not; but they had a tremendous reliance on their rifle. As the war came to an end they showed a greater determination in their attacks; and I do not agree with the inference drawn by some witness that it was because they knew that they would not be charged by regular Cavalry. I think they came on more gallantly towards the end of the campaign, first because they were becoming veterans and acquiring a regular sort of discipline—in fact, I am sure of it; and secondly, because our mounted troops which they were then encountering, the second Yeomanry, and so on, shot so badly that they knew they could gallop in and would probably not be hit. Those people that I saw of Delarey's who had charged Kekewich, cantered along in line two and three deep from a mile off, and there was a most terrific fire on them, it was most alarming, guns, pom-poms, and rifles firing all they knew, but none of them tumbled down until they got very close indeed.

13887. This is what I am basing my question upon: *See Q. 6861.* "One thing I made rather a point of was that our fellows had no arm of attack. For Yeomanry Cavalry it is essential to have a weapon, an arm of offence, and if you take away from them that arm of offence you put them under a great disadvantage, in my opinion. . . . We had the rifle, but the rifle is essentially an arm of defence, and we had no arm of offence" ?—I do not agree. I think that regular Cavalry ought still to have a weapon of offence, because for hundreds of years it has been so intimately connected with every cavalry story and their whole history that, morally, it gives them an idea that they can do things which they really cannot, but still they think they can, and therefore it enables them to act really with greater boldness than they otherwise would. This does not apply to Yeomanry or Mounted Infantry.

13888-9. Is there any other point with regard to the period of your service in Natal of which you would like to speak?—I may say that I felt the want very much of two or three alternative schemes of action under certain circumstances. I have always felt that we ought to have been provided with that. It would have given definiteness to our ideas whilst going out in the steamer and thinking what we would do, and on arriving in Natal and thinking what we would have to do. If we

Lieut.-General Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

*Lieut.-
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.*
12 Feb. 1903.

had had two or three schemes, say, "Supposing you have got very few troops, less than 10,000, and you have to take up a defensive position, and that you are threatened by an invasion from the north and from the west, then we think that you ought to fall back and take up a position at Pietermaritzburg or Estcourt, or something of that sort; or else we think the invasion will best be met by a defensive against the west and a vigorous offensive towards the north," and drawing up step by step what our actions ought to be, it would have been of great assistance.

13890. You are speaking now as a staff officer?—I am now speaking of the brief period during which I was chief staff officer.

13891. We had expected to have had Sir George White before we received this evidence from you, but it has been necessary to postpone the taking of his evidence, and that was why I did not ask that particular question; but we are very glad to have that opinion from you?—As you know, in India the Intelligence branch do draw up specific schemes; but there was nothing of that sort given to Sir George White that I ever saw. There was a good deal of useful information given us in books, but there was nothing to guide us as to what our action should be.

13892. You had all the information that the Intelligence Division could give you, I suppose?—Yes, we had all that.

13893. But no distinct instructions or schemes?—No schemes. In fact, I do not think the Intelligence Department considered it their business to do that at that time.

13894. There were local defence schemes, as I think I mentioned to you on the last occasion when you were before us?—Yes, there were.

13895. But I think when you were here before you said that you had not seen those schemes?—No, I did not even see them.

13896. Those, of course, existed, but they were drawn up under the conditions which the Regulations lay down, namely, that they should deal only with the normal garrison?—Yes.

13897. So that that probably would not have helped you much?—Not a bit.

13898. But the view that has been put before us is that a general officer sent out to command is better left to deal with the matter when he sees the circumstances on the spot?—I cannot understand that line of argument. He is not bound by the schemes necessarily. He has two or three schemes for different situations; but if he is a man of any character at all, he will say, "None of those situations have arisen, and these views are modified by what I have found awaiting me."

13899. You say that in India that would have been done?—In India, if the Viceroy wants to go to Chitral he tells the Commander-in-Chief, who wires to the Quartermaster-General. The Quartermaster-General there is not only in charge of the movement and distribution of troops, but he has also the Mobilisation and Intelligence under him, and he, through his Intelligence branch, has a scheme drawn up for, say, two columns, one starting from Peshawur and the other from Nowshara, to invade Chitral. He will lay down the number of troops and everything else, and then from his other branch he can exactly say where the troops are to come from, and having done that, he sends it instantly to the Commander-in-Chief, who may modify it, and the Viceroy may modify it, but, at any rate, they have a scheme, or very likely they would have two or three schemes. That is not so here.

13900. But then that was for the Commander-in-Chief and the authorities at home; but those schemes were also in the hands of the officer appointed to command the force?—Yes.

13901. And then, when the officer got on to the spot he could alter his dispositions if he found it expedient to do so; but he had all the information, and he had the schemes before him in making up his mind?—That is so, exactly.

13902. But in your case, on your arrival in Natal there was nothing of the kind?—Nothing of the kind.

13903. Then if we pass on to your next phase of service in the command of the Mounted Infantry on the right of Lord Roberts's advance, are there any particular points to which you wish to draw our attention?—I think the history of it all is pretty well known. The

troops did very well; they were very enthusiastic; they had not quite shaken down in some ways into campaigning habits.

13904. Were they troops that had just come out that you had under your command?—Yes, they were largely troops that had just come out, fairly recently—City Imperial Volunteers, I mean to say, and people like that who had not been out very long.

13905. I think you had a good opinion of the City Imperial Volunteers?—Yes; they ripened very quickly. They improved before my eyes. At the crossing of the Sand River was the first time I let them go at all, and I was not quite sure of them, but they were all right, and then they did better still at Doornkop, and at Diamond Hill they did very well indeed.

13906. I think we have been told that you ranked them nearly as high as the Gordons on that occasion?—Yes, I think so.

13907. You could not say more?—No, I cannot say more than that.

13908. Were the Mounted Infantry that you had with you from Regular battalions or from the Yeomanry?—They were Mounted Infantry drawn from Regular battalions; I had no Yeomanry at that time.

13909. But you had Yeomanry afterwards?—I had a little Yeomanry afterwards in the west.

13910. Not till then?—No, not in the phase that this Commission is considering.

13911. Did you have any difficulties with regard to your supplies during that march?—Great difficulties.

13912. You were at times a considerable distance from the base?—Yes, we had eight days' supplies for 14 days; that is what we got through with.

13913. You mean that you had to go for 14 days on eight days' supplies?—Yes; we were able to some extent to supplement that. I do not mean to say that the men were starving.

13914. What period are you speaking of?—That is during my advance on the right.

13915. Up to Heilbron?—Up to Heilbron, and then we were worse for a day or two after we crossed the railway. As you know, I was brought across, and we were to have been met by a large convoy under an officer called, I think, Corbelis; anyhow, this convoy went utterly astray somewhere, and as I was very keen, and everyone was very keen, to go and support General French, we marched without it, and the men were on half rations, and the day that we fought the action of Doornkop we finished our rations. Next morning there was nothing.

13916. And what happened then?—Oh, nothing could stop us, you see, then. We went on to Florida.

13917. And you got supplies there?—We got lots of supplies there.

13918. But I suppose that that delay in supplying you was unavoidable?—Yes, it was unavoidable. In this particular instance something went wrong.

13919. Yes, about that particular convoy; but, as a rule, you were well supplied?—Yes.

13920. Difficulties, of course, must occur in that sort of campaign?—Yes. The men, I may say, thoroughly realised that.

13921. You have not any general complaint as regards the supplying of your force?—Not at all.

13922. Is there any other point you wish to mention at this moment with regard to that part of the campaign?—No, I do not think so.

13923. Then the next phase was when you were Chief of the Staff to Lord Kitchener, I suppose?—I went on for a bit after that to Diamond Hill, and so on, and then I came back with Lord Roberts; and then the next phase was when I was Chief of the Staff to Lord Kitchener.

13924. Was that chiefly at Pretoria?—Chiefly at Pretoria. I found that I did my best service by being there as the senior officer, who could be held responsible, thus allowing Lord Kitchener to move about freely, and to go down to Cape Colony or Natal and see the troops and people, which he had not been able till then to do.

13925. He did move about?—Yes, he began to move about a great deal more.

13926. And left the control in your hands?—He left

the control in my hands; that is to say, it was my duty, of course, to tell him of any untoward event; but I felt that if I did so I entirely spoilt his tour, and brought him back; so that I used to postpone doing it. Then at times things grew worse, one passed sleepless nights, and so on; but, as a rule, I told him as little as I could.

13927. Were you in telegraphic communication with most of the columns at that time?—Yes, I used to get immense numbers of telegrams.

13928. And it was your duty to collate those?—Yes.

13929. And to get any orders from the Commander-in-Chief that were necessary?—That was it. We used to get up at half-past 5 o'clock and do all the operations work before breakfast, read all the telegrams, study the maps, study the operations, and write all the operations telegrams before breakfast at 8 o'clock. Then, when all the Departmental officers came to know where supplies should go, or where materials for block-houses should go, or anything of that sort, the operations having been all settled, it was easier to issue those orders.

13930. The work must have been very heavy at that time?—It was.

13931. Had you a sufficient staff?—Yes. We had not a very enormous staff, but we managed it.

13932. There has been some criticism of the staff officers in the campaign; were you well served at that time?—At the time I am speaking of now, when we were with Lord Kitchener, everyone had got to know his work, and had fitted into his place, and although the work was very hard, I think they got through it all right.

13933. One criticism which has been made of the staff officers is that they were not able to read maps sufficiently well to carry out the duties in the field? Had you any experience of that?—I have had great experience of numerous staff officers, of course. I think that a staff officer could hardly have been through the Staff College who could not read maps; but there is a great difference in individuals; some men have a genius for reading maps, and others are stupid at maps, however hard they work at them. But as regards the Quartermaster-General's part of the work, I think it is universally admitted that there was a great want there—that the Quartermaster-General's side of a staff officer's education in England had been allowed to go down.

13934. Would you define exactly what the Quartermaster-General's side means?—The Quartermaster-General's side in this connection means a knowledge of the country, water supply, movements, and (overlapping to some extent with the Intelligence) reconnaissances and knowledge of the enemy and his whereabouts.

13935. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Selection of camps?—Selection of camps, of course; as a matter of fact, the general himself often does that; but the selection of camps is very important, and, if you remain long in camp (overlapping again with the Medical Department), the sanitary arrangements.

13936. (Chairman.) And in all those points you were apt to find differences in the staff work?—I think you want someone to bring together the Intelligence Department, the Royal Engineers, and the doctors—some officer on the general staff to work all that sort of thing, such as you had in the old Quartermaster-General's man whom you had in India; and there is no reason why we should not have him again in England.

13937. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) In the field?—In the field. Of course, the Quartermaster-General himself here is quite a different person. He deals chiefly with supply and transport.

13938. (Chairman.) Then the last phase of your service was the later phase at the end of the war, when you went again to the field?—Yes.

13939. That was after Lord Methuen's disaster?—Yes. After Lord Methuen's last affair two officers commanding columns telegraphed in to Lord Kitchener on a Saturday to say that it was very difficult without any head to make plans, and they wanted a local head, and they both suggested me. Lord Kitchener showed me the telegram, but did not make any remark. Next morning, after I had done the work which I have just described to the Commission, just before breakfast, he said: "I think you had better go out to the Western

Transvaal." I waited all day, thinking I would have a very long discussion as to what measures should be taken, but I heard no more, and I went off that night. I took it that Lord Kitchener really wanted me to go, and just see whether I could do anything, and that if I thought I could not do anything I would probably come back, and if I thought I could do something I would go on. I went as fast as I could; I joined one of the columns; we had just enough supplies to enable us to make a march into the enemy's territory, which we did, when, fortunately, he attacked us, and was broken at Rooivaal. That was the time when the Boers charged so gallantly. After their back was broken in that way, it became possible to institute driving operations, and we drove the country.

13940. That is, of course, a period beyond our reference?—Yes.

13941. You have been good enough to furnish us with papers with certain remarks on various points which we shall be glad to have in your evidence?—If you please.

Deductions.

The South African War marks a very important epoch in the evolution of military tactics. During the wars of Frederick the Great the ruling factor was a perfectly trained and disciplined unit; I mean to say that mere numbers were at a discount compared with the cohesion, skill, and experience which characterised the veteran regiment or battalion. Hostilities were then still carried on by the monarch with his mercenary troops, largely consisting of foreigners, which he paid from his own exchequer. Armies were fed from the Royal magazines by elaborate supply trains and communications behind them. They made no attempt to live on the country, and, in fact, were models in the way they behaved towards the ordinary civil population, which, generally, only felt the effects of a war through an increase of taxation. The French Revolution upset this, together with many other things. It simply put the whole male population of France into the fighting line, and supplied them with an enthusiasm which compensated for mechanical deficiencies. Napoleon, in his turn, taught these masses how to live on the country they were fighting in, and thus gained for his forces advantages of mobility and crushing numerical superiority at any point, which with the improved use of artillery and small arms, completely broke up and destroyed opponents organised in the older style. The Prussians merely elaborated this general principle by the system of reserves, and by providing their huge armies of partially trained men with a supremely well-trained staff, who saw to it that the most careful preparations were made beforehand for utilising for war the whole resources of the State the moment war began. Thus far the changes of the last century have been economical and political rather than tactical, and the method which the French Revolution initiated, Napoleon improved, and the Prussians perfected, has resulted in Providence siding with the large rather than the highly-trained battalions. Now the moment has arrived when the question will have to be faced as to how far the necessity of a very high standard of individual training in the men, as well as in the officers, is compatible with the maintenance of large armies of short service conscripts. If the experience of the South African War can be taken as a guide, the big battalion phase is now about to pass away, and we are entering upon a period when the efficiency of an army will depend far more upon the morale and high training of the individuals who compose it than upon the mere numbers of these individuals who may be available. I believe that an army composed of individuals each so highly trained as to be able to take full advantage of the terrain, and of his wonderful modern weapon, and each animated with a morale and trained to an efficiency which will make him capable of acting in battle on his own initiative, will break through, scatter and demolish less efficient opposing forces, even if greatly superior in numbers. No doubt this principle will be more strikingly exemplified in the case of such countries as we are accustomed to wage war in, than in the comparatively small, enclosed, and highly civilised countries of Europe. For where numbers are limited by questions of transport and supply, the folly of despatching anything but superlatively good soldiers is accentuated. In other words, while with our regular army the one important thing is to improve the quality, without troubling too much about mere numbers, numbers may still have a certain advantage for the home de-

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fence of England. It must not be supposed that in insisting upon the necessity for individual initiative and training I wish in any way to ignore or depreciate discipline. Discipline there must be, but it must be discipline on a higher plane. It must be the aim of the new discipline to make the private soldier capable of keeping steadfastly in mind for the whole of the day, or even for several days, and striving with all his might to carry out what he has been told by a superior who is no longer present, and who, for all he may know, is dead. Within a mile of the enemy and in open country it will no longer be possible for the brigade-major to gallop up to the colonel with a folded piece of paper prescribing his next movement. Nor can the colonel send his adjutant to tell the captain to change direction or reinforce. Within a thousand yards of a hostile position the captain can hardly hope any longer to influence the company as a whole by orders, or even by personal example, and the idea of swarms of men surging forward by word of command to the assault of a position is one which we should do our best to encourage among our potential enemies. If a battalion in open country can succeed in getting within 500 yards of the enemy's defensive position, they will have done all that they can do as a collective body. The men will be lying widely extended and pinned down to some small depression, or bits of cover by streams of bullets passing just over them. At some part of the line, however, it is almost certain that a brook, or ditch, or imperceptible fold of the ground will give some trifling shelter to a further advance. Half a dozen private soldiers may find themselves at this spot. If they possess sufficient training to recognise the possibilities of their position, together with sufficient new discipline, initiative, and enthusiasm to take advantage of it, they will creep on. They will be followed by others, and if, as a result, the enemy's line is penetrated, even by a few men, the power of their modern armament will make their flanking fire so demoralising and effective that the position will either be abandoned forthwith, or so much attention will be concentrated on the intruders that an assault may become practicable all along the line. It will be evident that to do this the mind of each man must be imbued with a firm conviction that the other men of his own rank, whom he does not see, and who may be anywhere within the next few miles, are also doing the same and trying to seize hold of every opportunity; in other words, active discipline on the higher plane really consists in an unalterable confidence that it also exists in others, and that the individual is not risking his life for nothing. All this means added importance to a thorough disciplinary training, and to *esprit de corps*. That is, I believe, where the conscript soldier will fail. Only imperfectly acquainted with his officers and with his fellow-soldiers, he will tend at the first difficulty to remain lying under cover because he has no conviction that they are likely to do much more than he is doing, and is not imbued by the sense that he is giving his comrades away by not doing more. It is the magazine rifle, with its smokeless powder, which is at the root of this startling and imminent change in both tactics which I have endeavoured shortly to indicate. The modern firearm has been improved and perfected far more rapidly than the soldier. We want an army composed of men each of whom can be trusted to make the fullest possible use of the finest and most delicately-adjusted rifle that can be made. I have noticed a feeling in our army that improvements in armament cannot be carried further, because the private soldier would not be able to avail himself of such niceties. This is indeed putting the cart before the horse, and it should be clearly understood that the private soldier of the future must be sufficiently educated to take every advantage of all that science can do for him. Dispersion, concealment, and intelligent use of the ground are also essential to success for either the attack or defence, and this demands a high standard of individuality. There is a timid school of theorists who are eager to explain that the defence is more likely to be successful than the attack. If attacks are, indeed, to be conducted as they are now on the continent of Europe, or as they were until recently in our own Army, then this is undoubtedly true; but to my idea, under skilful leading, the attack has rather gained than lost by the new conditions. There is so much more scope for manoeuvre, and so much more frontage of ground comes into the sphere of operations, that it is almost always possible to take up flank and supporting positions, from which a deadly fire can be kept up on the enemy's line of defence whilst small bodies work their way close up

and effect a lodgment as previously described. The difficulties of estimating the strength of an enemy or the direction of his fire will give great advantages to a bold and vigorous general, who keeps on the move, and who is well served by his scouts and his patrols. The defence has then to extend its line, and the opportunities for a clever concentration to envelop one flank or to break through in the centre are largely increased. This is hardly the place for an essay on tactics, but I should like to say that I, personally, have never seen a determined and skilfully led attack fail when directed against a passive defence. From Nicholson's Nek or Elandsplaagte to Doornkop and Diamond Hill it has always been the same story. The siege of Ladysmith can hardly be quoted to the contrary, for it was only by successive determined counter attacks that Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill were retained on the 6th of January. Notwithstanding, then, the obvious fact that, where the defence is provided with good cover and has in front of it a field of fire offering but little cover, the wider area of the fire-swept zone is locally in favour of the defence. I am a strong supporter of the attack. Far from thinking that a great preponderance of numerical strength is necessary before an attack can be delivered, I think that under the new conditions it may often be possible for the weaker force successfully to attack the stronger. Even if the country is open there will always be ways of getting across the fire-swept zone. If the worst comes to the worst, the attack can be delivered in the afternoon so that it is becoming dusk, as the men get within point-blank range. Or failing this, a night march over carefully reconnoitred ground will bring your troops up to the desired point. Or, again, rain, fog, or dust may come to assist the would-be assailant, and, of course, in wooded countries like Europe there is often good cover available. In any case, I am certain that an attack can always be brought off somehow, and that with good men and skilful leading the chances are greatly in its favour. Granting, then, that the military supremacy of the future must be sought through the medium of a high standard of individual efficiency rather than by the preparation of masses of semi-efficients, it is clear that it cannot pay to keep soldiers who are only partly educated up to the potentialities of their armament. It may be that in some cases we cannot get enough of the class of men who will be of use in the wars of the future at the rate of pay we offer. In that case, I say most emphatically, we must pay more, even at the cost of a proportionate reduction in mere numbers. The ideal trooper should be able to travel by day or night, guiding himself by compass, map, or sun. He should be a finished horseman and a crack shot with his rifle. The ideal infantry soldier should have his body and brain developed to the utmost during his military service. If not properly educated before enlistment, the Army must put the schoolmaster to him and see that he is able to understand things, just as the gymnastic instructor must see that he is able to do things. He should be able to shoot up to the standard of excellence which is expected from the chamois hunter, and march 30 miles when required. He should have a good idea of terrain and cover, and of entrenchments. It is impossible to teach such things on a cricket-field. The soldier can hardly be expected to take much interest in soldiering or to see the sporting side of it when all his training is carried out on strict make-believe lines. The victorious army of the future must have ample training grounds, and if we cannot afford to hire or purchase them in these small islands, then we had better keep our troops somewhere where ground is abundant. In war we revert to primitive conditions, and every sort of subtlety or trick must be recognised as part of the game. Such a trifling device, for instance, as constructing lines of entrenchment precisely at those spots where there is no intention of posting troops may cause the enemy to misdirect the whole of his preliminary artillery fire. It is an idea which would readily occur to a schoolboy, but such points seem sometimes to be considered frivolous, irregular, and almost derogatory to the regulation military punctilio. The fondness of our officers for sports, such as hunting, polo, and shooting, assists them a good deal in such matters, for it must be remembered that war itself is, after all, a game, just like any other game, only that the stakes are the most important we can conceive. Whether on horse or foot, 50 sporting young officers would prove a match for 300 average young soldiers of the present type, although the soldiers may be just as brave as the officers. Similarly men of the stamp of University graduates, or young barristers, if taken to

a country like South Africa and trained there, would, in the course of a year or two, be able to make short work of many times their numbers of Continental conscripts. Quality above quantity should be our motto. If the man in the street is asked, "What is the lesson you deduce from the war?" he will reply, "I deduce that all your barrack-square drill, and pomp, and pipe-clay is no use at all, and that a few farmers possessing individuality, horsemanship, and marksmanship proved, man to man, more than a match for you. I further deduce that the people of any country are able to defend themselves if they are fitted out with rifles and ammunition." There is just enough truth in this to make it misleading. The value of individual initiative and individual campaigning aptitude is so greatly accentuated by modern armament, smokeless powder, etc., that an armed populace possessing these qualities may easily be more than a match for soldiers, in whose training, education, initiative, and individuality, have been neglected and repressed. But the soldier of the future, selected, trained, and educated as he might be in a voluntary enlistment army, should stand, in fighting value, as far above local levies or armed populace as a mailed knight of the Middle Ages did in respect to the peasants of the Jacquerie.

Adequacy in Point of Strength of the Forces in the Field.

It is comparatively easy to solve a strategical problem after the event, but, judging the matter from this standpoint, I am inclined to believe that the Natal Field Force on the outbreak of war might, under certain conditions, have been strong enough to repulse the Boer armies who invaded that colony. Unfortunately, however, those conditions demanded that military action should be entirely untrammelled by regard for political exigencies. But under the British Constitution, the evolution of a leader who would regard himself, as the young Napoleon did, entirely absolved from the consideration of any but purely military requirements is practically unthinkable, and as a matter of fact, political exigencies ruled the situation. Thus it came that the Natal Field Force had to be split up to meet two forces of the enemy, each of which was, perhaps, weaker than our united army, but each of which was also more powerful in that country than either of the divided portions of our force. Now, the strategical position in Natal was admirably suited to an energetic offensive against any attempt at a simultaneous attack from the Transvaal and Orange Free State, if only for the very good reason that it was obviously impossible to make such an attack really simultaneous. On the other hand, the strategic situation of the British troops could not well have been worse than it was, if the attitude to be assumed was of a defensive character. Even on the day after Elandslaagte it is at least conceivable that a bold advance over the Biggarsberg, which would have brought General French right on to General Joubert's line of retreat and communication, would have caused a precipitate retreat of the latter, who was then still facing the victors of Talana Hill. Of course, such strategy would have involved the chance of Ladysmith falling before a *coup de main* from the Orange Free State before our troops could get back, and this is one of those risks which it is more easy to take in theory than in practice. No correct appreciation of the results that might have been obtained by a complete victory over the Boers in Natal at the commencement of the war can reasonably be based on the meagre results frequently obtained after subsequent successful actions. With the exception of the Johannesburg commando, which contained men of good position and education, animated by a particular detestation of the British, the Boers at the commencement of hostilities had not, from all I could learn, quite as much heart for the fight as they afterwards developed. As matters turned out, our opponents got breathing space to familiarise themselves with the dangers of war, and from that time forward gradually became more and more formidable until the close of the campaign. My object in putting forth these views is not to argue that we might have done better than we did, but rather to show that the variations in the game of war are so tremendous, and so much depends on policy and a hundred other considerations, that it is practically impossible to give any satisfactory answer to this question, at any rate, in regard to the opening battles. But I may say that, taking matters as they stood, another five or six thousand men should have made initial success certain in Natal. Once the forces of the Orange Free State

and the Transvaal had united, and had succeeded in enveloping Ladysmith, an entirely new set of conditions arose, to cope with which an entirely new army was required. I do not like to venture an opinion regarding engagements in which I did not participate, but I should say that the troops which were diverted to Natal for the purpose of relieving Ladysmith and clearing that colony were sufficient for the purpose. In the advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria the troops were amply sufficient for all requirements.

Surrenders.

There may have been a few cases of unjustifiable surrender, and in a few cases also, although ultimate surrender was inevitable, there were grounds for the feeling that our troops should have held out longer than they did. But the great majority of the surrenders were, in my opinion, justifiable. I have noticed since I came home that senior officers who have seen much previous service, but have not taken part in the South African War, do not seem to be able to grasp the new factor introduced by the modern rifle in such conditions as when, for instance, a detachment becomes surrounded by a superior and mobile foe, in a position which affords insufficient cover. Under such circumstances it often happens that it will be manifestly hopeless for the troops to attempt to cut their way out. Such an attempt would involve a frontal attack on unknown numbers, which would have to be carried out whilst rear and flanks were being harassed by the enemy; not necessarily by the closing in of the hostile forces, who might in that case be beaten off, but merely by long-range fire. The moral of this would, of course, appear that a force should always be well extended, but a small party must sometimes concentrate, especially at night. Once the commander has realised the impossibility of extricating his force, he has to consider that his dispersed fire is practically valueless, whereas his own men may be falling at the rate of, say, one per minute before the concentrated fire of a ring of invisible enemies. If, then, he has no reasonable hope of rescue from outside, and if there is no prospect of darkness intervening in time to save him, it may become his painful duty to put up the white flag. The question of individual initiative to which I have referred under another heading is very applicable to surrenders. Soldiers trained under existing conditions cannot be got away from difficult positions out of which intelligent and resourceful individuals trained to the use of these qualities might extricate themselves with comparative ease. I am sure there were cases in which, although the commander was justified in surrendering, a fair proportion of the men might have got away if they had realised what was happening, and had had the power of initiative to act upon what they saw. There were other circumstances also which in South Africa may sometimes have inclined men's minds to surrender more easily than would have been possible had we been at war with, for instance, any Continental nation. First of these was the fact that Boers and English soldiers respectively had no religious implacability, or, indeed, any strong feelings, against one another. Quite the contrary. Accordingly, both sides were far more anxious to obtain a surrender than to kill or wound their adversaries. Secondly, the language was the same, inasmuch as the Boers usually spoke English, and the combatants could sometimes even call out to one another in a friendly way, point out the hopelessness of continuing the struggle, and thus tempt small detached parties to surrender. Once anything of this sort had taken place, it became most difficult for the main body to fire at Boers mixed up with their own men, and a sort of confused state of things occurred which inevitably led to surrender, unless the commander had his men extraordinarily well in hand, and was possessed of exceptional strength of character and determination. It is worthy of note that these same considerations had much the same result during the American Civil War, where several of the conditions were similar. In America, as in South Africa, there was desultory fighting over large areas; the Southerners were crack shots, horsemen and hunters; the Northerners were largely composed of townfolk and of the industrial classes, and therefore more like our own troops. As a result, the Southerners were defeated just as the Boers were defeated, but in the course of the war the Southerners took 192,000 prisoners from the Northerners. In the War of American Independence the similarity of language and of feelings seems also to have led to surrenders which would not have taken

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place had we been fighting against foreigners. At the battle of King's Mountain, and on other occasions also, we read of officers galloping to cut down the white flag which some irresponsible subordinate had raised. But officers can neither gallop nor even rise from the ground without certain death when modern fire reaches a certain pitch of intensity, and thus it has become far more difficult than it used to be, when a commander had, so to speak, the whole of his force concentrated in the palm of his hand, to prevent some key to the position being given away by, perhaps, a mere handful of soldiers two or three hundred yards distant, whose officers and non-commissioned officers have been wounded or killed. A lofty standard of *esprit de corps* is the best safeguard, for when that is present in its perfection a private soldier is no more likely to yield on insufficient grounds than the highest General in the Army. This spirit can be fostered in many ways; partly by drawing closer and closer the associations which bind counties or towns to their respective regiments; partly by encouraging all those little distinctions of dress or designation which are so dear to the heart of a soldier, although they may appear mere troublesome trivialities to a certain class of official mind; principally, I think, by the development of the intelligence and initiative of the soldier, and by introducing this spirit into the whole nation through a system of disciplinary training in our schools.

Cavalry.

I would preface these remarks by venturing to express my opinion that it is more difficult to be a good cavalryman than to attain distinction or success in any other branch of our Service. Although every care may be taken to appoint only commanders who seem to fulfil all peace requirements, at least two or three of these apparently fully qualified men will certainly fail, perhaps with lamentable results, in war. Thus we may be practically certain that at least two out of three of the Continental cavalry leaders are actually effete, although nobody, not even they themselves, are or can be aware of the fact. We, on the other hand, if we have the courage to advance only men who have in South Africa emerged successfully from the supreme test, should be secure as regards this vitally important matter for at least the next three or four years to come. Relatively, we should be secure for very much longer, for by putting in tried young leaders a good standard will be set up, and a right train of thought will be encouraged. The juniors, too, will listen to their views with a respect which would not always be paid to the theories of men who had not done well in the field or who have not had the chance of being tested. I served with the Cavalry during part of the Afghan War, and I have had as much as two brigades of regular Cavalry serving under me at a time in the late war. I have thus been able to study the arm from the standpoint of an infantry soldier. I have no expert knowledge, but if my deductions are inaccurate, they are at any rate unprejudiced. The requirements other than discipline which future wars will demand from Cavalry seem to me to come in the following order of importance:—(1) Horsemanship and horsemastership, which together spell mobility. (2) Marksmanship. (3) Scouting and despatch riding by night and day. (4) Swordsmanship, steadiness, cohesion, drill. With regard to (1) only a moderate standard of horsemanship prevails at present, and the brilliant exceptions in every regiment have not learnt what they know in the riding school, but have picked it up for themselves in the hunting field or on the polo ground. I feel sure that Cavalry officers who have been out in South Africa will bear me out when I say that the average non-commissioned officer or trooper is not capable of "rounding up" a mob of horses or cattle, or of galloping across country with dash and individual judgment; nor does he possess a sufficiently intimate knowledge of or affection for his horse to enable him to nurse and save it when making an exceptional effort. As a matter of fact, when horses or cattle had to be rounded up and driven off at a gallop, the work was carried out by sporting young officers of Regulars or by Colonials or Kaffirs. Throughout the war I was struck by the fact that the Colonials rode better than our Regular Cavalry soldiers. Concerning horsemastership, I must confess I did not see much to choose between Cavalrymen, Mounted Infantrymen, overseas Colonials, or National Scouts. The only class of men I met who were constantly and eagerly on the look-out for a chance to ease their horses and give them a bit of grass or a drink of water were those South African Colonials, who rode their own horses. It has

been so fully recognised that some weight must in future be taken off the horses, that I do not here refer to that point, especially as a War Office Committee, of which I was a member, have dealt with the whole question. As regards (2), the marksmanship was indifferent, and nobody seemed to think that the fact of the men having no confidence in their firearm was any reflection upon their previous training. Cavalrymen would shoot better than Infantrymen if they got the same chances. As regards (3), our Cavalry have, as far as my experience carries me, a good deal to learn about scouting and despatch riding. In saying this, I do not forget Major Greenly, 12th Lancers, or the night in which he and Captain Boileau, accompanied by five Australians and five Regular Cavalrymen, rode 20 miles through the enemy's laagers, cut the telegraph lines, blew up the railway, and reported to me just as I was leaving camp next morning. Neither do I doubt there are many Cavalry officers who would not only be willing but able to carry out duty of this sort. But, after all, even in the instance in question, I gathered from these officers that they were mainly indebted to their Australians, who were able in the dark instantly to detect objects to be avoided, who, under all stress, maintained an absolute silence, who possessed a rough knowledge of the stars, and who in many ways excited the admiration of the Regulars and proved that riding across country through the night was no novelty to them, but a science which they had practised and learnt. I feel, however, that I have no need to labour this point, for if the Royal Commissioners will ask any column commander the question, he will admit that he would never send a Regular Cavalry soldier with a despatch, and that the whole of this work was done by Colonials or Kaffirs. Despatch riding is indeed an art which depends almost entirely on an eye for country, combined with individual initiative and a perfect self-confidence as regards horsemanship and marksmanship. As before stated, these are the precise points in which I think our Regular Cavalry might attain a higher standard of proficiency, although I confess that it will always be difficult to teach scouting or despatch riding in a small populous and game-preserving country like England. Every Cavalryman, however, more especially officers, might at least be practised in carrying despatches at a time of night when roads are empty and the use of a compass becomes necessary. Not many Regulars understand the use of this instrument. The high standard of marksmanship is also quite attainable even in England. In scouting, the best thing of all is to see without being seen; but it is also useful to kill the enemy's scouts if they have seen something, or to be able so to frighten them that they will think twice before they are too inquisitive. As to (4), the South African War did not make any great call upon these qualities. In so far as their possession tended to make the men draw together in face of the enemy, they proved to be a source of weakness and not of efficiency. I have heard it said that if the Boers had possessed Cavalry, in the European sense of the word, our men would have had a chance of showing the advantages of a boot-to-boot charge over a looser formation admitting of greater individual initiative. It is difficult to answer this sort of argument. If both sides were to agree to carry out their fight with punctilio and a chivalrous disregard of the requirements of scientific arms, then no doubt there would still be suitable scope in warfare for old-world methods. Knowing what I do of the Boers, I cannot, however, conceive that, under any circumstances, they would have given up the firearm for the sword, or loose for close formation. This fourth point leads directly to a consideration of Cavalry armament. Compared to a modern rifle, the sword or lance can only be regarded as a mediæval toy. Even in that pursuit of thoroughly demoralised troops which affords a special opportunity for the *arme blanche*, a trooper who merely used his horse to keep within easy range of the flying enemy, and employed his magazine rifle, would, by such a method, do more damage with less fatigue or danger to himself than he could with sword or lance. It must be remembered that sword and lance are still the same as they were in the days of King Arthur, whilst the firearm improves steadily, the latest step in this direction having taken place since the South African War. In scouting and reconnaissance especially, I hold that Cavalry who use their rifles must beat back or pierce the Cavalry screen of opponents who are thinking mainly of their swords or lances, and of how they can best come to close quarters so as to use them. Never-

theless, there is so much glamour and romance about the sword, and it is so essential to keep up the daring spirit of Cavalry which alone will inspire them to manoeuvre and attack with boldness, that I would give them a sword just for those reasons which render it so desirable to arm the Infantry with bayonets. Those reasons consist in the undoubted fact that the possession of a sword or bayonet is an encouragement to charge home, and I freely admit that on some rare occasions a determined charge by a swarm of horsemen with cold steel might have an effect on the morale of a shaken or surprised enemy which no rifle fire could produce. Therefore I say, arm the Cavalry with the sword as well as the rifle; but let the rifle have the place which is its due under modern conditions.

Royal Engineers.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Royal Engineers are better educated than the corresponding ranks of the other branches of our Army, and this tells in their favour under all circumstances. Fighting did not fall very much to their lot, but when it did they always distinguished themselves, a memorable instance of this being the handful of Engineers under two young officers on Wagon Hill point. The calm, matter-of-fact manner in which the Royal Engineers in charge of a field telegraph would, when their wire was exhausted, retrace their steps alone through the enemy's country, winding up their wire so as to prevent this expensive material from being wasted has often excited the admiration of their comrades of the other arms. On the line of march the work of the Royal Engineers extends along the column of route from its advance scouts to the rear guard. They should also be the first into camp to prepare the water supply, improve communications, and, if necessary, to assist in improvising cover for outposts. A dismounted unit of Royal Engineers cannot, with the best will in the world, adequately fulfil these functions, and I formed the opinion in South Africa that a mounted detachment of sappers, to be used as divisional troops, would be extremely useful. In countries like England, with abundant roads, cyclist and motor Engineers could both do considerable things.

Mounted Infantry.

In the early part of the war (up to Pretoria) Mounted Infantry as an arm can hardly be said to have had a fair trial. It was, with few exceptions, hastily organised, the men having received no previous training in riding, scouting, or in the care of horses. It was officered also by men few of whom had had any previous experience with mounted troops. There was, from the first, observably a very marked difference in the efficiency of companies. Some line battalions generously spared their very best officers, non-commissioned officers and men for this extra regimental employment, but other Mounted Infantry companies were officered by individuals without much initiative, and contained men who could never have come up to the ordinary regimental average. The "Mounted Rifles," a term which includes all mounted troops other than Regular Cavalry and Regular Mounted Infantry, had their ranks filled with infinitely better horsemen and better scouts than the Mounted Infantry, but they were not as well officered and did not shoot as well, and were not, therefore, in my opinion, as valuable as they might have been. Notwithstanding these great disadvantages, the Mounted Infantry and Mounted Rifles proved most useful, and besides playing the rôle of Cavalry, fulfilled certain requirements which Cavalry did not satisfy. In action their musketry efficiency combined with their mobility assisted largely towards the success of every action in which they were engaged, but the want of previous training showed itself in the abnormal waste of horses and in the ignorance on the part of officers and men of their own powers and capabilities. In the latter part of the war, when the men had learnt to ride and scout, and the officers had gained experience, the Regular Mounted Infantry, especially the first ten regiments, were, in my humble opinion, the best mounted troops in South Africa. I attribute this partly to their superior marksmanship, partly to the professional knowledge and expert and gallant leading of the selected Infantry officer. The Mounted Rifles would have equalled or perhaps surpassed the Mounted Infantry had not the majority of the men of all Colonial regiments been discharged after a year's service, just as they became fully trained. Their places

were taken by fresh contingents, with new and untrained officers. It would be impossible to over-estimate the value of Colonial mounted troops if only their officers were trained. The difference between the first contingents under Colonially trained officers and the latter contingents which came out with untrained officers was remarked by all thoughtful observers. The same may be said of the first and second contingents of Yeomanry. Our experiences in this respect go far, I think, to show that with well-trained officers and non-commissioned officers, even comparatively untrained men can very rapidly be made into good troops. In every case a regiment commanded by a well-selected officer of our Regular Army was of more value than a similar regiment under a Colonial officer, and, as far as I could learn by many conversations with those most intimately concerned, the men preferred a good Regular officer to anyone else. I earnestly hope that Mounted Infantry training will be continued in our Army and encouraged in our Colonies. Under our existing organisation I consider the best results would be achieved by means of a training school in each Army Corps, each school to be able to train four companies, or 500 men, and the whole to be under an Inspector-General of Mounted Infantry. Each course should be of three months' duration; each regiment should send a complete company, with its officers and establishment, old soldiers and bad shots being eliminated and replaced by good shots and young soldiers from other companies. In the Colonies every encouragement should be given to the corps of Mounted Rifles, such as were being trained in Canada and Australia before the war. In conclusion, I would repeat once more that with Mounted Infantry and Mounted Rifles the best results can only be obtained when marksmen who have had previous training in mounted duties are led in the field by selected officers who have learnt to make use of such good material.

Artillery.

The senior officers require more practice in the handling of large numbers of guns and in selection of suitable positions. Otherwise the personnel is superb; we cannot improve upon it. The training, discipline, and horse management were all excellent, a result, in my opinion, of the Royal Artillery practice camps, where batteries get more realistic work in peace time than the other arms; also, to some extent, to the system of command, which gives responsibility to officers from the time they first join. On the other hand, there is possibly a certain want of adaptability and elasticity, especially in the higher ranks, due perhaps to a prolonged peace training in which originality is apt to be frowned upon, or at any rate smiled at. It may also be due in some measure to the fact that, although the young Artillery officer is fortunate in having some realistic and responsible work thrown upon him at once, the amount does not increase very much afterwards. In the Artillery the question of individual initiative causes no difficulty, for with a gun to work, cohesion and machine-like discipline must always be primary qualifications. I think, however, that if the expression may be permitted, individuality by sections should be encouraged rather more than at present. I hold that a battery with its three sections separated and concealed should in most cases be at the same time more effective and less vulnerable than a battery with all its six guns at the regulation interval. This view was particularly impressed upon me at the battle of Lombard's Kop. Our Field Artillery was outranged by the Boer guns, and this gave rise to some disappointment amongst the troops. I am assured, however, that the gun was really up-to-date in comparison with the gun of any other European Power, and that the only real fault was in the shortness of the fuses. Nevertheless, it is perfectly certain that the actual effect of the fire was disappointing to all arms in South Africa, and to none more so than the gunners themselves. The Horse Artillery gun is considerably less effective than the field gun. I have myself seen a section of field guns quickly shift an enemy who had apparently not been much troubled by previous fire from a whole battery of the Horse Artillery arm. Personally I hold very strong views that there is no longer any room for Field Artillery in a modern army. It is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring. It is uselessly mobile for the Infantry and not sufficiently mobile for the mounted arms. Under the conditions of dispersion now obtaining, it is simply destruction for an Infantry company to do escort to a field battery. On the other hand, the great margin of mobility which the field battery possesses above and beyond the mobility

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12 Feb. 1903.

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12 Feb. 1903.

of its infantry escort is, and must be to some extent wasted, although I admit that on occasion, it may be most valuable. In my humble opinion, we require (a) Horse Artillery to accompany mounted branches (the present field gun or a gun of that type would do excellently for this purpose if lightened of gunners and some of the equipment which must be carried either on horses or carts); (b) position artillery to accompany Infantry; this should rarely be required to go out of a walk; the bigger the gun, consistent with carriage of ammunition and that amount of mobility, the better it will be.

Infantry.

Under other headings I have indirectly referred to the Infantry combat. The endurance and contempt of danger displayed by this arm elicited the admiration of foe as well as of friend. Sometimes the Infantry used to say, in camp phrase, that they were just about "fed up" with fighting, but their finest characteristic seemed to me to be that it was practically impossible to give them too much fighting to do. On the contrary, the prospect of what they called a "scrap" with the enemy would bring every man out of hospital who could possibly put one foot before the other. Our Infantry shot well, and the Boers realised very clearly the difference between them and the mounted troops in this respect. When they have been trained in snap shooting at short ranges they ought to be very good marksmen indeed. The previous practical peace training of Aldershot proved itself quite unsuited to the requirements of South African warfare. This training was calculated to stunt rather than to develop the initiative of company officers, section leaders, and men. In the attack as practised in most battalions before the war, company commanders had little leisure either to study the ground across which they would have to move, or to exercise a general control over their companies. They were, on the contrary, as a rule, absorbed in waiting for orders from some senior officer in the rear. At that time the advance under fire was carried out by a company, or even sometimes double company rushes, whereby the section commanders were reduced to the position of mere ciphers. As long as every section and every individual adhered without deviation to the fixed movement prescribed by the commanding officer, then all went smoothly; otherwise there was trouble. Worst of all was the volley firing, which by the exactitude it demanded monopolised every idea of the individual soldier in peace, and in war betrayed its exact position to the watchful enemy. Volley firing was as unsuited to the actual war requirement of the Infantry as boot to boot charges were to those of our Cavalry. If only the Boers would have drawn together to fire volleys, they could have been defeated with one half of the loss and trouble which they actually cost us. It is only fair to add that until the Tirah Campaign no one was a greater believer in volley firing than myself. Considering, then, how little the teaching of peace time had resembled the realities of war, I think the adaptability shown by all ranks, and especially by captains of companies and senior subalterns, was somewhat remarkable. After the first bitter lessons all ranks seemed instinctively to realise that the old stereotyped methods must be abandoned, and commanding officers, captains, section commanders, and private soldiers, very soon began to rise to the occasion. It is earnestly to be hoped that no reaction to the previous state of things will now be possible, and that, at any rate, captains of companies will henceforth be left in a much more independent position, both in quarters and in the field. Coming to matters of greater detail, entrenchments played a prominent part in the South African War. I do not, however, advocate the soldier carrying a spade, as I place mobility above everything even for Infantry. Large quantities of entrenching tools should, however, be carried on transport, and should be readily available if required. I have noticed men, who were so pinned down to the ground by rifle fire that they could not raise their heads, use the butt-end of their rifles to push forward stones and loose earth in front of them, so as to make a small shelter. If the butt plate of the rifle were hollowed out or shaped in some way, so as to make it more adaptable to this purpose, it would, I think, be a good thing. Another point to which I would draw attention is the desirability of having two or three steel shields on wheels with each Infantry battalion; under cover of this half a dozen men at a time might be worked across the open into some angle of the enemy's position, where they would make their presence very un-

pleasantly felt. The shield might be quite light, as it would only need to be impervious to rifle fire or shrapnel. The risk of the enemy hitting such a shield with percussion shell would be infinitesimally small.

Medical Services.

I think these proved equal to all demands which were made upon them, except during the epidemic of enteric at Bloemfontein. But it seems to me that no nation could afford to supplement its military forces by a medical organisation capable of coping simultaneously with the normal results of a campaign plus a violent epidemic of sickness. The Army Medical Service is animated by a very high standard of duty. Nothing could surpass the devotion either of the doctors or nursing sisters with whom I came in contact. As the war went on, they became more and more popular with officers and men. The specially enrolled doctors were also admirable. There is one point, and one point only, on which I would discriminate between the Royal Army Medical Service and those doctors who came either from oversea Colonies, or who were recruited in South Africa itself. The latter seemed more free from red tape and less afraid of incurring responsibility, especially where a point had to be stretched regarding regulations, or where financial obligations had to be incurred. I have known Colonial doctors who would push ahead with the advance guard to the halting-place for the night, and who would fearlessly seize upon every good thing which might be in the place for the benefit of their sick; whereas a medical officer of the Regular Service would hesitate to commandeer so much as a solitary chicken, lest he might be contravening some order or running a risk of official displeasure. In my advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria, I was singularly fortunate in having as the principal medical officer to my force Colonel Williams, now Principal Medical Officer of the Australian Commonwealth. I will give one example to show the sort of thing which a Colonial will do, and a Regular, generally speaking, will not or cannot do. After the fight at Doornkop, by Johannesburg, we had some 250 sick and wounded. Next day we marched into the mining village of Florida, and early on the following morning Colonel Williams asked my permission to visit Johannesburg to make some arrangements for his patients. Although Johannesburg, some twelve miles distant, and still full of Boers, was in a very unsettled condition, I had such reliance on his judgment that I allowed him to go. During the forenoon of the next day he asked me to go round his hospitals; I did so, and was surprised beyond measure to see what he had accomplished in so short a time. The officers and men were in clean and airy buildings; in bed, in many cases, with sheets, and in all cases with sufficient blankets. Three civilian doctors had been engaged in Johannesburg, and were in attendance, as well as several nursing sisters. There were tablecloths on the tables, and even vases filled with flowers. The men looked happy and comfortable, and I should have been proud at that moment to have received an inspection visit by the College of Surgeons. It will be observed that the entire responsibility for engaging these doctors and nursing sisters, and for purchasing or commandeering beds, sheets, and extra blankets, was cheerfully incurred by Colonel Williams without even troubling me with a reference which, indeed, under the circumstances, would have entailed at least 24 hours' delay.

Now I may be wrong, but I think that there are few officers in our Departmental Service who would take these financial risks; they would be intimidated, justly or not, by the dread of an interminable correspondence, which might end in a censure or in a heavy pecuniary loss. The Colonials, on the other hand, had never been checked for taking responsibility.

Transport.

My views regarding transport are based on having ridden for some thousands of miles alongside of hundreds of wagons and draught animals which it was a matter of vital importance to me to keep in an efficient condition. The conclusions I was forced to were that regimental transport animals grew fat under the precise conditions in which animals separately organised into transport companies starved and died by hundreds. The reason for this seems to me to be that English people are so constituted that whereas they will be in the highest degree enthusiastic and self-sacrificing in regard to the unit or association with which they may identify themselves, they are less conscientious where Govern-

ment property is concerned or where the interests of other units or associations happen to be placed at their disposal. For instance, I have observed over and over again that the escort to regimental transport do not for a moment permit tired or lazy men to sit on their wagons. With Government wagons such men were often found sitting on the wagons like flies upon a piece of sugar, and the strictest orders had only a temporary effect in putting this right. Regimental transport was never allowed to be overloaded. Government transport was overloaded whenever the close supervision of superior officers was temporarily relaxed. In my opinion, it becomes absolutely necessary on field service, where strict checks are impossible, to enlist some *esprit de corps* for the protection of the transport animals. Once this is done, then every effort will be made by all ranks for their light loading, feeding, watering, etc., etc. I am aware that a point is made of the fact that certain units were on the lines of communication near a railway station, and therefore did not need so much transport as those in the field. It was argued, therefore, that the regimental system entailed a waste of proportion of the transport. This, however, seems to me to be a mere detail which might have been adjusted without breaking up the regimental system. I do not know whether it has been sufficiently brought to notice that in the operations subsequent to the capture of Bloemfontein the regimental transport system was to some extent reverted to; that is to say, the transport companies often found it necessary to allot a certain number of their wagons, more or less permanently, to certain corps; these corps, however, did not regard the wagons thus allotted to them as really belonging to the regiment, and by this method the advantages claimed respectively for the regimental and company system of transport were foregone. It is obvious that no mere change of system, either from regimental to departmental or vice versa, could increase the number of mules, oxen, or wagons to the smallest extent. The transport was obtainable in South Africa, and the object to be obtained was to work it with smoothness and efficiency, and with as little loss of life to the animals and wagon wheels as was humanely possible. Finally, I would like to qualify all I have said on this subject so far by stating that towards the end of the campaign a considerable amount of *esprit de corps* and homogeneity had sprung up amongst the transport companies themselves, so that my remarks do not apply to the latter phase of the operations. I would go further, and say that, provided the transport organisation were permanent, under officers and men who had been specially trained and had got to make their reputation in that line of work, then it is quite possible that this might be the best system. Only this was not the case in the period under consideration.

13942. In the first place, you think that this war marks an epoch in the evolution of military tactics?—I do.

13943. Chiefly in the development of greater individuality on the part of the soldier?—I think so.

13944. And in order to meet that it will be necessary to consider the training of the soldier?—Yes. I may say that in the provisional new Infantry drill that appears to a great extent to have been done. If only these instructions are carried out in their spirit by the Army, they ought to go a long way towards the proper training of young officers and men.

13945. I observe that you say also that, although on first sight good cover may give an advantage to the defence, it does not necessarily always follow that the attacking party might not benefit?—I thought it very much my duty to put that down, because I have heard so many people argue—for instance, Monsieur de Bloch says that it will be impossible now to attack a place unless you have a majority of eight to one, and there are people in our own Army who have got ideas of the same sort. I think they are quite wrong.

13946. What proportion would you fix?—I think under certain circumstances it might pay a General to attack even although his force is the weaker. By skilful manoeuvring and handling, and with this smokeless powder and khaki uniform, your enemy must be so much in the dark with regard to your real numbers that, even if he is superior, he may make a mistake which will give you a chance of attacking.

13947. You illustrate that by the history of the 6th of January?—As I say, I have hardly ever seen a resolute attack fail against a passive defence. The reason

why I mentioned the 6th of January was because I thought it might be said that that was a resolute attack and yet it failed; but I think it would probably have succeeded if strong counter attacks had not been made. There was no question of our defence being passive.

13948. The way in which you established your defence was by making counter attacks?—Yes. 12 Feb. 1903.

13949. Does that mean that the Boers had established themselves on Wagon Hill at that time?—Certainly, they had twice knocked us clean off it and we re-took it—I mean the very point of Wagon Hill where the gun pits were. Twice there was not a British soldier alive and unwounded on the top.

13950. It would always be dangerous tactics, would it not, to attack a force in the open, at any rate?—Usually there is some cover to be got somewhere. If the terrain is perfectly open then you must choose the night.

13951. And you require a man who is well trained to take every advantage of it?—Yes, you would indeed.

13952. Do you think you could get the ordinary soldier to that pitch of training?—That is just it. Of course, the better educated the man the more easily you get him to that pitch of training; and the less well educated the more difficult and the longer it will be. Given men like the City Imperial Volunteers, you could reckon on making them good infantry in six months, working hard, but given the ordinary corner-boy or glodhopper, then you certainly will not do it much under two years.

13953. That raises the question whether you would like to have a smaller force more highly trained rather than a larger force not so highly trained?—Personally I would sooner have a smaller force highly trained. I think that the margin of efficiency has been so enormously increased, and the difference between the highly-trained soldier and the poorly-trained soldier, especially with these modern firearms, is such that it would pay best to have a man who would take the full advantage of his weapons and of the ground.

13954. And if it is the case that you cannot get a better man than the present recruit for the Army under any conditions that we can offer, would you rather offer larger conditions and get a smaller number of men?—Distinctly.

13955. You think that the British Army would be stronger if it were so?—Distinctly. I should like to say one thing—I am talking, of course, purely as a soldier—I quite recognise that from the national point of view it is a good thing to get half-starved striplings and pass them through the Army and make them into something decent.

13956. But looking at it as a fighting machine, that is your opinion?—Looking at it as a fighting machine, there is no doubt of it.

13957. You want even more from the cavalry soldier, do you not?—You want even more.

13958. You have stated the various qualifications which you think are required; how would you propose to get men of that kind trained in that way?—We get good material amongst the men in the cavalry. If the officers would really take up the question of individual training a good deal might be done. It is difficult in this country to train cavalry fully, as I have pointed out, in certain very important things—for instance, reconnaissances, dispatch riding, and so on; but a good deal more might be done, and I think they might ride better.

13959. They could be taught to ride?—They could be taught to ride.

13960. And it would be a serious matter to keep the troops elsewhere, would it not?—Of course, this country would lose the spending of their money, which would not come back to us.

13961. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) And there is a more serious question, is there not—that the Army would have to supply drafts to the Colonies and India if we kept it in South Africa?—If we kept it in South Africa it would have to be treated as a home army, and it would have under our present system to supply drafts to the coaling stations and India.

13962. So that they would never be at home at all for any part of their service?—No.

13963. Would not that be a difficulty?—Yes, it would be a difficulty.

13964. (Chairman.) You look at that, again, simply

Lieut.-General Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton, K.C.B., D.S.O.

Lieut.
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

as a question of the best way of getting a fighting machine?—Yes; I am sure you would get a very much better fighting machine trained in South Africa than in England.

13965. You expressed the opinion that the Natal Field Force on the outbreak of war might under certain conditions have been strong enough to repulse the Boer armies who invaded that colony?—I am inclined to believe that that was possible.

13966. That is to say, that by massing all the forces that you had in Natal at the moment you might have dealt with the different Boer forces?—Yes.

13967. But, of course, that is quite independent of any political considerations?—That is quite independent of any political considerations.

13968. That is a military opinion again?—That is a purely military opinion.

13969. There is only one remark at the end of that paragraph headed "Adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field" which I should like just to ask you about. You say: "I do not like to venture an opinion regarding engagements in which I did not participate, but I should say that the troops which were diverted to Natal for the purpose of relieving Ladysmith and clearing that colony were sufficient for the purpose." What did you mean quite by that?—I meant to say that General Buller's forces, certainly by the time of Spion Kop, were sufficiently numerous, so far as numbers went, to enable him to relieve Ladysmith and to clear Natal, so far as I could judge. By what I knew of the Boers and Natal generally, I should say that he was well equipped for his purpose so far as numbers went.

13970. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But not before Warren's Division arrived?—I should like very much to have tried.

13971. (Chairman.) And afterwards for the advance from Bloemfontein you had sufficient forces?—Yes, quite sufficient.

13972. The next point is one that has been before us already, with regard to the surrenders. You hold that the great majority of the surrenders were justifiable?—Yes.

13973. Owing to the changed conditions of warfare?—Yes. I have an example of a surrender in the American War that is rather interesting. When Lee crossed the Potomac in 1862, just before fighting McClellan at Antietam, he detached Jackson with some 25,000 men to capture the Federal entrenched camp at Harper's Ferry, which seriously menaced his communications. On the 13th of September it was entirely surrounded. On the 14th Jackson subjected it to a very severe bombardment. Next morning bombardment was resumed, and preparations were made for the assault, but before the charge was sounded the white flag was hoisted (at 7.30 a.m.), and with the loss of no more than 100 men Jackson had captured Harper's Ferry with his artillery alone. The surrender was unconditional, the fruits of it being 12,520 prisoners, 13,000 small arms, and 75 pieces of artillery. That I thought was a big surrender. That shows, I mean to say, that other people have occasionally surrendered.

13974. But that was a surrender on a large scale?—Yes.

13975. But in the case of a good many of the surrenders in South Africa they were either on a small scale altogether or else they originated in some surrender of a position by a small number?—Yes, I think that was almost invariably the case. It was so even at Nicholson's Nek.

13976. And that arises out of the modern conditions of warfare?—I think very much so.

13977. And also, you say, from the nature of the combat between the two races?—Yes, I think there was no very fierce animosity; I think that helped; I think it weakened the men. If they thought they really had not a chance it seemed absurd to throw their lives away if they had no very strong animosity.

13978. The remedy, you say, is *esprit de corps*?—I think the remedy is *esprit de corps*. There were certain regiments—it would be invidious to mention names, and I do not know all of them—who practically never had a man taken prisoner during the war. If inquiry were made it would be found that they were all regiments with a good deal of *esprit de corps*.

13979. And you attach a great deal of importance to distinctions of dress, and so on?—I do. It is extraordinary how much our people think of such things.

13980. When they are on service they are all alike, of course?—There is a very burning question at present as to whether the Rifle Regiments may not have their black button on service.

13981. Yes, we have heard that that had engaged the attention of the War Office?—Oh, but it is not over yet; it is going on still.

13982. And the kilt?—I hope the kilt is all right.

13983. Then you have given us two statements on the different branches of the Service; I really do not think it is necessary for me to take you through them?—No; I thought they might possibly be useful to the Commission.

13984. Yes, they will be of great interest to us. They are the results of your experience from the incidents in the war; that is what you intend them to be?—Yes. I think the only revolutionary remark in the whole of those statements is that about the artillery, where I give voice to a feeling which some artillery officers certainly have—that the Field Artillery is unnecessarily mobile. The more mobile it is the better, of course; even as an infantry arm it may be of the greatest importance to shift it rapidly from one flank to the other, but you may pay too dearly for mobility; if for the same amount of horses you could carry a much heavier gun at a slower pace.

13985. I understood your argument to be that if it were so mobile it ought to be Horse Artillery?—Yes.

13986. And if it is not to be so mobile, then it need not move out of a walk?—That is so. There is one point that I did not bring out perhaps: it is the enormous amount of ground taken up by the very large numbers of guns which accompany a modern army. A battery of six guns in action has a frontage of 100 yards, and, of course, if you get 100 guns in line it is difficult to find a position for them. Now two big guns are certainly more than equal, I should say, to six field guns, and they take up very much less room, either on the terrain in action or marching along the road, where one of our batteries takes up 240 yards. It lengthens out the column. We did not feel it so much in South Africa, where it is open veldt and you could move in a broad front, but in places where you have to go through a defile it makes the column very long.

13987. When you said that two heavy guns are equal to a battery of six guns, what did you mean?—I mean that two heavy guns will silence six field guns.

13988. The effect of their fire you were referring to?—Yes.

13989. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Do you mean guns up to 4.7 inches?—I am thinking of the 5-inch gun, which is rather lighter.

13990. (Chairman.) Then I pass on to the Medical Service, and there you are very strong for a point which has also been brought under our notice of making the officer in charge of a hospital responsible, and giving him a free hand, so to speak?—I am very strong about that.

13991. That is not possible under the present Regulations, is it?—No, the present Regulations preclude it.

13992. We have had some evidence to show that as a matter of fact in South Africa the medical officers in those positions did exercise a freedom that was not allowed them by the Regulations, and I suppose this instance that you quote is one of them?—I think that in war the generals and finance people and everyone would have given medical officers the greatest freedom, but their habit of mind was such that they found it difficult to rise to it.

13993. And those officers whose conduct you quote had not been so subjected to the cramping influence of the Regulations?—That is so.

13994. But then is it proposed to modify the Regulations in peace time?—I have not heard that; it does not come much in my line of study, but I think it would be a most admirable thing, merely judging by the doctors I have met on service. I am quite sure that they want a little more training in taking responsibility, and I should think that the Regulations could be modified to meet this requirement.

13995. I think it was not denied that otherwise the

Lieut.-
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

Regulations are reasonable enough for peace time?
—Yes.

13996. But for that reason of increasing the officers' sense of responsibility you think it would be desirable to modify them?—Exactly, for that reason.

13997. Something has been said about the difficulties that the chief medical officer in charge of hospitals was subjected to by the amount of clerical work he had to do. Has your attention been drawn to that?—Yes, I have heard them complain of it.

13998. Did you find that to be so in the case of the hospitals attached to your column?—I certainly have heard the medical officers complain of the amount of clerical work and correspondence that they had to carry on.

13999. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Was it a just complaint?—That I really do not know anything about.

14000. (Chairman.) It was put as strongly as this: that the fact of the matter was that the Principal Medical Officer in the hospital did no medical work at all; his time was entirely taken up with administration?—I think there may be some truth in that.

14001. There is some substance in it?—There is some substance in it.

14002. That, of course, is a disadvantage if that clerical work can be done, as has been suggested, by a quartermaster or clerk?—Yes, indeed.

14003. Do you think it could be?—I am afraid I do not like to offer an opinion.

14004. Are not those returns that would come in to the General?—The General would not look at any returns except those regarding the health of his force at the moment. The daily hospital returns that come to the General could be done by a Quartermaster under supervision, for they merely show the number of sick and the number attending hospital. But I do not suppose the Principal Medical Officer writes that return with his own hand. I can hardly think that.

14005. But you are not in a position to say more on that particular point?—I say if the Principal Medical Officer does write those returns with his own hand that is very wrong.

14006. (Sir Henry Norman.) And you see no necessity for him to do so?—No, I do not.

14007. In point of fact, I suppose you think he does not; he satisfies himself that it is correct, and signs it?—That is what he does I feel pretty confident.

14008. (Chairman.) Then the remaining question is with regard to transport; and, so far as I understand your view, you are rather in favour of regimental transport?—Yes. I know quite well that Lord Kitchener is tremendously in favour of what was done, and so is Lord Roberts, and so is General Nicholson. Still, I have thought it my duty to say what I believed. The gist of it all is that if you have this transport under the new conditions started by Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener and Sir William Nicholson as a permanent arrangement, and if it had its own *esprit de corps*, and were all in working order as a going concern, then I think it might be all right; but what really happened was that the regimental system was broken up and the other one was substituted for it, and we were in the middle of operations; and shortly afterwards the regimental system was in form reverted to without the spirit, that is to say, you allowed a regiment to take a day's food with it. I venture to suggest that the result of that was that there was less care for the transport than there otherwise would have been.

14009. You must have either one thing or the other?—I say either one thing or the other. If you have regimental transport, of course you must have your director of transport, who must have supreme power over it. He sends for the regimental transport officers, and says: "I want all your wagons to go a march with a convoy." There must be no question about that, of course; but still, they belong to the regiment.

14010. That has always been the rule, I suppose?—That has always been the rule, I think. It certainly was in Ladysmith. Sir Edward Ward used to send to the Gordon Highlanders and say: "Send your wagons," and they sent them.

14011. (Sir Henry Norman.) I think you have almost said as much as that all the various departments—the medical department, and so on—did their work very well during the war?—I thought so.

14012. Does it occur to you to make any sort of suggestions as to any alteration in their organisation or their system, or, speaking generally, would you leave them as they are. For instance, in the Medical Department do you consider that it is sufficient when a regiment goes on service to attach a medical officer to them who is naturally or probably not acquainted with them in the slightest degree?—I have often regretted the abolition of the old regimental system in which each battalion had its own medical officer, who knew the shirkers and knew all about everyone. I believe its abolition was merely a matter of money.

14013. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Where does the economy come in?—By grouping the people into station hospitals they do with fewer doctors.

14014. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Still, one man is now doing the duty that formerly four did?—That is so.

14015. (Sir Henry Norman.) You have no means of knowing, I suppose, whether this anticipated economy has been really realised or whether it is not more expensive in the end than the old system?—I am afraid I have no means of knowing that.

14016. I wonder if anybody has ever worked it out, because the great recommendation was the supposed economy. But do you think that the other departments, such as the Ordnance and Supply Departments and Transport, and so on, are fairly well organised?—Yes, I think so; I think they are.

14017. I suppose when it was necessary, owing to your supplies being exhausted and convoys not having come up, and so on, you got supplies by commandeering, did you not?—Yes, by commandeering. I had an Army Service Corps officer who was my supply officer—Major Atcherley. He rode on with the advance guard into any town, and he commanded everything that he could find and gave receipts for it, and then he issued it out.

14018. He did not pay?—He did not pay.

14019. Do you suppose that there is any ground for these complaints that we see are being constantly made of receipts given by officers which holders have not received payment for at the present time?—I am sure they have not—not yet.

14020. Would it be possible to establish a system by which payments should be made rather more promptly?—Well, I hear from South Africa that they are not paid yet.

14021. Was there no authority charged with the duty of paying these receipts?—You see, it was impossible probably until the war was over, because, as a matter of fact, very likely the people who had the receipts went away with their rifles and fought against us.

14022. Would the fact of a man who had got a receipt for 50 sheep, or whatever it might be, fighting against us afterwards debar him from getting paid?—No, I think not. I think it might if it had been proved that he had taken his oath under Lord Roberts.

14023. You think it would have been almost impossible for them to have been paid while the war went on in the great majority of cases?—Yes, in the great majority of cases.

14024. You said something about having a smaller army if you had a more highly-trained army, which, of course, is probably a very good theory, but would it be possible to reduce the British Army very much beyond a certain point, considering the immense number of places that we have to occupy, and we must occupy, with some sort of efficient strength?—I think that actually, say, you took the garrison of Meerut, if you had a higher class of really efficient men, trained to a very high standard, you could do with half the number; I mean, literally half. On the other hand, I think it is quite possible that the people of India might not understand at first that the reduced garrison were really as formidable as twice the number that were there before, and they might think that Meerut was dangerously weak and behave accordingly. That is the only danger that I see. I fully believe that if you get a higher class of men—highly trained men—they can take the place of a much larger number than is generally supposed of semi-trained men.

14025. I do not exactly know what is the advantage which you consider would result from having troops abroad and keeping them abroad in places where they can be more readily manœuvred?—The advantage of training and keeping them especially in South Africa would be enormous. I have been told that in Canada

Lieut.-
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton.
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

it would not be so much so, because it is all forest there, or else it is all wire fences and cultivation; but in South Africa certainly you would get the most admirable training for your troops.

14026. But what effect do you think it would have upon recruiting if the British soldier is to spend all his career, or nearly all his career, in a foreign country, which at all events at present is not a very popular country—South Africa?—He would be very glad to go out there at present to see what it is like if he got a Government passage out to the country as a recruit, he would be willing to enlist to go out to South Africa for three years.

14027. Do you think politically it would have a good effect upon the men if they came to feel themselves a sort of local troops; because there might not be war for many years in South Africa? Do you recollect the effect upon local corps in India?—It has always been said from the old Indian experiences that local troops rather deteriorated in discipline, but in India, of course, it was a very serious business going and coming backwards and forwards in those days, and the officers, for instance, would also become very much localised, more so than they would at present in South Africa, where they could constantly come back to England, and would do so, and, of course, if it is treated as a home army and the term of enlistment was only three years, a man would not have very long to get into slack or local ways.

14028. Then it would involve a great deal of going backwards and forwards if every man was to go and remain there for the balance of three years?—The principal objection to such a scheme is the very greatly increased transport charges.

14029. But with regard to the local troops in India, I daresay you may have heard that it was supposed, that though they were splendid soldiers for fighting, their feelings of loyalty to the country got rather weakened, as was shown by their behaviour when they were transferred to the Crown; that what you may call loyal feelings (they were perfectly ready to fight against any enemy) were rather weakened. Do you think there was any truth in that?—I cannot conceive of its happening just now in South Africa, because you must be either one thing or the other there now.

14030. It might be the other?—Well, it might. I can hardly believe it. That would be very bad.

14031. From what you have said, it occurs to me to ask you this question: Was there any real material amount of desertion to the Boers?—Certainly not. I heard of one man from Ladysmith. I think that is the only case that ever came to my knowledge.

14032. (Chairman.) Just one question about that matter of troops abroad. If you had a number of troops stationed in South Africa in that way, and their services were required in another part of the world, would they not be much less handy than if they were in this country?—It depends upon where their services were required. They would be much more handy for India or Persia.

14033. But in order to move troops you have got to get the transport for them; in this country you have the command of a vast amount of transport such as you would have to send to South Africa?—In a very few years there will be large fleets in Delagoa Bay, and the communication with India is immense by the fleets of the British India Steamship Company and all those companies in India.

14034. But they have to be sent to South Africa?—Yes, they have to get to South Africa.

14035. There is that point, is there not?—Yes, there is.

14036. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) If the troops were wanted in Canada the transports would first have to go from this country to South Africa, and then carry them from South Africa to Canada?—Yes, at present. But very soon there will be a lot of shipping in South Africa.

14037. (Chairman.) And if they were wanted in Europe?—That would be inconvenient, certainly.

14038. (Sir Henry Norman.) You mention that in the case of sending messages across country, and so on, the Colonials (Australians and perhaps Canadians) were much better than our own men?—That is certainly the case.

14039. From their knowledge of country, I suppose? In the case of the Australians, of course, it is only fair to say that belonging to the Southern Hemisphere the stars are familiar to them; but still they are much more in touch with nature and the way to get about country than our men are.

14040. They are accustomed to it, in point of fact?—Just so.

14041. Hardly any one more so?—That is it. Our men come from cities nowadays.

14042. And even if they are in the country they do not go about with cattle thousands of miles?—No.

14043. (Sir Frederick Darley.) An Australian knows the prevailing wind in the district?—Yes, all those things.

14044. And with this indication and others he generally knows how to get across that district?—Yes.

14045. (Sir Henry Norman.) Your opinion differs from some opinions which have been given here as to regimental transport, but did you ever in India investigate the system of regimental transport which prevailed in the old days in the Punjab Frontier Force?—I always knew that in the Punjab Frontier Force they were ready to go anywhere at 24 hours' notice. I suppose that showed that they had a good transport system.

14046. In point of fact they had permanently attached to them certain transport which was as much part of the regiment as the men themselves, camels and mules, and so on. And I have always understood—in fact, I have seen over and over again—the excellence of that system. But that system did not, as I understand, in the slightest degree prevent that transport being used for any general purposes?—Certainly not. It ought not to do so.

14047. And we had evidence the other day from General Rimington and Colonel Thorneycroft that they could not have got on at all if they had not had a small amount of transport to take three days' provisions and sufficient ammunition, which would always be up with them every evening. Was that advantage lost, do you think, by the transfer of the regimental transport to the general transport purposes of the Army?—I think it was lost for the time being, very greatly lost.

14048. We have had some evidence about mounted infantry, and yesterday we were told (what is a very general opinion) that it is not desirable to have permanent regiments of mounted infantry; that men should be taken for the time being (and for the time), and trained moderately as mounted infantry, but not to be allowed to form into regiments which would probably end in their being a sort of inferior cavalry?—I entirely agree with that. I have known all the more prominent mounted infantry commanders, I have taken great interest in the subject myself, and I am sure the men must be infantrymen, and that the way to have good mounted infantry is to keep training men and sending them back, and keep training them. When a man gets too wedded to his horse he ceases to be a first-class mounted infantryman. He must be always quite glad to dismount, and ready to attack as infantry attacks.

14049. You are aware, I suppose, that the Australian Mounted Infantry who went out were not taken from infantry regiments as a rule, but were permanent mounted infantryman?—Yes, but I do not think that changes my opinion. The Australians were possessed of so much individuality themselves and initiative that they would get off their horses and go and take a place. But still if I was going to make a serious attack and drive it home, there is nobody like our own regular mounted infantry drawn from British infantry regiments. Greatly as I value the Australians, the Australians would be the first to say it, and the Canadians, too.

14050. You did not find that they were anxious to ape cavalry at all?—No.

14051. (Sir Frederick Darley.) When you were moving on Lord Roberts' flank you were then in command of a distinct column or division?—Yes, quite distinct, 50 miles away.

14052. Were you in touch with Lord Roberts' column at the time?—Occasionally a messenger came through. Our field telegraph wire very quickly ran out, in the first day or two. Up to that time we were in telegraphic communication, and then we were only in communication

Lieut.
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

by mounted messengers, and occasionally we got a heliograph from a distant mountain.

14053. Then would you recommend a larger store of field telegraphs, so as to be able to keep in communication with a column on your left or your right as the case might be?—We were very short of wire—in fact, the wire absolutely ran out in the whole of the country at one time. I think we could probably do with a little more than we had.

14054. Had you a staff of field telegraphists with you?—Yes.

14055. Men who thoroughly understood that work?—Yes. We had a young Engineer officer with two or three men, and they had their two carts with wire.

14056. It is very important to be able to communicate with the body on your right or the body on your left as the case might be?—It is most important.

14057. When you went to Sanna's Post from Bloemfontein you say you never returned to Bloemfontein again?—I did not.

14058. Then you marched straight from Sanna's Post to where?—To Thabanchu.

14059. And then?—Through Houtnek to Isabellafontein, and on to Winburg, Ventersburg, Lindley, and Heilbron.

14060. Did you have many actions during that time?—We had 22 actions from the time we left Bloemfontein till we got to Pretoria.

14061. Twenty-two separate actions?—Some were skirmishes, you know, but others were fairly severe. We were fighting at Houtnek for two days, where we lost a considerable number of men—I do not know the exact number, but it was over a hundred, and at Doornkop we lost over 150.

14062. What was the space of time covered from the time when you left Thabanchu till you got to Heilbron?—Three weeks.

14063. Then you had really one action every day almost?—Yes, very nearly, but several of the 22 actions were after leaving Heilbron.

14064. Was General Hutton under your command at that time?—He was nominally under my command, as I was General Officer Commanding the Mounted Infantry, but he never really served under me during the whole campaign.

14065. But did his detachment of mounted infantry belong to your column at the time?—No, they were with the main force with Lord Roberts.

14066. You speak of having at one period only eight days' provision transport when you were 14 days out; if you had had regimental transport at that time would you have been in that position, do you think?—I do not think the possession of regimental transport or of Government transport makes the smallest difference in the number of carts or animals, but I do think that at that particular stage several hundred animals perhaps might have been saved if we had had the regimental system, and in that way we might have had a little more food—I am not quite sure about that either. I do not suppose any food was left behind—I do not think it would have made any difference.

14067. It did not at the time occur to you that the regimental system would have been the best?—Not in connection with the amount of food that we had, but it was very strongly occurring to me then that the regimental system would have been the best during that march.

14068. With regard to your own field staff, at that time they were thoroughly efficient in their duties?—Yes, I had a very good staff. All officers have their own peculiarities in these matters. I had Colonel Le Gallais as my chief staff officer, who was not what is called a highly trained staff officer; he used to hold his pencil like a hatchet, and he wrote very badly, but he was the most sensible, level-headed individual I ever saw. If I wrote anything that was not sensible he used to bring it to me and point out that it was not sensible, although, perhaps, he did not write very much himself.

14069. (Sir John Jackson.) Did he read maps well?—I think he read maps, and he certainly had a wonderful eye for country.

14070. (Sir Frederick Darley.) He knew his ground well?—Yes, he was a very gallant fellow, and had a very

good eye for country. He was a most beautiful rider, and excellent in all the practical part of the work.

14071. (Viscount Esher.) He had not had the advantage of a Staff College education?—No, he had not.

14072. (Sir Frederick Darley.) But yet he was a thoroughly efficient staff officer?—Thoroughly. Different staff officers suit different generals—that is what it really comes to.

14073. (Sir John Jackson.) You spoke a good deal of the value of *esprit de corps*; do you think if we were under a system of conscription you would have anything like the same *esprit de corps* in the regiments of the Army that you have at present?—I should doubt it; it would all have to start afresh. You might get it up by closely associating the regiments with certain towns and counties, but I think you could not replace those old traditions that there are with the present regiments.

14074. You think you could not expect it under such a system?—No. After a campaign you would get it, when certain regiments had greatly distinguished themselves, and so on.

14075. You laid a good deal of stress upon the advantage of having even a smaller number of more intelligent men as soldiers. I take it, therefore, that you would prefer to have your recruits from a slightly higher level than they are mostly got from at present?—Talking purely as a soldier, certainly.

14076. Even if, looking at it from a money point of view, you had to pay something more for them?—I would sooner have fewer men and pay more for them.

14077. For instance, if you only had 75 per cent. of the better trained men, you could afford to pay them 33 per cent. more?—I should say so, and I would gladly do so.

14078. Touching the question that Lord Elgin raised about the difficulty of transport, if we had a trained army in South Africa, and we wanted to convey troops to Canada, for instance, from the fact that ships would have to be sent out to the Cape and then go from there to Canada, is it not the case that you have a very large number of passenger steamers to Cape ports every two or three days?—Yes.

14079. And I take it that if the Government had an arrangement with these vessels for having an immediate call upon them wherever they could lay their hands upon them in the event of an emergency of that kind, a somewhat similar call to that they have upon the armed cruisers, that would get over the difficulty?—It would get over the difficulty, but I believe myself that the difficulty will be largely solved in the course of a very few years by large quantities of ships being into Delagoa Bay Harbour, and double, treble, or even four times as many vessels in South Africa.

14080. (Chairman.) If I may just interpose, would those ships carry horses?—No, they would not; they would have to undergo a considerable alteration.

14081. It was specially the training of cavalry that you spoke of?—Yes.

14082. (Sir John Jackson.) But still, these large liners could be adapted for carrying horses without any very great delay, could they not?—It is a biggish business; it takes about a fortnight.

14083. (Sir John Hopkins.) Touching the field guns, not the horse artillery, because the range of those guns, as you say, is small, did you find the range of field guns equal to what you could have wished?—No.

14084. They were outclassed practically by the Boer field guns?—They were outclassed by some of the Boer guns, Creusots and Krupps. The Boers had about 16 field guns that completely outclassed ours.

14085. And you felt the inconvenience of that?—Yes, very much indeed.

14086. Were you satisfied with the infantry rifle?—Yes, quite. I have discussed that with Boer Commandants often, and some of them like the Mauser and some of them like the Lee-Enfield.

14087. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) With regard to staff officers, I think in India there is more distinction drawn between those who take up the Quartermaster-General's work, the B side, and the Adjutant-General's, or A side, is there not?—Very much so, but there used to be a still greater difference.

14088. Even yet there is a great distinction?—Yes,

Lieut.
General Sir
Ian S. M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

even yet the tradition remains, and there is a big distinction.

14089. Do you think it would be an advantage to introduce that distinction into this country?—I am sure we found the want of it in South Africa.

14090. Going back to the Staff College on that point, how do officers exercise an option when they go in there which side to take up? You keep them a year in the Staff College if they are going to take up A, and you keep them two years if they are going to take up B, the object being to be able to pass as many men through the small course at the Staff College as can possibly go through now?—I do not know about their option, but I think the commandant, if he is a good man, ought to be able to classify his students within six months, because they are a totally different type of men. One is a cut-and-dried sort of sensible person, and the other ought to be rather brilliant.

14091. Do you think that one year at the Staff College would be enough to teach a man all the A work?—Yes.

14092. (*Viscount Esher.*) Why not the B work as well?—B work is much wider. A "B" man, for instance, ought to be able to go into Euston Station or Charing Cross, and run the trains; he ought to have a good knowledge of the whole of the working of railways, entraining and detraining, how to run the trains and get back the empties, and all that sort of thing. Then he should be a first-class draughtsman in the way of topographical work; he should have a certain smattering of elementary medical knowledge so as not to go and pitch a camp in an unhealthy spot; and he should have a certain acquaintance with the Intelligence work, with which his work overlaps a great deal, so that he should be able to draw up schemes and proposals for movements, and even for attacks or retreats. The Adjutant-General's branch on service become gallopers, aides-de-camp to take a message; that has been my experience; whereas you rely upon the other men for important matters.

14093. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And in that way, if that suggestion could be adopted, we could pass 50 per cent. more men through the Staff College?—There would be difficulties about it, because it would rather put the A men into an invidious position, and they would not want to be A men.

14094. At present I understand all the best men want to become A men in time of peace, and in time of war everybody wants to be a B man, because he gets fighting work?—That is so.

14095. And what you want is rather to invert that. You think that would put the A man in rather an invidious position—that is exactly the idea. There is only one other question I want to ask you: You said that you could make a good infantry soldier out of a man of the City Imperial Volunteer class in six months, whereas for a corner-boy and clodhopper it would require at least two years?—I was simply illustrating something by that statement.

14096. I quite understood the statement. Now I want to ask you, supposing you had a mixed force of all classes, where the corner-boy and clodhopper would be in contact with the tradesman's son, the gentleman's son, and all classes thrown together. I suppose some middle time between the six months and the two years would be the time that you would then choose, because the lower class man would learn from the other, and be spurred on?—I have a very strong personal theory that when you have bad and good together the bad becomes much the strongest force.

14097. They all become bad?—Yes.

14098. I wanted to elicit that answer from you. You hold that view quite firmly?—I have often thought over it, and that is the conclusion I have come to.

14099. But do you not find in playing games that one always plays up to a person a little better than oneself?—No doubt, but everyone is very anxious to excel in a game, and everyone is not so very anxious to excel in doing work.

14100. Supposing there was universal military training, you do not think that a year would make good infantry soldiers out of the whole lot together?—Do you mean, taking good and bad together, that one year would make a good infantry soldier?

14101. And strong discipline and real discipline. You would not be afraid of working the men when you could not lose them, when they could not go away?—

No, I do not think so. I think if you could select your companies out of a mixed lot like that, you could train half your regiment if you took it away separately into excellent infantry soldiers in a year, but the other half you would not.

14102. Out of a body such as that you might, at any rate, get in case of war a very valuable body of good trained volunteer and infantry soldiers?—You might.

14103. Assuming that the whole nation passed under arms year by year for one year only?—Yes; it would improve, of course, but whether taking men by force and making them serve for a year would not give them a distaste for volunteering afterwards is another question.

14104. (*Viscount Esher.*) You have had no personal experience of the Staff College?—No, I never was there.

14105. Is the new Director-General of Military Education under you?—He is not to be. At the present moment he is still, as regards education, referring things to me because I have been doing that work, but that is another very vexed question just at the present moment—under whom he is to be.

14106. Have you any strong opinion as to the necessity for a two years' course for anybody at the Staff College?—No.

14107. You have not considered that, I suppose?—I have talked to both Colonel Miles and General Hildyard, and they seem to think—I gather that their mind, if they spoke frankly what was in it, would be that officers do not come to them quite sufficiently educated to enable them to start off doing the interesting and important work at once, and they have to spend a year in more or less educating them.

14108. There is an examination when they pass out, is there not?—Yes.

14109. Is there an examination at the end of the first year?—Yes, there is.

14110. I suppose you do not happen to know whether the standard at the end of the second year is very much higher than the standard at the end of the first year?—I think it is a totally different sort of work altogether.

14111. You think that the examination at the end of the second year is of a totally different character?—Yes.

14112. However, you see the importance, do you not, of considering that question as to a two years' course?—I do, indeed.

14113. Because you might by a second course pass just double the number of men that you do now?—Yes.

14114. Then as to a smaller and more efficient army, I suppose no scheme has ever been worked out, has it, so far as you know, at the War Office, for carrying that principle into effect?—No; I do not know that the principle is even acknowledged there.

14115. I do not suppose it is acknowledged, but still, even hypothetically, so far as you know that has not been done?—No, I do not think so.

14116. Of course, if you leave the Indian and South African garrisons as they are now, you will have to consider whether you could, in view of the large number of drafts that have to go out every year under the present terms of service, reduce the number of regular troops in this country?—Yes.

14117. Anyhow, no such scheme has at present been worked out even as a hypothesis?—I believe not.

14118. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) As I gathered, you meant that smaller drafts would go out, that everything would be on a reduced scale?—Yes.

14119. (*Viscount Esher.*) If you reduce the forces abroad that would be so, but I am assuming that you keep the garrisons in India and South Africa up to their present strength?—I said that I gave the garrison at Meerut as an example.

14120. I quite understand that, but you see there are two ways of doing it; that was my point. It may be a necessity to keep the same number of troops in India and the same number of troops in South Africa?—I gather that it is, as a matter of fact, from what I have heard.

14121. At the same time, I suppose you will admit that it does not necessarily follow that if you alter the terms of service you will have to send out the same number of drafts every year. That necessity is only

forced upon you by the present terms of enlistment?—Certainly.

14122. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) With regard to the matters which you mentioned as being done during the second year of a staff officer's career at the Staff College, could they not be done apart from the Staff College; for instance, acquiring a knowledge how to work trains on the railway, entraining or detraining troops?—I think a good deal might be done by subsidiary courses afterwards. I think an officer who is going to be a Quartermaster-General afterwards ought to go to the Army Service Corps and learn something about transport and supply. That might be a three months' course after he has finished.

14123. And in the Medical School?—Yes, he might do a subsidiary course in that away from the Staff College.

14124. Or for languages he might have a course on the Continent?—Yes.

14125. All that might be done away from the Staff College?—Yes.

14126. And yet he might be called upon to submit himself to examination at the end of the second year?—Yes.

14127. And in that way you get the two years' staff employment and yet only one year in the Staff College?—Yes, I wrote once myself suggesting that after the second year a man should go and be attached to a big railway office and learn to work trains.

14128. (*Viscount Esher.*) And in that way, as Sir Frederick Darley suggests, you would increase the capacity of the Staff College?—Yes.

14129. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Were you satisfied with the way in which the wounded were brought in after the various actions by the bearer corps and people of that kind?—I think the bearer corps did very well, but there were sometimes great difficulties in their way in South Africa. I personally have no complaints.

14130. So far as the organisation of the bearer corps went, and so on, you were fairly satisfied?—Yes, I was satisfied.

14131. If there was any idea of a rearrangement of the scheme, you do not know that you could suggest anything better?—No.

14132. So far as the advance hospitals with the different columns are concerned, were you satisfied with them?—Yes, I was thoroughly satisfied with them.

14133. They did all that could reasonably be expected? They did.

14134. (*Chairman.*) I think it was a suggestion of Sir Frederick Treves' that what was called the collecting station was not required now?—No, I do not think it is. We always practise at manoeuvres to have an intermediate station between the advance hospital and the actual fighting line; but I do not think it is required. I never saw it used on service.

Lieut.-General Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

12 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-FOURTH DAY.

Friday, 13th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable The EARL of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Honourable Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary.*

Lieutenant-General The Lord METHUEN, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G., called and examined.

14135. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to send us some notes (*vide Appendix, page 612, post*), upon which I will ask you questions. You went out with the Army Corps, I think, to South Africa?—Yes.

14136. In command of one of the Divisions?—The 1st Division.

14137. Was that an appointment made before you left home?—Yes.

14138. When did you arrive in South Africa?—I think early in November. It was the 7th November.

14139. What was the position with regard to the distribution of forces at that time?—One of my Brigades was sent on to Natal, and the Brigade of Guards arrived after my arrival; then I was given the 9th Brigade, consisting of Yorkshire Light Infantry, 5th Northumberland Fusiliers, Northampton Regiment, half battalion Loyal North Lancashire, the other half battalion being garrisoned at Kimberley. Then there was a Brigade Division of Artillery at Orange River, the 9th Lancers was given to me as a cavalry regiment, and I had about 120 or 130 Colonial Scouts, which were called Rimington's Scouts.

14140. And that was the force with which you moved for the relief of Kimberley?—That is so.

14141. Had you any distinct instructions with regard to the movement on Kimberley?—Yes, those orders I had given me by Sir Redvers Buller I have got, but I am sorry to say I have mislaid them. I wrote to Sir Redvers, and he told me that if I came to him

he would let me have a copy of them. You would be able to obtain a copy from him, but I shall probably lay my hand on them before long, and will forward the copy to you.

14142. You could let us have the purport of them, I suppose?—Yes. I gathered from Sir Redvers Buller that I had no reason for anticipating a determined resistance from the enemy in any very large numbers between Orange River and Kimberley, though probably they would elect to fight on the Modder. My movements were to be made with as great celerity as possible, because Kimberley seemed to be in straits according to Mr. Rhodes, and because there was the danger of reinforcements coming from Natal to the enemy directly they heard of my advance. I had to relieve Kimberley, throw in a large supply of provisions, clear out the non-combatants, and return to Orange River. These were, in short, the orders I got from him.

14143. The intention of your advance was simply to reinforce the garrison of Kimberley, and move the non-combatants, and come away again?—No; I could not say my object was to reinforce Kimberley, but it was to clear out, I think, something like 11,000 useless mouths, who were black men, and so on. I was to send up the trains holding provisions sufficient for Kimberley to go on with for some time, and clear out all these black men and send them down country or where I could; at any rate get them out of Kimberley.

14144. But you were to leave Kimberley again?—Yes, to leave Kimberley again at once. I was to move Mr.

Lieut.-General The Lord Methuen,
G.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903.

*Lieut.-
General
The Lord
Methuen,
G.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
C.M.G.*

Rhodes too, and having done that to get back as quick as I could.

14145. You were not to hold the line of country through which you advanced?—No.

14146. Where were you intended to come back to?—I should have come back to Orange River, and then I remember a telegram which I do not think was kept—I am afraid it was lost—in which Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to me and said: "You are to return to Orange River, where I have got a million rations. You will probably be cut off from us all; you must fight the enemy where you meet him; and you must make your way across to Colesburg to join French." Therefore my intention when I went back to Orange River was to have worked my way across from Orange River and taken over General French's command as well as my own.

14147. How did you think those conditions were to be complied with?—With the utmost celerity, because Kimberley seemed to be in straits according to Mr. Rhodes, and because there was the danger of reinforcements coming from Natal to the enemy directly they heard of my advance. I had to relieve Kimberley, throw in a large supply of provisions, clear out the non-combatants, and return to Orange River. To fulfil these conditions it would not have been an easy matter to march through the country with a large force, because of the limited amount of mule transport (I had no ox transport), and the small supply of water in the country I had to traverse. For instance, after the exhausting day of the Graspan fight, there was only one well with a limited supply of water and a pond of muddy water for my entire force of men, horses, and mules. As matters turned out the enemy made a determined resistance from the first, and as their force consisted entirely of mounted men they could on the defence change their position with the utmost rapidity, changing thereby my flank into a frontal attack, notably so at Graspan.

14148. From the nature of your advance, therefore, you had to keep to the railway?—I had to keep to the railway; I had to keep to the railway, because I could only carry a certain amount, I forget how many days', of supplies with the mule transport, for most of that was required for the blankets, and so on, that had to go with the regiments, and the remainder of my provisions were carried by the railway which followed me day by day.

14149. Your transport was all mule transport?—Yes, and that was really only sufficient for the regimental and staff requirements.

14150. Was it regimental transport?—Yes; I may say, roughly speaking, it was regimental transport.

14151. Was there no question of ox transport?—No, the ox transport never came up at all.

14152. I was trying to lay my hands upon it, but something was said by some of the witnesses before about the ox transport, and my recollection was that it was suggested that ox transport should be given to your force?—I never heard of it, to the best of my recollection. What date did they say it was offered to me?

14153. On the 6th December, I think?—Yes, that was when I was at Modder River.

14154. This was a reply to a telegram referred to by Colonel Clayton in his evidence at Question 2752: "Your No. 106 railway line will be all right for Kimberley. Ox transport as suggested by you not required.—C.S.O., Modder River"?—You see, I suggested ox transport there.

14155. No, that is an answer from your staff officer. Then Colonel Clayton was asked this in question 2753: "You had that communication from Major Paul on the subject of transport for Lord Methuen's advance?" And he replied: "Yes, we had a communication from him to the effect that Lord Methuen had practically refused to have ox transport with him. We wished him to have ox transport as a reserve, in order that if he wanted to get away from the railway he could have done so. He refused on two occasions to have ox transport with him; he said he did not want such slow-moving transport"?—That would be after I got to Modder River.

14156. On the 6th December?—Yes, that would have been so. I think my force would not have been sufficient to have taken my mule transport and the ox transport I should have required, but I do not recollect the telegram at this moment.

14157. It was from Major Paul, apparently?—I do not recollect the telegram.

14158. But, anyhow, I understand you to say that with the object you had in view it was necessary for you to keep near the railway?—Absolutely. I am now talking of the advance up to Modder River, and there was no question there about ox transport. I think what you are referring to now is after I had got to the Modder River in my further advance up to Magersfontein, and when I had sufficient transport to take with me to Abbotsdam, and so to attack the Boers at Spytfontein, had I been successful at Magersfontein; but my force was not big enough for me to encumber myself with more than five days' provisions, and that I was perfectly able to take with the mule transport I had with me by first of all clearing the whole of the regimental transport and making use of all I could get hold of for my rations. The telegram you have quoted from is, therefore, quite correct. I should not have required the transport.

14159. You go on to point out in the statement which you sent in that your force had so small an amount of cavalry that you were immobile as compared with the Boers?—Yes. In such an open country, and against a force so composed, I consider my mounted force of one cavalry regiment and 120 mounted Colonials inadequate. A battery of horse artillery would have proved of great value. I had two batteries at first, and then I had three batteries when I got to Modder River, but if I had had a battery of horse artillery they could have moved forward with cavalry.

14160. Had you only one cavalry regiment?—Yes, the 9th Lancers; I am talking now of the time up to the Modder.

14161. That was the whole of your cavalry?—That was all; for instance, as I have said in my despatch of Belmont; when I took the position there I had at my feet, about 2,000 yards off, the whole of the Boer laager, but I had not anybody to go for it; if I could have got a battery of horse artillery on to the heights, which were not difficult to get up, I could have fired into their convoy as long as I liked, but the horses of the field batteries were dead beat, the guns were heavier, and they could not get up.

14162. The horses were not in good condition?—No, the horses were soon worn out, for they were in poor condition when they left Orange River, being dependent entirely on their insufficient ration; there was no grazing at Orange River. I do not recollect for certain what the ration there was; it should have been 10lbs. of oats and the ordinary ration of hay, and they might have had that; but then Sir Redvers said to me: "Mind you, you will find there is grazing up there, and you will make them graze; don't you listen to anyone if he says they want more for their horses." Well, there was hardly any grazing there, and the horses ought to have had a better ration than they had.

14163. Was that owing to any peculiarity in the season?—Oh, no; but you see the force had been there some time, and unless you can manage to cover a very great deal of ground your force soon eats up the grass around, and another thing is that all that part of the Karroo never gives good grazing. November, generally speaking, is a good time for it.

14164. Sir Redvers Buller must have had inaccurate information with regard to the grazing then?—I think he had too hopeful a view of the grazing there and the condition of the horses; but he did not get too hopeful a view from the officers who were up at Orange River.

14165. Were those horses that had been lately landed, or had they been some time in the country?—I think the 9th Lancers had been there a little time, and the Brigade Division was a Brigade Division that came from Aldershot; I think they went out somewhere about August, but that I cannot tell you.

14166. Then their horses would have had some time, at any rate, to acclimatise?—Some little time. I had better answer that I do not know what time they went there.

14167. I only asked the question because we have had so much evidence to show that the horses that were not acclimatised failed very rapidly?—Yes, that is quite true. I think you might say they were not acclimatised.

14168. The remarks you have now been making refer to the time when you were between the Orange River and the Modder?—Yes.

13 Feb. 1903.

14169. Will you now deal with the events after crossing the Modder?—As regards the Magersfontein reverse, without wishing to rake up more than I can help, the disputed question as to whether or no my force should have marched round the enemy's left flank, I consider that such a movement, entailing as it did quitting my line of communications, leaving the strong ridge of which Magersfontein formed the key in the enemy's hands, would have been unjustifiably hazardous. My reason for saying so was because my force was not sufficiently mobile, nor was my mounted force, augmented by one cavalry regiment, adequate. The question of transport would have been a matter of difficulty supposing my force had been adequate for the task set it.

14170. Does that mean that you had a second cavalry regiment at that time?—Yes, I had one more cavalry regiment; the 12th Lancers were sent to me.

14171. All your cavalry at that time was two cavalry regiments and 120 Colonials?—Yes.

14172. If you had quitted the line of railway, what would that have involved?—Do you mean the amount of rations I would have had to take?

14173. Yes, that is one point?—I should have had to be away from the Modder River five days, which would have entailed five days' provisions.

14174. Marching to the right to get round?—Yes, to get round the enemy's left.

14175. Had you transport to take that quantity?—Yes.

14176. But you would have had to guard your communications during that time?—I should have had to guard my communications by occupying Magersfontein with a strong detachment; that was the reason of my attacking Magersfontein. I should never have dreamt of going round the Magersfontein position and leaving it in the hands of the enemy, because all they had to do was to come right across my rear and cut me off from my line of communications. The very first thing I had to do was to secure my line of communications by occupying the key of the enemy's position, and having done that I meant to leave a strong detachment of the Highlanders on the Magersfontein ridge and to push on with the remainder of my force to Abbotsdam.

14177. I did not quite understand. I thought from what you said before that when you referred to "Leaving the strong ridge of which Magersfontein formed the key in the enemy's hands," you meant to leave them there?—To leave the enemy there?

14178. Yes, to leave the enemy at Magersfontein?—On the ridge?

14179. Yes?—No, I put it "leaving the strong ridge of which Magersfontein formed the key in the enemy's possession would have been unjustifiably hazardous." I considered that such a movement, entailing as it did quitting my line of communications, and leaving the strong ridge of which Magersfontein formed the key in the enemy's hands, would have been unjustifiably hazardous. I say that I meant to have taken the Magersfontein ridge, and to have left a detachment of Highlanders there.

14180. I understand now; what I understood was that you would have made your flank march leaving Magersfontein and going round it?—No, that is just what I say would have been unjustifiably hazardous, because I should have had my whole line of communications cut off.

14181. So that the taking of Magersfontein was a preliminary in any case?—It was absolutely essential, because I knew perfectly well that there was an equally strong, and I was told a stronger position between Magersfontein and Kimberley, called Spytfontein Ridge, and the Boers would have fallen back upon Spytfontein. From Abbotsdam to the ridges which form the position of Spytfontein was about six miles, and then I had to fight five miles before I got to the railway. If I had left the heights of Magersfontein in the enemy's possession, had fought them again at Spytfontein, and had not been successful, I would ask you what my position would have been; whereas, if I fought at Spytfontein (the Magersfontein ridge being in my possession), and was unsuccessful, my line of retirement was always perfectly secure.

14182. And at that period, as I understand you, you consider your force was inadequate in cavalry?—Yes.

14183. And in the matter of horse artillery?—No, not then, because I had got a battery of horse artillery.

14184. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What was the strength of the cavalry regiment approximately?—I could not give you its fighting strength, because the horses of the 9th Lancers were so wretchedly weak, and probably a good many men dismounted.

14185. (Chairman.) But in the other arms of the service was the force adequate?—No; considering the strong position held by the Boers at Magersfontein, according to the rules of war, for an attacking force I could not call the infantry force adequate, but I am not making any complaint on that score. I am still lingering on the fact that I had not enough mounted men.

14186. At the subsequent stages of your command you had adequate forces?—Yes.

14187. We had from Lord Roberts the other day an account of the various movements, and I do not suppose it is necessary to take you through the events that occurred during the time you were in command on the west?—No.

14188. The next point is with regard to the quality of the men, and in the first place as to their shooting?—The shooting of the Regular troops was conducted under exceptional difficulties on account of the clearness of the atmosphere, and because the enemy offered no good target, but my opinion gained from my experience during the Tirah and the South African campaigns is that the shooting of our infantry is not worthy of the accuracy and the long range powers possessed by the present rifle.

14189. (Sir John Hopkins.) May I interrupt you for one moment to ask you how the clearness of the atmosphere interferes with good shooting?—Because it is so difficult to tell the distances, after being accustomed to the English atmosphere.

14190. It is a case of judging distances?—Absolutely, and that would be the same in the Tirah too, although not to the same extent.

14191. (Chairman.) Will you proceed with your statement?—No money can be so well spent by the nation on the Army as it can be on musketry practice. I do not lay the blame on the soldier for his want of precision in aiming or his lack of knowledge in judging distances correctly. I blame ourselves, because we have set so far too much stress on the figure of merit in the different battalions in the Army, which, in the opinion of many, would be far better abolished. We require to devote far more time, money and intelligent interest on musketry practice, specially at movable targets. We should see that the soldier, whilst shooting, takes care he does not offer a target to the enemy. Good shooting, accurate judging of distance, and intelligent use of ground are the very essence of success in modern warfare, and well worth the purchase at a heavy price.

14192. What is the objection to the figure of merit?—I think it gives a fictitious value to the shooting of regiments. It is done a great deal with fixed targets, and they think much more of the figure of merit shown in a battalion than of the ordinary work that would be done by companies firing at movable targets, and so on.

14193. Does it mean that you want more individual training of the men?—More individual training of the men, and much more of the company officers, and much less parading before the Army what they are doing in each regiment, I think. I am speaking now rather from what I have been told by regimental officers themselves. In India, in Malta, and in England it is so very difficult to get the conditions the same. I think the conditions, for instance, at the Cape, at Malta, in India and in England are so different that you never can make the figure of merit perfectly fair, and at the same time it is the old story, it is a good self advertisement, whereas if you do the work modestly and quietly it pays the best in the end.

14194. The figure of merit, as I understand, represents the merit of the regiment in the mass?—Yes. You say one regiment has 141, and the next has 140, and no regiment is very content with itself.

14195. But in modern warfare what you have to look to is the individual man?—The individual work, and to make your company officer responsible, and see he does the work, and you need not bother so much about what the regiment's figure of merit.

14196. Of course, you cannot very well get over the differences of atmosphere?—No, and that is what I mean; the figure must be fictitious, if you are practising

Lieut.-
General
The Lord
Methuen,
G.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General
The Lord
Methuen,
G.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903.

one regiment at Malta, and one in England, where the conditions are so very different. Take the Cape, at Wynberg; all the men had to do was to walk about 500 yards down to their rifle range, and shoot just when they liked with the greatest ease. But now I take a battalion of the Guards; they would go down to Pirbright; they have to shoot perhaps in April in cold weather, with a good deal of wind, get through their shooting, and come back again; there is no fairness of comparison between the two. I only give you these two instances.

14197. But there would always be the difficulty of training soldiers in this country as completely as you could under better conditions elsewhere?—That is perfectly true, but what I have said applies to the figure of merit.

14198. Do you think you could get the individual soldier to learn the judging of distances?—Much better, but I do not think you want to hurry so much as you do. I think, as I say, that you want to spend more money and time in encouraging shooting and in encouraging company officers to take interest in it.

14199. You have also to see that the soldier keeps under cover whilst he is shooting?—Yes, that is very desirable. As to the shooting of the Militia, when I say that in many cases the men had not even gone through their musketry practice, and were recruits in a musketry sense, I do not think I need go any further.

14200. The Militia in any case cannot have the same amount of practice as the Army?—No.

14201. Did you see any Militia regiments or any parts of Militia regiments which had had sufficient training?—Yes, I had with me after Pretoria, during the last part of the war, a company of mounted infantry from Bedford and North Staffordshire, and I think they were perhaps the best company that I had in my Division, but there were a good number of old soldiers among them.

14202. And I suppose they had been out for some time?—Yes, they had been out for some time, and they are two exceptionally fine Militia regiments. The other Militia regiments had never had a chance of firing, as far as I remember.

14203. Have you seen enough of Militia regiments not only in the war, but otherwise, to say if it is possible with the present amount of training to make them good shots?—No, I do not think the present amount of practice for the Militia is sufficient. You have them out for a certain number of weeks, and they have to get through their drill and their musketry practice, and it is a scramble from beginning to end. Of course, it depends a great deal where they have their ranges; if the ranges happen to be close to barracks they save time; but I can safely say that if the present weapon is to be made proper use of and appreciated properly the amount of time they have for musketry practice is not sufficient.

14204. (*Viscount Esher.*) How many days do they have?—I cannot answer that question now, as they have altered the conditions. Then as to the shooting of the Imperial Yeomanry, I do not suppose any men would be more surprised than the Yeomen, were I to say their marksmanship was satisfactory. But it is not to be expected it would be. Anyone who has any knowledge of Volunteers and Yeomen will know how very seldom you find the combination of a man who is a good horseman, and also proficient with a rifle. I found that in 1884, when I had to get together at a fortnight's notice something like 600 men for Sir Charles Warren's Expedition. It was noticeable how few men who could ride knew anything whatever about a rifle, and *vice versa*; the men who would go down to the range and would take the trouble to shoot at a target could not ride a horse. It is very difficult to find a man who is a good rider to hounds who would care to go down to a range for an hour to fire at a target.

14205. (*Chairman.*) There was a difference between the first contingent and the second contingent of Yeomanry, was there not?—Yes, I have not said anything about the second contingent, because you stop at Pretoria. When the second contingent of Yeomanry came out their riding was hopelessly bad; they had no knowledge of a horse, or how to ride, and there were only a few farmers among them. In the first contingent the former element was not so large as one would have thought. In the second contingent there were mostly townsmen, and when first Lord Kitchener ordered me to make a combined movement with the new Yeomanry,

I pointed out to him that I could not possibly take them alone, and so I took my old Yeomanry and those of the new Yeomanry who were good enough. I then formed a column of them, and they did their work very fairly. Afterwards there came to me a certain number of men who I always understood were men from the East End, and they were men of an inferior stamp.

14206. Were they in the second contingent?—Yes. When I started for my first trek when they were all new Yeomanry, I told Lord Kitchener that I did so knowing perfectly well the danger, and I pointed it out to him, and some of them suffered accordingly from not having any knowledge of shooting or riding. I wish to say of the second contingent (because there has been a good deal of adverse criticism against them), that they were not in a position either through capacity for riding, shooting, or discipline at first to render a satisfactory account of themselves, but by the time they had once got into working order even those men who came from the East End, and who were quite a lower class, had their hearts in the right place, and did their work intelligently, and I have not one single word to say against them. I am very glad you have given me the chance to say this much for them, because I have seen so many criticisms abusing the men for their want of pluck. It was not their fault; it was sending them out unprepared, and not giving them a chance when they got to the country of getting into order before they were in front of the enemy.

14207. You must bear in mind with regard to that limitation on our Inquiry which you have referred to, that that applies only to military operations, and any question with regard to the men we can inquire into throughout?—Yes.

14208. The men of the first contingent, I think, our evidence goes to show were better riders, and knew more about horses?—Yes, good riders. I will now proceed with my evidence as to the shooting. We have now to make the Yeoman know that his riding powers are of little value unless he is at any rate a fair shot. The shooting of the Colonials from the Cape, Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania varied very much, but in some corps was decidedly good. Making good use of ground came natural to them. Although the Colonials from Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania joined me later on in the campaign, it is as well to include them in my evidence.

14209. You were satisfied on the whole with the shooting of the Colonials?—Yes.

14210. Then, as to the marching?—As soon as the weak men were weeded out, and the troops were in condition there was no question as to the men marching well. I cannot ever recollect the men not being ready to do more than I asked them to perform. I gladly include the Militia and the Volunteer companies in this statement. As long as the men are well fed and taken care of by their officers one need not fear stragglers. I except, as a rule, the men of Section D from the above remarks, as they fell out, and we left a good many behind at different places.

14211. What does that mean with regard to Section D?—They are men having special qualifications. I was going to say they are more or less veterans who go into Section D.

14212. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Technically there is a particular meaning attached to Section D; it is men who have gone through the reserve, and are allowed to serve again?—Yes, they are allowed to serve again, for certain reasons.

14213. And they get the great advantage of being allowed, if they fail during the campaign from ill-health or wounds, to count the whole of their previous service?—I do not recollect.

14214. And he is a man who has gone through the reserve, and is allowed to come back?—Yes, and only for special reasons he is allowed to go on.

14215. (*Chairman.*) He may have fallen out because he was physically unfit?—That is it, I think, because he was more or less a cripple.

14216. As to the cavalry, you do not wish to express an opinion?—No, I do not mean to say anything against their horsemanship; but I do not care to give an opinion.

14217. In mentioning horsemanship in the memo-

random we sent to you, we did not mean only the cavalry?—No; I have mentioned the others. As regards the Yeomanry of the first contingent, I think, on the whole, their horsemanship was quite satisfactory. As regards the Colonial corps the rider and horse were one. The artillery were the best horsemasters in my force; then I put the cavalry next.

14218. Is that horsemanship or horsemastership?—I allude now to horsemanship.

14219. Will you now deal with horsemastership?—The artillery were the best horsemasters in my force, the cavalry next. The Yeoman and the Colonials seemed at first to have an idea that I had an unlimited supply of horses always ready for them at a moment's notice. After I made them march on foot for some little time they seemed to realise the value of riding, and in time became fair horsemasters.

14220. Does that mean you made them walk because they were not taking sufficient care of their horses?—Yes, when I found a great many of them knocking their horses up, I formed them into a company and attached them to the Loyal Lancashires, and told them they could walk with them. There were not so many of them on foot next time. We have in peace time to make the Colonials and Yeoman understand what a horse can do if properly tended, for at present they have very little idea of saving a horse or nursing a tender back.

14221. You speak there only of the Colonials and Yeomanry; I think some of our evidence goes further, and, indeed, all through, except perhaps in the artillery?—I had nothing to do with cavalry with my force after Modder River, except for a few days in the Marico country, because I only had Yeomanry and Colonials.

14222. Have you any reason to doubt that those observations apply also to some extent to the cavalry?—I have no experience.

14223. The next point is entrenchment and cover?—The Boers taught us the advantage of narrow deep trenches, the line being scarcely visible. We were at first too apt to show our line of defence. Our men had not much idea of selecting sites for entrenchments, or using configuration of ground to conceal themselves; the officers were not strong on this point. This is the fault of our peace training, and the want of suitable ground for practising entrenching. The Boers and Colonials made use of ground instinctively, probably from living in country away from towns, and many of them accustomed to stalking game.

14224. The conditions of modern warfare make that a very important point?—Very important indeed.

14225. Do you think you could bring the ordinary British soldier to a reasonable idea of the necessity of taking cover?—Yes, to a great extent, but I do not think you can ever expect any soldier in our disciplined Army to instinctively gain cover like a man who lives in an open country, and who is in the habit of stalking game.

14226. Would the class of man you get as a recruit for the Army have intelligence enough—he has plenty of pluck—to take up that idea?—As I said, to a certain extent, but you would never expect him to have the cunning and shrewdness of the Dutchman, or of our Colonials from New Zealand and Australia.

14227. And to get a really satisfactory Army from that point of view, you would have to go to a more intelligent class?—Yes.

14228. Then as to the physique of the men?—In the Guards very fine; in the Regulars very fair; in the Militia fair in some battalions, indifferent in others. My remarks are limited up to the time the troops reached Pretoria. When I was at Lichtenburg in the latter period of the war there came a strong draft for the Northampton, and I have seen a good many bad drafts when I was on the staff and commanding the Home District, but I do not think I ever saw so bad a draft as that.

14229. For the Northampton Regiment or Militia?—The Northampton Regiment; I reported it to the Commander-in-Chief at the time.

14230. Bad in physique?—Absolutely wretched, the physique and the general conditions of a man (the moral conditions of a man), in my opinion, go together. That is to say, if you get a wretched set of men like that, you may be perfectly certain that if they get into a tight corner they will not face it.

14231. Were they men recruited under the ordinary conditions?—I know nothing about them—I should think so.

14232. They came out as a draft?—They came out as a draft to the Northampton.

14233. The Yeomanry you have spoken to, I think?—In the first contingent of the Yeomanry the physique and stamina varied greatly, which fact, I assume, accounts for the large number who went home early in the war. A large percentage of those who found their way into hospital were either not strong enough or energetic enough to risk a second winter on the veldt. There was a very marked improvement in this respect in the second contingent of Yeomanry, for they did their best to avoid going into hospital, and then rejoined without delay. It is only fair to those men in the first contingent of Yeomanry who stayed out the whole of their time, many at very great self-sacrifice, and saw the really hard work, dating from the time we left Krugersdorp in July, 1900, to make this remark, and also because in the event of the Yeomanry being called upon to serve in any future campaign it is as well to bear in mind this abnormally large wastage in war.

14234. You mean that the men who stayed out in the first Yeomanry for the whole of the time were not those who found their way into hospital, and were invalided home?—No. There was no difficulty in getting home in the case of the first contingent; a man had to ask leave and Lord Roberts generally allowed it; but later on, with Lord Kitchener, I am glad to say a very firm hand was put down, and men could not get away.

14235. A good many of the first Yeomanry stayed out during the whole time?—Yes, a very fair number, but still the proportion of Yeomanry out of the whole force that went back to England was far larger than it ever should have been; I mean there were a good number of men who went home not having done their full share.

14236. They were only enlisted, of course, for a year?—They were enlisted for a year, and as long as the war would last, and that is what I got them to understand perfectly clearly; I had no nonsense about it. Whenever they came up to me with the year theory, I said, "Nothing of the sort; it is as long as the war will last." They said, "Lord Roberts has stated the war was over," and I said, "Is it over?" That is all.

14237. If that was the real interpretation of the condition, why were they allowed to go?—A man would come forward and say his mother had gone to a lunatic asylum, and there was nobody else to look after his sister, or that his wife was dying, and so on, and I sent all these forward. I must say they always had a remarkably good excuse, but it is extraordinary how all these reasons vanished when they knew they would not be allowed to go home any more. We could not write home to England always and ascertain if the story was absolutely true. With the exception of the objects of the above remarks I can conceive no troops possessed of higher morale than the men whom I had the honour to command throughout the campaign; and I hope I may not be out of order if I include the second contingent of Yeomanry, the Volunteer companies, the Volunteers in the other branches, and the Rhodesian Police in these remarks, all of whom served under me in the latter part of the war. The Volunteer companies are those that joined the infantry regiments there, and seemed to me to do very good work.

14238. They fell in with the regiments?—Yes.

14239. One witness seemed to think it was perhaps a little hard on a Volunteer company going out to find itself placed in a crack regiment, and that it was a severe strain?—It was very hard on them at the end, because I remember wishing the Volunteer companies "Good-bye" in August, or about that date, when they thought they were going home, and they stayed on for another five or six months after that, but I never heard any grumbling from them.

14240. I meant rather that it was a strain on their physique being brought out to join a crack regiment in hard fighting trim?—They did not march at first as well as the others.

14241. But they soon took up?—Yes.

14242. As to the intelligence of the men?—As to the cavalry soldier, what struck me in comparing him with the Yeoman or Colonial was the lack of individual initiative. To give an example of what I mean, I was marching through the Marico district, living from hand to mouth, and I noticed some nosebags of the

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13 Feb. 1903

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13 Feb. 1903.

cavalry whilst on the march empty, although the Yeomen and Colonials had theirs all full of mealies—the two latter required no telling. I remember the Colonial Division which joined in the chase after De Wet—Cape men—and I do not know how they would have got on at all if what I have just said had not been true of them. I said: "If you have no provisions at all, how are you getting on?" They said: "Lord Kitchener gave us orders to live on the country, and we live on it"; and I must say they did. The cavalry soldier, on the contrary, had probably received no definite instructions; he had not been trained to look out for himself, and to use his own intelligence; he is dependent on his officer or non-commissioned officer, and if he finds himself alone he gets into difficulties. The shrewdest men I have ever had to deal with are the Colonials; anything they do not know is not worth knowing. They were quite the Boer's equal in everything but courage, in which quality they excelled him greatly. The Yeomanry gained in military knowledge to a surprising extent during the campaign. They bought their experience rather expensively at first, but I could place implicit reliance in them after a short time. This good result was due to their individual intelligence, their independence, and the confidence they, with justice, placed in the leading of many of their officers. The first Yeomanry had the great advantage of having men in the county whom they knew, and, therefore, here was a thorough county *esprit de corps*. The Royal Engineer fitted himself into any job, seemed theoretically and practically well educated for work and service, and it made no difference whether the officer was by his side or not. I question whether there is very much room for improvement in the gunner as a fighting machine. Most of my time in action was spent with a battery, and I give the officers the utmost credit for the fine fighting soldier they have formed out of the same material supplied to the infantry. The gunner thinks of nothing but his horses and gun, and there is little more he can be taught about either.

14243. Is the gunner the same material as the infantry?—Yes. The garrison gunner is a bigger man altogether; he is the sort of man you would have for the Guards for standard, but the ordinary gunner is much the same as we have for the infantry.

14244. Because otherwise your evidence about intelligence seems to point to the same thing, that if you want an intelligent soldier you must get a class that is intelligent to take him from?—Yes. The gunner does not require so much individuality; all he has to do is to be fixed on to his gun and he knows what he has to do, and it is extraordinary under fire, even under the hardest circumstances, how little the gunner notices anything else but his gun.

14245. But the infantryman has to exercise a great deal of individuality?—Yes.

14246. And that is where, perhaps, he fails?—That is where he would fail.

14247. Then as to officers?—Taking the regimental officer, a very great improvement has been shown of late years in the knowledge possessed, and the interest taken in his profession, by regimental officers. No doubt there is much more to be done. If they have shortcomings, let us be fair and not lay all the blame on them, but admit frankly the shortcomings belong to our system, and sometimes are our own. You cannot make bricks without straw, and can anything have been more disheartening to a zealous officer than to find himself in command of a company reduced from various causes to a unit not worth commanding? Added to this, he often finds himself restricted to ground quite inadequate, or unadapted for tactical instruction.

14248. Are you referring there to his training in peace time?—Yes, I am referring to his training in peace time.

14249. Do you refer in that to the fact which has been brought before us that in many cases regiments are so reduced that they scarcely can appear on parade at all?—Yes.

14250. (Sir John Edge.) Is that reduced by the men being taken away for other duties?—Not only that, but so many of them are recruits, and the regiment is often under strength.

14251. (Sir Frederick Darley.) And the men are taken away to perform menial duties?—Yes, they are taken away for everything—servants, for instance, or perhaps to do the gardens and what not. It is extraordinary

the number who are taken off duty from one cause or another, but, of course, hitherto there have been very many recruits to drill and drafts to send off to the regiments abroad.

14252. (Chairman.) We had it in evidence that for fatigue duties alone so many were taken that it seriously impaired the possibility of drill?—That is perfectly true.

14253. That you have seen yourself?—Yes.

14254. Does that obtain all through the Army?—Yes. I suppose it varies very much according to garrisons, but naturally it does prevail extensively. You must have your coal fatigues, and so on, just the same in every barracks.

14255. Would it apply to the Guards, for instance?—Yes.

14256. (Sir Frederick Darley.) We are told it does not apply to the cavalry, and that where the cavalry are with infantry the infantry do the work?—That is so; particularly with the Guards there are daily duties they have to perform; for instance, at Windsor I think it is 46 men that have to be found for guard every day, and if you multiply that by two, the guard coming off and the guard going on, there are 92 men on duty at once, and when you come to add to that the number of recruits and the number of men employed in barrack duty, and so on, you will find you have a very small company left.

14257. (Chairman.) And that impairs the training of the regiment and the training of the officers?—Absolutely. Of course, the authorities have done their best by fixing a certain period of time for company training when every man is supposed to be present. I think very likely in the Guards that is to some extent satisfactory, but in some line regiments even then, with the number of recruits that are always in barracks and the duties that take them away from their company, they have very small companies indeed.

14258. Have you ever considered how that difficulty could be met?—No; it is a very difficult matter to meet. I will not go so far as to say that I can give any suggestion; I can only point out what has been done.

14259. One suggestion made was that fatigue duties ought not to be met by men belonging to the regiment at all, but ought to be done by, say, Reservists?—That might be.

14260. Would that meet the difficulty to any extent?—Yes, that would meet the difficulty by increasing the expense to the country very considerably.

14261. The expense, no doubt, is the difficulty?—Yes, because that means employing so many more men in the Army.

14262. But if you are to have the men who are being trained properly trained, and the regiment made properly efficient by their officers being sufficiently trained, do you see any other way of doing it?—No, I cannot help you.

14263. The regiment must be kept fairly full in order that that result may be brought about?—I think the reason to a great extent is that of the men who are in the regiment there is an enormous number of recruits, and although the regiment on paper may be all right, it is full of a large number of immature men who are no good to anybody.

14264. But that surely is a different point rather, and as long as our present system of linked battalions goes on that must be so?—Yes, I think so. I think a considerable change is necessary, but what that change is I cannot venture to say.

14265. Outside that matter, if you take away in addition men who are trained soldiers and put them to other duties which should be performed by other men, you still further reduce the efficiency?—Certainly.

14266. (Sir Henry Norman.) Short service, of course, greatly increases that evil, because there are so many more recruits in the regiment than there would otherwise be?—Yes, we are always quoting Germany, but where they get their immense advantage is that it is a wheel all through the year; they begin in October, and go right round, and they have a system. As long as we have recruits joining all through the year we must be prepared for losing a great number of men every year from learning their work, and with our present organisation we can have no regular system.

14267. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Over what period are

the men expected to drill? I think you said there was some time when the men must all be there?—Yes, they have a company training, and that is about one month in the year; then you have the whole of your company together as strong as you can get it, and you train them; but, as I say, now, as a matter of fact, with the recruits, and men not available, very often the numbers have been far too few for the officer to take an interest in his work.

14268. (*Chairman.*) Will you proceed about the officers?—The best young officers I have ever met were serving in Native regiments in India; and why? Because they had commands in which they could take interest, plenty of ground for practice, and occupying positions of responsibility. It is this system which establishes the keenness in Continental armies, and if we wish to stimulate emulation in our regimental officers the remedy lies in ourselves. The more intelligent work I have given them, the more I have forced them to be independent, and not to rest on their seniors for support, the better and keener soldiers they were for it. Whether the double company system would not be a wise innovation, considering our small companies, I have for many years thought worth consideration. That is the important point; if you cannot suggest any means by which you can make the companies stronger than they are, there is always the solution of having in the infantry what they have in the cavalry, which is the squadron system, and there at once you get two fairly strong companies made into a good strong company. Our company system of eight companies gives you a small number of men, if you compare them with the big companies the Germans have.

14269. The German companies are larger?—The German companies are much larger—250 on war footing and the consequence is that if you have the double company system you would always have a unit well worth working. I advocated that years and years ago.

14270. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And then the Germans call them companies, and not double companies?—Yes, but we could always work the two companies under the one officer.

14271. Do you not think it would be a better system to have them in one big company, as they have on the Continent?—Yes, but there is always the difficulty, particularly abroad, of sending a company complete on detachment; you might send half a company.

14272. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) And you would have two captains to each company, in accordance with that suggestion?—Yes.

14273. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) They do not have that in the German Army?—No; there they have a big company.

14274. They have that in the Native armies now—the double company?—Yes, I never could see the objection to it, and I see great advantages in it.

14275. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The German captain commands a larger unit?—Yes, it is 250 on war footing. There is another very important matter, and that is whether you might not try to strengthen the territorial system by placing, so far as possible, officers in the regiments, Militia and Regulars, belonging to their own counties; that is to say, you find the county magnates putting their sons into Militia regiments which have nothing whatever to do with the county, and I think if it could be established as far as possible that the officers belonging to the Militia and the territorial regiment should be officered by gentlemen belonging to the county it would have a very good effect, certainly on the Militia and, I think, on the Line regiment, too. Everything you can do to bring together the feeling between the regiment and the county I think ought to be done.

14276. (*Chairman.*) That would increase the *esprit de corps*?—Yes, and I think it would improve the recruiting as well; for instance, in the Yeomanry the work is done a great deal individually, and I think if you found the gentlemen of counties in their own regiments they themselves would help to get recruits, and you would stimulate recruiting to a great extent, or to some extent, at any rate. Now I see, for instance, a popular Militia regiment in Scotland taking away two or three young officers in my own county who ought to be in their own Militia regiment.

14277. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And that obtained to some extent in the Yeomanry?—Yes, most officers in the Yeomanry belong to their own county.

14278. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would there not be difficulty in the Regulars under the system of open competition?—Yes, but I mean as far as you could; I do not say you could do it altogether, but I would recommend that as the principle, and you could work up to it. You need not always carry it out, but as much as you can. If a Welshman comes up, and there is a Shropshire regiment and a Worcestershire, I would, for choice, put him into his own county regiment.

14279. Would there not spring up a feeling amongst the officers that they should try to get rid of anyone who did not belong to the county?—I belong to the Scots Guards, and I do not think there was any particular feeling there against the English. I spoke to an officer commanding a battalion in my own county, and he was very strongly in favour of my suggestion.

14280. But at any time there was an irregular regiment attached to the territorial regiment of which a large proportion of the officers were county men, some of these men getting in by open competition, and no special county men, would be considered as rather outsiders?—They might have their choice, but there is the ordinary luck, and you would put them into the county regiment if you could instead of putting them into a regiment of which they know nothing. The thing to do is to begin with the Militia.

14281. The Militia and Yeomanry would stand on a different footing, but I would be rather afraid of establishing a feeling in a Regular regiment of such a kind that there would be a tendency to get rid of any officer who did not belong to the county?—I do not think there would be; there might be. You might get 10 or 12 county officers in a regiment, but you would never get the majority.

14282. (*Chairman.*) Now, I suppose the county men go into the Militia of their own county?—To a great extent, but nothing like what they ought to.

14283. As to officers reporting, what have you to say?—It has been stated that officers cannot draw up a report. My experience on service does not bear out that statement. From the time I left Orange River to the time I left Modder River to take up my command at Kimberley, the reports and the sketches were as clear and comprehensive as they could well be under the conditions of modern warfare—that is the difficulties entailed by smokeless powder and long-range fire. Later on in the war the short reports sent me from the front were seldom misleading. What is required is not a well-finished sketch and a verbose report, but a rapid sketch, the situation described in as few words as possible in a clear hand. Of course before I went to Modder I had the advantage of Colonel Verner, who is a past-master at the art of reconnaissance, and then I had two extremely good officers, Colonel Cheston Masters, now commanding the Rhodesian Police, who was then a lieutenant, and Lieutenant Brooks, who has since passed through the Staff College. I was speaking to Dr. Warre, and he said, "You took picked men," and I said, "Naturally, because I wanted my work done as well as I could"; but all I know is that better work could not have been done. Afterwards when you are advancing on the march all you require is a sketch done fairly clearly and quickly, and with as few words as possible, written in a legible hand. I must honestly say that I have never had any complaint to make.

14284. You are speaking of your Intelligence officers?—No, I am speaking now of the regimental officers who had to give me their reports, because, if you remember, in the Committee which sat on the education of officers, that was a very strong point—that they could not draw up a report, and so on, but so far as I am concerned I cannot say that I found it so.

14285. You are not referring only to the two officers you have mentioned?—No, I am only telling you as a matter of fact, that I did have picked officers for it, but naturally any General would have picked officers. The one belonged to the 9th Lancers, and the other to the Rimington Scouts. I simply called on the regiments, and they sent me their two best men. Then there comes the training. I have already spoken about the training of the infantry. Musketry training all the year round, intelligent seeking of cover, a sufficiently large unit to give an officer interest in his command, and ample space on which to work. Given these conditions, let every opportunity be offered to the best officer to see his way to promotion as a reward for his zeal and ability. That will take in the shooting as well; where I found an officer do justice to his company's shooting I should look upon that as a very im-

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13 Feb. 1903.

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3 Feb. 1903.

portant matter in giving him promotion. I think I should lay more stress almost on the musketry than I should on anything else as long as he also showed his company knew how to take intelligent advantage of cover. The artillery officer, quite apart from his thorough military education at Woolwich, shows the good result of having an independent command. As a major he has a self-contained unit in the battery; and the three subalterns the same in their three sections, hence a very efficient body of officers. It really does not matter a bit in the artillery what battery you have given to you or what officer; they are all equally good, as far as I can see. I cannot speak too highly of them. It is, of course, due to a very great extent, I think, to taking them at the age they are taken at Woolwich, and then they go through a most thoroughly sound good curriculum there, and there is a very good tone among the officers. If you take them in sport or games, for instance, they get more fun for their money, at riding, polo, cricket, and in every way, than any other branch of the service, and they do it cheaply. On service they are the same; they know their work, and do it in a thoroughly professional style.

14286. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You are in favour of getting officers young, and training them thoroughly?—Yes, my idea is to get them young, and to train them for two years.

14287. That is preferable you think to getting older men from the Universities?—I think so. I think it is just from the same cause that the Navy is so good, that you get the boy young, and you train him up as you want him; and I think if you get men from the University, although very often good men, they have got a little too old to shape.

14288. (*Chairman.*) It depends on the man?—Of course it does; there are of course exceptions, but, as a rule, I would rather shape a man young than when he gets a little bit older.

14289. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) When you speak of taking young men, up to what age do you mean?—I would take Woolwich, for instance, where the age is 17, I think; you take the boy at 17, and shape him just as you want him, and I naturally go by results. They are professional soldiers in every sense of the word.

14290. (*Chairman.*) And now with regard to the staff?—The great disadvantage a General labours under in our Army is going on service with a staff strange to him, though in the Army Corps system this will be rectified. It is essential if a General is to be well served, and to have his brain free to think out the general scheme, that he should be able with confidence to leave all details in the hands of his staff. For this reason it is essential the staff officers should have passed through the Staff College, or else have had a thorough practical experience of staff work on active service or in time of peace. To place any regimental officer, however capable, without the above qualifications, in a position of trust on the staff is unfair to himself, and likely to prove of danger to the country. More can be made of the fine training given at the Staff College than at present. The officers who go there should be manly, practical men, and more care exercised in shutting out the college to men who know everything, but can do nothing. There is a feeling now that if once the P.S.C. is gained, this is a certain pass for employment, whereas it should be no such thing. Only the best men should be selected, and more men should be encouraged to go there, so that there should be a larger choice to select from. Unquestionably, during the campaign many regimental officers with inadequate training filled staff billets, which would have been far better filled had we possessed a larger reserve of passed Staff College officers than we have at present. Then again it should be understood that the place of Professor at the Staff College should be a stepping-stone to high staff appointments. They should be men admittedly leaders in the field, as well as men of sound theoretical knowledge; men whose value is known throughout the Army. Far more care should be taken that an officer goes back to regimental duty from staff employment; "once on the staff, always on the staff," means injury to the man and the Service. I speak with some knowledge of the Staff College, because I was allowed as a full Colonel to attend the second year's course as a Volunteer.

14291. You attach great importance to the Staff College for staff officers?—The greatest importance.

14292. And, therefore, in order to have a sufficient number of staff officers qualified in that way the more men you put through the Staff College the better?—Yes. You see in the German Army it is not thought any discredit to an officer to go to the staff and then go back to his regiment, and never, perhaps, be employed again. There are something like ninety officers going through the staff at their General Staff College, and only about nine of those or perhaps a dozen go to the General Staff. They are tested by the Chief of the General Staff to see whether they are worth their salt, and out of that number there are only three or four selected for work on the General Staff. I well remember a case in point which shows what I mean; there was a great friend of mine who spoke English and French perfectly, and who was a highly educated man, and a very nice fellow in every sense of the word, and I asked one of my friends on the General Staff, "Why is not 'A' employed? He is a very able man?" and he said, "Yes, he is an able man, and theoretically excellent, but he is not practical enough." With that very strict selection they are able to pick out men who are very able and also practical men. Now every single staff officer with us who gets the P.S.C. considers he ought to get some employment for having gone through the Staff College.

14293. And does not wish to go back to the regiment?—That is the very last thing in some cases.

14294. You think they should go back to the regiment?—Certainly, and there again the Germans are so particular that they send back an officer who is on the staff to go and drill a battalion when he is on the staff. I have often been on the Templehof and seen a staff officer drilling his own battalion to get the practice, and to keep in it. The great mistake of the staff is ever to get out of touch with the regiments.

14295. One opinion expressed to us was that officers who served on the staff should be sent back to the regiments with promotion. Do you think that is a necessary qualification?—No, I do not see why that should be.

14296. They should go back as a matter of course?—Certainly. I think that would be the very last thing to do, to give dissatisfaction to the regimental officers, which that would do if they received promotion as a right.

14297. But in this war you think there were not enough qualified officers?—No, there was a very heavy strain indeed on the number of officers we had, and unless you increase the size of the Staff College to a very great extent you never can expect in any prolonged war to have the number of men you would like to have who have been through the Staff College course.

14298. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Unless you shortened the course?—Yes.

14299. I suppose you knew that there was a certain amount of loafing going on there, as there is in other institutions?—There are about six or eight really good men out of the whole batch.

14300. (*Chairman.*) You say you went to take the second year's course?—When I came back from Sir Charles Warren's expedition I wanted to work at field engineering and surveying, and so on, which I had not had the chance to do when I was Brigade Major and Assistant-Adjutant-General, so I first got leave to go through the long course at Chatham, which is three months' surveying and engineering, and next I got leave to do my regimental work, and also to go through the course for the whole year at the Staff College, and the whole of the work I had done in Chatham came in, and I was able to do my work, I believe, satisfactorily for the second year of the Staff College, which is the interesting year. If you take the work I had to learn at Chatham it is much the same work as I should have learnt at Sandhurst, and it seems to me that at the Staff College there is a great deal of work in the first year which formerly was necessary, but which now really is not required, considering the instruction that they get at Sandhurst.

14301. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) So that a single year of the Staff College well employed would be quite sufficient?—Of course, I bow in deference to men like Major-General Hildyard, who know more, but I think certainly there is a great deal of work done the first year which should be unnecessary now that Sandhurst teaches what it does.

14302. Do you think some distinction might be drawn between the men going into the Adjutant-General A Department and the Adjutant-General B Department?—While at the Staff College?

14303. Yes, as regards instruction?—No, I think a man when he goes to the Staff College ought to be able to learn the whole of the A and B work, but I think that you ought to be most careful when a man has passed through the Staff College to mark what he is fit for, and not put a round man in a square hole. Occasionally you get a man fitted for B sent to A, and A to B, and so on. I do not think it would be interesting enough work otherwise; if I went to the Staff College I should like to learn A and B, and I could perfectly well learn it in a year.

14304. But some officers could not probably; some men are only fitted for the official work, the military law office work, and so on?—Yes, you can easily note that up when they leave the Staff College, and put down what they are fitted for.

14305. If you found a man really not fitted for the Quartermaster-General's work, would it not be more economical to give him a short training in his own line, and get rid of him, so as to be able to pass more men through the College? You are making room for more men to come in, the object being, of course, to pass as many through the Staff College for a given amount of money as you can?—I do not think I agree with you; I think he would have to do his A and B.

14306. Even if he showed no capacity for the B work, the knowledge of ground, reading of maps, and fixing of camps, etc.?—On service my B man might be disabled, and an A man have to do the work. I think a man ought to be able to grasp A and B perfectly, and at the end of the course you would probably see what his bent is. You would say: "I look upon Methuen as better for A Department, and somebody else as better for B Department"; but you would make them both go through it.

14307. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You think it better that all should go through the same course, without making any invidious distinction?—Yes.

14308. And that afterwards the head of the Staff College should give his opinion as to what they are fitted for?—Yes.

14309. Do you think that is done now?—They will say it is done to a great extent, but I think they should be more strict about it, because officers are not always placed—it may be the fault of Headquarters afterwards—in that department of the staff they are best fitted for.

14310. We have had some evidence to the effect that a very reliable report is now given by the head of the Staff College as to the particular qualifications of an officer when he passes out?—Yes, but that should be noted and attended to by those at Headquarters.

14311. If that is not done it ought to be done?—Yes. Let me put it the other way, that the report rendered by the head of the Staff College should always be recollected at Headquarters, and acted upon, because there is no use for the Commandant of the Staff College to write, "Methuen is fitted for A" if the authorities at Headquarters put him to B.

14312. (*Chairman.*) With regard to supplies, I think you wish to say that they were admirable?—Excellent. I never recollect the food supply, and so on being better or so good as it was in this campaign; from the beginning to end I have not one word to say against it.

14313. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Had you ever any difficulty with the ammunition? Was there always a sufficient quantity?—Yes, except after Magersfontein; I had got through so much ammunition at Magersfontein that I could not really have gone on. I had to wait then for a fresh supply, but that was my own fault, firing so much, and not the fault of anybody else.

14314. (*Chairman.*) And it was sent up pretty quickly?—Yes.

14315. Were you never short of food?—Never; my men and horses always, I think, except one day, had full rations.

14316. And you do not know of any delay or failure by contractors?—No.

14317. As to horses, what have you to say?—You have had the report of the Court of Inquiry on the administration of the Army Remount Department, and I do

not think I need say more. Of course the difficulties there were that the horses arrived, and they were not given a chance very often. It was nobody's fault; we wanted horses; everybody wanted horses; they landed, and they came up at once without a chance being given to them.

14318. And to that you attribute the great losses?—Yes, to a great extent. The moment they arrived I might get a telegram from Lord Kitchener (he was obliged to do it) saying, "I want you to start at once," and off I had to go with these horses not the least fit. It was nobody's fault, but the fault of the enemy requiring us to move.

14319. It was the exigences of war?—Yes.

14320. You do not wish to enter into the quality of any particular stamp of horse?—No. I agree with what the Court of Inquiry said, that the best horse was the Cape horse, and then the English horse, and particularly the 'bus horses, for the artillery; they did admirably. It is extraordinary how well they came out. I thought the worst horse the Argentine, with no exception.

14321. Did you see many of them?—Not more than I could help. I had them at first, but I did not get any more.

14322. And what have you to say as to transport?—I do not see that I can give any information of value, as it is a big question. If the Commission would name any special points I might be able to answer them. I may say that I am very strongly in favour of the regimental transport, and I thought it was a pity altering it, although when first Lord Kitchener came out they formed big companies of transport, and eventually that was all broken up. Really for most of the campaign I had more or less regimental transport.

14323. It went back of its own momentum?—Yes, because the regimental officers take immense trouble about their transport. They generally appoint a very good officer for it, and take great pride in it, and I think it is a very great thing for a regiment to know all about their own transport. They will take care of it, and when they go off with a detachment they have always their transport available. The system introduced for a short time on the Modder certainly caused friction, and at once disheartened the regimental officer, who at the time the change was made was taking very great trouble about his transport.

14324. For a big move is it not necessary to take away the transport from regiments?—I could always do that; for instance, two or three times when I was chasing De Wet I took the whole of the regimental transport for myself, and gave them the ox transport, and there was no difficulty about that. I used to say "You will have to take over these ox-wagons, and put all your goods upon them, as I am to take your mules," and I used the transport as long as I wanted it, and then it went back to them again.

14325. If the General has that power of control, that sufficiently meets the case?—Quite, but the system they introduced at the Modder was that they made them into big companies. I had five, for instance, and if French wanted to make a move I should have had to send probably three of these five companies off to him, and Cronje would know quite well that with two companies I could not move, and that I would have to wait till the three companies came back again. I think it might have caused a great deal of difficulty.

14326. As to the Medical Staff Corps, what have you to say?—I was quite satisfied with the Medical Staff Corps. The new and sweeping changes were recognised as necessary, and should give the Army an efficient Medical Staff Corps. The civilian surgeons, fresh from the hospitals, and up to all modern requirements, were of great value. I should judge that their services should be utilised in any future campaigns. The orderlies were not always good, but we are inclined to forget a large number were makeshifts from the Regulars and Militia. I have seen more than my share of sisters and nurses, and the Army owe them a very deep debt of gratitude.

14327. They were not with you at first?—No, they came on to me to the Modder afterwards, about the middle of January, I think. Lord Roberts sent them up to me.

14328. I think in the big fights your wounded were sent back?—Yes, they were all sent back, and I think they went straight down to Cape Town. It was ad-

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13 Feb. 1903

Lieut.-
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Methuen,
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C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903.

mirably organised by Colonel Townsend, who was my Principal Medical Officer.

14329. It was well worked?—Admirably. Take Graspan, for instance: he only new that morning at 1 o'clock that I was to fight next day, and he cleared the train; by the time I was fighting he had it up without my knowing it, and by 3 o'clock in the afternoon the men were on the train on the battlefield, and sent straight down. After Magersfontein he got up the wounded during the night, and 300 of the Gordons volunteered to act as orderlies, and the next morning, the day I retired to the Modder, those men were on board the train going straight back to Cape Town, which was very sensible, because with men wounded like that if you cannot operate at once it is far better to put them in the train, which is fairly comfortable, send them down to the base hospital, and let them be operated on there.

14330. That you can only do when you have the railway?—Yes.

14331. When you are not near the railway we had some evidence that it would be better to have a large field hospital as close to the front as possible, in order that the men might be operated upon without being moved?—Yes, I think that very likely would be so; in all the last part, when I was moving, you could not have found any place where you would have put a field hospital, as I was all over the veldt.

14332. When you are really moving about like that the field hospital would have to come after you if you had one?—Yes, and that I should not require. I was never more than 50 miles, or not so much, from where I could land my men into the hospital. I could always go to Klerksdorp and Mafeking, and at Lichtenburg I had a very good hospital, which I had formed, and I never had to take my men more than 30 or 40 miles.

14333. Perhaps that to some extent would meet the case?—Yes. You know pretty well where Zeerust and Lichtenburg are; if you take Mafeking, then Zeerust and Lichtenburg are like two bastions; my work was always beyond Zeerust or Lichtenburg, and the consequence was that when I came back from trek I put them back into Zeerust, or Lichtenburg, until they were fit to be moved, and then they were moved to Mafeking, where my hospital was.

14334. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Do you refer here, in this statement of your evidence, to women nurses—"sisters and nurses"?—Yes, I was referring to women; the sister is a superior nurse; the nurses are the underlings; the sisters are those who superintend.

14335. (Chairman.) And now will you deal with the Engineers' service?—The Engineers' service was too weak during the latter part of the campaign, being supplemented by natives, but it was always very efficient indeed.

14336. What do you mean by "supplemented by natives"?—There was much work that ought to be done by sappers, but I had not sappers to do it, so I got natives. I mounted these boys on donkeys, and I had about 20 of them; they were taken command of by whatever sapper I had, and made a very efficient black boy brigade.

14337. They did well enough?—Capitally.

14338. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Were they employed in entrenching?—No, in getting the drifts right, and looking after the water arrangements; the Engineers had little to do with the entrenching, but the moment we got into camp they put the pumps up, arranged the water supply, and got the drifts straight.

14339. (Chairman.) Will you proceed with your statement?—Then I come to the effectiveness of the guns. I know the artillery officers will repudiate my statement, but I cannot think our field gun equalled the Creuzot in range, nor do I think we found the range as quickly or accurately as the enemy. I think you will find most of the commanders agree with me, and none of the gunners do. They think their guns quite as good as the Creuzot, and they think they are extremely good at judging distances.

14340. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) There, again, the clearness of atmosphere comes in?—Yes, that is so, and the Boers were extremely good judges of distance. Then, as to the pom-pom; the pom-pom was of value, very light, it could easily accompany a mounted force. It did not, perhaps, do great execution, but it frightened the enemy. It certainly did little execution, but in a European war, where you will have more chance of firing at masses, the pom-pom will have a great effect. In South Africa it hardly had a target to fire at.

14341. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What range has the pom-pom?—4,000 yards, speaking off-hand; it is a weapon of wonderful accuracy. The Lyddite shell did not come up to its reputation, but I always took one howitzer with me in the hills, as it terrified the enemy more than any other arm. I very seldom hit anybody with it.

14342. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Does the remark about European armies come in there also—larger masses?—Yes.

14343. Used against masses, it would have a great effect?—Yes. We had no reason to complain of the accuracy or range of our rifle, though the mechanism and general finish of the Mauser are superior. I have no fault to find with our rifle. The Maxim never had a good chance (nor had it in the Tirah campaign), for the only occasion when it would have been of value, that is at Tweefontein, my last fight, I had none. In both cases we were always attacking, and the Maxim when attacking has seldom a good chance, it is so essentially for defence. Both the pom-pom and the Maxim have the danger of jamming.

14344. (Chairman.) And that did occur?—Yes, and it seems always to be just at first, but you can never be quite safe about it.

14345. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) It depends a good deal on the man you have in charge of the Maxim, does it not?—Yes.

14346. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) I see that in speaking of the Colonials you do not mention Canadians; I presume you had no Canadians with you?—I had none.

14347. You saw nothing of them?—No.

14348. You would class them just as the others, I suppose?—Yes.

14349. With regard to mounted infantry, I ask what is your opinion of the mounted infantry as a useful body in war?—I consider them a most useful body.

14350. As compared with the cavalry?—I have always had the same opinion, that it is now essentially the day for mounted infantry as against cavalry, but I think that where our difficulty regarding the mounted infantry comes in is our system of selecting the best men and officers from each battalion. We know quite well that General Trochu, who was a very good authority in the French Army, pointed out what very great harm it did there, the best men going from line regiments to the Imperial Guard and the Zouaves, and it disheartens the men and officers. They say, "Our best officers and men go at the very time we require them," whereas if we had battalions of mounted infantry, and took remarkably good care that they did not develop into cavalry, as our dragoons have developed into our present cavalry, then I cannot help thinking that it would be far better. In saying that, I mean that we should have mounted infantry, which really were what the dragoons were, and what the dragoons ought to be now—that is, men as good on foot as they are on horseback.

14351. Looking to the great mobility of the Boer force, you would have considered it an advantage to have had mounted infantry with you, would you not?—They proved of an untold advantage to me afterwards, with the Yeomanry, who were nothing else than partially trained mounted infantry.

14352. We have had evidence before that the first body of Yeomanry were far superior in intelligence, and generally, to the second contingent?—They were from a different class of men altogether; the first were men from the country, some of them farmers, officered by their own county men; the second, on the contrary, were townsmen, as a rule, with very few farmers, and officered by men whom they knew nothing whatever about, and a great many of the officers sent with the second contingent were perfectly useless, and had to be sent back.

14353. But after a few months you found the second contingent to be good and useful troops?—Certainly; but I beg respectfully to say that I do not think in face of the enemy is quite the place to educate your men.

14354. The Regulars generally were not adepts at finding the spoor, as it is called, or the tracks of the Boers?—Are you talking of cavalry?

14355. No, the Regular infantry?—If you are looking for the spoor of the enemy it would be the mounted troops in front who would take it up. I only had

the 9th Lancers and Rimington's Scouts from Orange River to the Modder, and I have not one word to say against them; they happened to be an exceptionally good cavalry regiment, and they did their utmost for me. The horses, as I have said in my evidence, were worn out, and when they got to the Modder they could not get sufficiently close to the river to give me what I would call reliable evidence—they could only tell me what I had already been told, that the enemy were burrowing like rabbits, but I never knew myself until the end of the day on which side of the river they were; and now, with these modern weapons firing 2,000 yards, to reconnoitre over a perfectly flat plain and give any good reconnaissance report is an impossibility. Therefore I think the answer to your question is that, so far as I am concerned, the mounted Regular troops did very good work for me.

14356. You speak of the intelligence of the Royal Engineers; they are drawn from a different class?—From a superior class.

14357. Who are better educated and have more intelligence?—Yes.

14358. But the artillery are from the same class?—The artillery are from very much the same as the infantry.

14359. I think you mentioned also that the artillery were better horsemasters than the cavalry or mounted men?—Yes.

14360. Would that arise partly from the fact that they had more men to look after their horses in the artillery than in the cavalry?—No, because if you take the driver he has two horses and all the harness to clean.

14361. Their number was not greater in proportion?—No, but the officer commanding a battery has the unit entirely to himself, it is self-contained, the three subalterns all have their little self-contained units, and they are responsible for their two guns, and they get the work done.

14362. The horses as a rule are a better class of horse chosen particularly for the artillery?—They are a different stamp of horse; they happen to be very good horses, much heavier altogether than the cavalry.

14363. I think, from what you said about those officers, that you would not suggest that the B.A. or M.A. degree from a university should be a passport to entering the Army; you would prefer having younger men?—Yes, I would refer to what I said about Woolwich; I can only judge by the results, and all I can say is that I think the result of Woolwich is so satisfactory that it shows that if you can catch the officer at 16 or 17 and give him the curriculum he gets there for two years, you have a very good article for your money.

14364. I asked that question because I think we have had evidence that it would be better to have as many capable men from the universities as possible?—I do not say a word against the universities; I only give you the result of Woolwich.

14365. It is of advantage to begin early?—Yes.

14366. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You spoke of the want of suitable ground for practising entrenching, and, of course, that want applies throughout this country for many purposes; and you spoke in another place of a young officer finding himself restricted to ground quite inadequate or unadapted for tactical instruction. Have you any practical remedy to suggest?—You have got Salisbury Plain now, and I should be inclined to say that you must go to the expense of sending companies to some manœuvring ground in the district of each Army Corps; that, for instance, if a company is at Leeds, and there is not suitable ground there, the country must go to the expense of sending it to some ground where it can work.

14367. To move the whole Army about the country like that would be an expensive process?—It would, but there it is; if you have not the ground at hand you must find the ground for them. Take Woolwich—I do not suppose there is any ground round Woolwich which would be available, and so the country must recognise that if it wants its troops properly trained it must go to the expense of moving the troops to places where they can train properly.

14368. Is there more ground to be found in Ireland for that purpose?—I do not know Ireland well enough to say. In connection with the First and Second Army Corps you have the answer at once—you have Salisbury Plain and Aldershot.

14369. Is it not said that Salisbury Plain is being spoilt for that purpose by buildings being erected upon it?—It is a pretty big area. I cannot suggest where suitable ground is to be found; I only point out the evil, and I will not commit myself to a remedy.

14370. We have heard a good deal of evidence on the question of brains versus numbers; supposing you were organising an army at a fixed sum of money, would you rather have an army say 100 per cent. strong, as our Army is at present, or would you rather have it 60 per cent. of thoroughly trained men, with the money spent on training rather than on the increase of numbers?—I prefer 60 per cent. thoroughly trained men.

14371. You attach more importance to brains than numbers?—Von der Goltz says quite clearly in one of his books: "This is the time when we have big armies, but you mark my words, that the nation that will do the best is the nation that can produce a small army, but absolutely good," or words to that effect, and I am perfectly certain that what we want is a small army and thoroughly good. Much that you see in the newspapers now on Volunteers is most misleading, because there are men like myself who have always taken an intense interest in the Volunteers, and have always recognised their value, and I am sure the Volunteers themselves will say that of me. I have had them with me in Sir Charles Warren's expedition and also in the Yeomanry in this last war. The mistake that is made is that a number of people not knowing very much about Volunteers always think it essential to give them undue praise. Those who have taken an interest and know about them, as I venture to think I do myself, simply say this: "We recognise the Volunteer is a man of use, but he must be well trained." The harm done now is that there are a number of Volunteers in this country who are not of much good, both officers and men, and what we should wish to see is a good Volunteer force in this country, not so big as it is at present, but absolutely reliable. What we do not want to see is this: If you remember, in Queen Elizabeth's time, when she went down to Tilbury, there was a Lord de Vere, who had seen a good deal of fighting in Flanders, and when she had gone down all the line, she said: "Now, Lord de Vere, what do you think of this array?" "Well," he said, "Madam, I am not thought a coward, but I am the biggest coward here; I am only thinking what foreign troops would do with these men if they came across them"; that is what we fear about the Volunteers—that you will have a number of men on paper, and you will think there are a great many valuable men, but one fine day, when put on the ground, they will not be found of the value they ought to be.

14372. (Sir Frederick Darley.) For want of training?—Yes, what you want is a small army and a good one, and if you make up your mind that you are to reduce the Regulars or to send them abroad, as proposed in the "Times," and you mean to trust to your Volunteers, your Yeomanry, and Militia, then you must use every effort that you can to make them thoroughly efficient and good men, otherwise you may take my word for it you will suffer.

14373. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) To turn to another point, you said very truly that only the best men should be selected for certain purposes, and that brings one to the question of selection; there is a natural fear in many minds that selection means favouritism; have you any suggestion to make as to how that could be avoided?—No, I have always thought that selection means men not fit being rejected.

14374. It is rejection rather than selection?—Yes. I think when you come to the question of selection it is so very difficult; but where a man is not quite as good as he should be you reject him.

14375. That is just the answer I wanted from you—rejection rather than selection?—Yes, and it must be thorough.

14376. There is one question about military sketches: In your advance from Belmont to Magersfontein had you at your disposal all the necessary military sketches of the country made previously to the war?—Well, I had rather a funny one at the Modder. I was given a sketch, which I have got at home, showing that the Riet and the Modder were both fordable by the bridge; that was given me just about two days before the fight, and a native had told me the Modder was fordable everywhere. The Riet is fordable nowhere: the

Lieut.-
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C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General
The Lord
Methuen,
G.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.,
C.M.G.,

Modder is certainly fordable close to the bridge. There was a ford further up the Modder, and there was the ford by which we eventually got over, which was never mentioned in this sketch at all. That sketch was made simply in order to report the Modder Bridge itself, but it was given to me as a report on the river there, and I cannot say that was a happy experience of a sketch.

13 Feb. 1903. 14377. Apart from that sketch had you general sketches of the country on both sides of the line?—Yes; no detailed sketch. Of course, it is so easy now to find fault with our not having had better sketches of the Transvaal and Free State. I happened to be Deputy Adjutant-General in the Cape for some time, and if we had sent anybody up to the Transvaal or Free State sketching promiscuously they would have got back pretty quickly.

14378. I was referring to our own colony?—No, I do not think I had any detailed sketches; I had not any on a big scale.

14379. None sufficient for tactical movements?—None.

14380. Only one other general question: supposing you had beaten the Boers and found your way to Kimberley, and they had massed behind you afterwards on your lines of communication?—Until I reached the Modder River, I did not know it would take eight days making the deviation bridge—the railway bridge was destroyed. Supposing I had beaten the Boers at Spytfontein and found my way to Kimberley, I should have had to wait eight days before a train could cross, and I cannot imagine the enemy would not have massed on my line of communications. Again, supposing when I first came near Modder River I had ignored the enemy, and crossed at Brown's Drift further up the river, and that the enemy had elected to remain on the Modder. I should, no doubt, have reached Kimberley, but I should have had to fight my way back over the Modder with the enemy between my force and my base. My train I should have had to leave south of the river under proper protection.

14381. And your refugees too?—And my refugees; there was always a chance. I was talking to the Boers themselves afterwards, and they expected me to attack when I did, and they always said to me: "If you had got to Kimberley we do not see how you would have got back again."

14382. I wanted to ask you what you thought of it?—If they had destroyed my line of communication and got between me and the Orange River I might have had a second Ladysmith. If I had gone round by Jacobsdal after fighting Graspan, then round by Brown's Drift, and from there pushed on to Kimberley, I had always the Boers on my flank, on my line of communications. I might have packed up the whole of my mule transport with provisions for five days, and hoped that these Boers would not know what I was doing, whereas with spies in my camp they knew everything; all the resistance I received on the Modder they would have had ready for me at Brown's Drift, had they not elected to let me go past them, and cut me off from returning.

14383. On the whole we may congratulate ourselves that you did not get through?—That I leave to you to say. I do not defend myself in any way.

14384. (Sir John Hopkins.) I should like to ask you a question about the horse artillery guns, because we have had it in evidence that the guns were too light to be of real service in many cases—that is, that where the horse artillery guns had not sufficient range and power to dislodge the enemy, when the field guns were called up for that purpose they effectually did so?—I can give you an answer to that. When I went from Rustenburg to Zeerust I took the cavalry brigade, whatever was left of it, for a few days, and Lord Kitchener said: "I want you to send back the cavalry brigade, but you can keep the horse battery if you like," and I said: "I would not thank you for it, because the range is not enough." I had one very good field battery all the last part of my work, and I stripped the horses and guns of whatever was not wanted. I think I took off about 1,400 lbs. from the gun and the horses, and then got an extra team of horses for each gun, and my field gun would have held its own with any horse battery, and it gave me 4,000 instead of 3,000 yards range. What I venture to think is that our artillery harness and the whole equipment of it now errs on the side of weight, and that you can make it much lighter—at any rate, I did so.

14385. In fact, your opinion rather coincides with the

opinion I am referring to, that the horse artillery guns are not of sufficient weight to meet all demands?—Yes. How could it be if the enemy have a gun that can fire like the Creusot, 4,500 or 5,000 yards, and you have your horse artillery guns up to 3,000?

14386. Did you find amongst your field bearers, after actions, and so on, that there was any inefficiency, or were they well up to the mark?—The bearers were all right, except that they had to be taken from the Militia and Regulars; the proper Army Medical Corps were not sufficient for the job, and one would notice bearers walking in step carrying the wounded men, and that was because we had not had time to instruct them properly. With regard to transport, some people say they want bigger ambulances, but the ambulances we had were exceptionally well made, as was all the transport from Woolwich, with the exception of the Bristol wheels, which were not much use. You might have two men perhaps carried arranged in a bed on the outside of the ambulance, or you might have two tiers each with two men in the ambulance, four altogether, but I think it would be a very great mistake if they made a much bigger or much heavier ambulance. The present one is excellent. I do not know if you have had any evidence about it, my Lord?

14387. (Chairman.) We have had some evidence to the effect that the ambulance we have at present might do on the road, but it was no use, as far as the patients were concerned, when it got off the road?—Why, I have taken it over every sort of thing. Colonel Townshend will tell you so, and it has beaten the whole of my buck wagons for lasting.

14388. It was not denied that it would get over, but it was said that the condition of the patients in it would be very bad?—I quite agree with you, but if you get a lighter one it will cause still greater discomfort to the patients. For instance, the American Hospital had the tortoise ambulance, and that was no good at all. The best of all for the patients was an ordinary ox wagon with plenty of mattresses.

14389. What do you say to tongas and two-wheeled wagons?—I had one galloping ambulance, and I am sorry to say the officers used it for their mess, for nobody ever ventured to go into it a second time, it shook them so much.

14390. (Sir John Hopkins.) Did you see any of the Colonial ambulances?—No.

14391. (Sir John Edge.) I understand you are anxious to see Volunteers much more efficient than they are?—Yes.

14392. Do you think it would be possible ever to get that efficiency from the Volunteers, from the amount of time they can devote to training? I only ask for my own information?—I think in the Colonies they have a system of paying the Volunteers so much, but I do not know anything about the Colonies—

(Sir Frederick Darley.) It is so; in Australia they are paid for the days they are out.

14393. (Sir John Edge.) But, speaking of the Volunteers at home, we know something of them here; do you think it would be possible to bring them up to that state of efficiency that you would like to see?—I think so. I put it in the other way; I do not suggest the remedy, and I am only pointing out the evil, but I think unless the Volunteers are brought up to a good state of efficiency we shall make a great mistake in putting great confidence in them. At Manchester, and in other large towns, for instance, and in the case of a large number of corps in London and Liverpool, you get men absolutely reliable in the battalions, but in the country it is not always so.

14394. Are you speaking of efficiency from the point of view of having a force that is capable of manœuvring in the field, or a force capable of being put into a position to hold it?—I am speaking now of men who in the battalion are good shots, who know how to make use of ground and who under their company officers know the work they should know as soldiers. I do not speak of brigade work; I only speak of work which I think Volunteers ought to be able to do. I speak of the work which ought to render a brigade efficient if called on service.

14395. It is the shooting mainly that would be required?—As to the shooting of the Volunteers, there are a certain number of men in every battalion who shoot extremely well, but there is an enormous number who shoot extremely badly.

14396. The same might be said of the Regular Army?—But the whole mass of the Volunteers do not shoot so well as the Regulars. It is a great mistake to imagine that the general shooting of Volunteers is very good, at any rate, it was not so three years ago, and no one would support that statement more than the Volunteer officers themselves.

14397. What remedy would you suggest—more musketry, or what?—More musketry, and more care taken for efficiency, and far stricter rules.

14398. Efficiency in what direction?—For instance, with regard to the officers, that they thoroughly know their work, and efficiency in the case of the men, to see that the training at the ranges is carried out thoroughly and systematically. You get returns as to the Volunteer shooting in the country which I am not clear are always reliable with regard to the scores they have made.

14399. Can you suggest any method to increase the efficiency, outside the question of musketry? You have confined your evidence, so far as I can understand, to musketry?—But surely the last Regulations issued from the War Office, about a year ago, tend towards increasing the efficiency.

14400. Do you consider that it would be possible to bring up the Volunteers as a body to the efficiency you desire?—I think so. I do not see why it should not be; wherever I get a thoroughly good commanding officer of Volunteers and a good body of men—take, for instance, the Post Office Volunteer Corps, under Colonel Du Plat Taylor, I could not wish to see a better battalion. Take the London Scottish and the Artists; they are all well officered, and they are all good battalions.

14401. You confine your appreciation to the corps in the larger centres in the country?—I said Manchester and Liverpool, which are both excellent, and in Glasgow they have their tactical societies and a thoroughly good system.

14402. Apparently the corps you see most deficiency in are the country corps, or what used to be called administrative battalions?—Yes, and there you find good and bad.

14403. You have good material in those corps?—Yes, and what you have to do is to be most careful about the officers, and not to hesitate to turn out an officer if he is not much good. There are certain officers who hold their position as commanding officer more from their local position than anything else; be firm, and take them out at once; have no one in command of Volunteers Corps except thorough efficient men, and do not hesitate to strike hard and strong, if necessary.

14404. I think you will probably agree with me that the working of a scattered corps in a country district is much more expensive than the working of a corps in London, Manchester, or Liverpool?—Yes, but expenses must not be thought of. You say you want a smaller army, and I say, "Very good, have a smaller army: but you must not mind putting your hand in your pocket." With regard to moving companies, I know it is an expense, but if you want efficiency you must have it.

14405. Is not one reason why you have to go to the county gentleman who lives close to the company and to get him as an officer, that you want money?—That is perfectly true, but I want brains.

14406. What would be the use of brains if you had not the money?—What is the good of money without the brains?

14407. We have come to a deadlock. Unless those corps get more allowances than they do it would be a difficult thing to improve them?—Yes, that is what I think.

14408. You could not afford, probably, to get the proper officers?—I quite agree with all that, and I think your rich man in the country, and the country must recollect that, if they want an efficient army of Volunteers they must pay for it, and the first thing they have to do is to come down with a good strong hand on those gentlemen with money and no brains, take them out, and get men into their places in whom every man under them will have confidence.

14409. And then it will be for the Treasury to pay?—To pay the piper.

14410. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What course does the infantry soldier go through in the year in musketry?—I cannot answer you now, because I have been away for some time, and they may have altered the musketry

regulations, but I think, roughly speaking, it is about three weeks.

14411. In the whole year?—Yes.

14412. And that is at one period?—Yes, that is where I think the mistake is. I should like to see the infantry soldier shooting at different times of the year as often as he can.

14413. What quantity of ammunition does he have at his disposal during that three weeks?—I cannot answer that.

14414. During what time of the year is the practice?—That depends entirely on when the companies are available; it is from the beginning of March until the end of August or so.

14415. So that a man may for the first three weeks in March have had his training at musketry; firing the ammunition at his disposal, and be called upon to serve 10 or 11 months afterwards, never having fired a shot in the interval?—That is quite true, and during these three weeks in March it would probably be bitterly cold, with a heavy wind blowing, and he would not have the same chance as the man practising all through July.

14416. So that the ordinary infantry soldier would have ample time to forget all his knowledge?—I do not think that. If he once got into the way of shooting it would not go away from him like that, but would probably come back to him at once; but still the man would be better if he could be shooting through the year instead of only for three weeks.

14417. Is there no means of teaching men, and having them trained to shoot thoroughly by practice with the Morris Tube?—It is quite excellent.

14418. Is there any reason why you should not have that?—I would have that in as many barracks as possible, and I think they have it in many now.

14419. Reverting to the Staff College, is there not a great deal done at the Staff College which might be done outside? For instance, as to military rides, might not these be done entirely outside the College?—Yes, I think a man might have a certificate to show that he is qualified in riding when he joins the Staff College.

14420. But I mean military rides when a man makes sketches?—I do not know; as far as I was concerned that was the work that was most valuable and interesting to me—excellent. My idea of the Staff College course is to have as much outdoor work as you possibly can.

14421. Might not an officer be seconded from his regiment for, say, two years, one year actually employed in the Staff College, and the other employed apart from the Staff College outside, so as to enable more men to pass through? For instance, the knowledge of entraining men, and detraining men, on railways, and so forth, might be acquired outside without living in the Staff College, and then requiring an examination at the close of the year?—I would rather not answer that because I do not think I can give you a satisfactory answer.

14422. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) General Hildyard could answer all those questions?—He could answer them better. His views and mine are really the same, and if I had known you would ask me these questions I would have talked it over with him. It would be much better, therefore, to get it from him at first-hand.

14423. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You got a sketch of the Modder River—I do not ask you any name, but was that prepared by a staff officer?—Yes, it was prepared by a very able Engineer officer, and done in perfect good faith. He had to report on the bridge, but by bad luck they did not say to me: "This is only a report on the bridge, do not take it as of any value otherwise," and when it was put into my hands I took it as a sketch of the river.

14424. How would you arm mounted infantry? Would you give them a personal weapon other than a rifle?—Do you mean a revolver?

14425. A sword?—Yes, I would give them a sword, I think. It is very difficult to say, however, because in this last campaign they never even had a chance of using the bayonet, and I think it would be almost a mistake to come to any conclusion as to future wars solely by this one, because the conditions were not normal, and, therefore, I think I should not be inclined to take away either the sword or bayonet from them.

*Lieut.-General
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14426. In point of fact the conditions of the past war were very unlike what would be the conditions of a European war?—Yes, and I think it would be a great mistake to make any radical changes like that until we are quite clear of our ground.

14427. You think they ought to have some personal weapon, some weapon of offence?—Yes, a bayonet or an Elcho bayonet, and, at any rate, if it does nothing else it comes in useful for cutting up wood.

14428. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I think you said that when you were ordered to go to Kimberley it was with the intention of simply throwing in provisions and stores and bringing away non-combatants?—Yes.

14429. And there was no intention of reinforcing Kimberley?—No. I may be wrong, it may be that I had to leave the other half of the battalion of the Lancashires there, and I am not certain.

14430. At first you had no ox transport, but latterly you had?—I had no ox transport until I left Kimberley; I had none on the way there.

14431. But you had good experience of it later on?—Yes.

14432. You prefer mule transport, I suppose, if you could have enough?—Both have their advantages; when I had to go after the Boers with the utmost rapidity, then I used to change. I used to shift all my goods from mule to ox transports, simply taking just what I wanted for my mounted men on mule wagons. Then, lastly, towards the end of the campaign, I said to Lord Kitchener, "I will give you the whole of my ox convoy of 92 wagons, if you will give me 43 more mule wagons," and then I moved entirely with mule, but that is only for a trek of about 10 days or so, because the mule is eating his 8 lbs. of oats every day, which I have to carry, and the consequence is that if I am going for a long trek of 14 or 16 days, of course the ox convoy would pay me better, because they have not to carry any forage.

14433. The ideal transport for a campaign would be a mixture of both?—Yes, but if you have the two together, of course, your ox convoy goes slower than the mule, and cannot travel in the heat, so you must travel at certain hours. As long as you have ox convoy you are so restricted in your hours of moving, whereas with mule I can go whenever I like.

14434. How far do you think ox transport could take you in the day without fatigue, for several days together?—We did very long distances, but for comfort 15 miles.

14435. Without knocking up the animals?—That is so. I used generally to trek from 4 a.m. till 8.30 a.m., and then from about five until nine. That is, of course, where a man like De Wet had an immense pull over one, as he could trek all through the night, but I could not, as he might ambush me at once.

14436. You must have seen a good deal of the reserve men who rejoined regiments for the war?—Yes.

14437. Do you think, generally speaking, they were efficient?—Very.

14438. In marching powers?—They had not very much marching at first up to the Modder; we had only 10 miles a day or so. The difficulty with the reserve is that when you bring them, as I did, up the Orange River, and then launch them against the enemy at once, they have hardly got to know their non-commissioned officers and officers. In the Guards Brigade, where they are all Guardsmen, they knew their officers and non-commissioned officers to a great extent, but in a line battalion this is not quite so much the case, and they have not had time to know their officers and non-commissioned officers. Therefore, I should say that to give a battalion its full chance the reservists ought to be with the battalion a few weeks in the field before they are used.

14439. As far as age goes there is no reason why he should not be perfectly efficient?—He is perfectly efficient, and I should imagine the reservists were about the best men.

14440. He may have been following for all the years he has been out of the Army, a sedentary occupation, and not much accustomed to walking or marching?—I do not think I noticed anything of that sort; I think they were as good as the others.

14441. You saw a great deal of difference in the officers of Militia regiments?—Yes.

14442. Were the Militia regiments inferior in physique, do you think to the line regiments?—You will

find a Militia regiment, as a rule—I had a Division of them at Aldershot some years ago—march even better than the line regiments, because they belong to the country, and come out from the plough. I was quite surprised; I had eight battalions of them, and they marched perfectly, and I found that was the reason.

14443. There has been a good deal of evidence before this Commission as to mounted infantry, and I gather that you are rather in favour of having permanent regiments?—Yes.

14444. Not taken for a war?—That is so. I know there are difficulties in the way, but I am perfectly certain that, as a principle, it is a mistake to draw away at your regiments like we do at present.

14445. Supposing there were mounted infantry regiments for some years, do you think they would be as good men dismounted and acting as infantry as infantry would be?—I do not see why they should not be.

14446. That has been alleged as one of the reasons, and the other is that, of course, they try to ape the cavalry?—That is the strong point.

14447. Particularly if they had swords?—Yes. I suppose the way to keep that down would be to have them officered mostly by infantry officers, but that is a danger, just as the Dragoons have become cavalry. I think you have plenty of experience of that in the American War; there you see so clearly the value of the mounted infantry.

14448. The argument used here, as I understood it, by some of the witnesses, was that the mounted infantry would not be so useful unless they had recently been infantry soldiers and accustomed to infantry, and that in point of fact you might have mounted infantry whom you would not mount on horses at all; you might mount them on bicycles, although there are objections to that, or carts, or anything; but what you want is to use them as mounted infantry so as to get them quickly to a given point?—I look on the use of a horse for a mounted infantryman as simply being the means of getting the man from one point to another, and I do not see in the least why for part of the year you should not be working these men as infantry. Let them be infantry, and put them on a horse when wanted, so as to get them from one point to another.

14449. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Only you must train them to horsemanship?—Yes.

14450. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Did you ever see the mounted infantry use their bayonets?—Never; the Boers never waited for that.

14451. But you think they would not?—I never saw them do it; what the Boers did at Tweefontein when my mounted men fled was to put their rifles under the right arm, pointing straight to the front, and advance, firing shoulder to shoulder, and there is no bayonet in this world could have the effect of that.

14452. Do you think our men could do that?—I think so, in time; it is a terrible weapon naturally. They covered a great extent of ground, holding their rifles straight forward, and coming with a steady canter, firing the whole while.

14453. Were you ever really put to any serious inconvenience from want of good maps during the war? Perhaps at first, but very soon we got Jeppe's map, which is a Dutch map; until then I certainly did not get any value out of the maps, or no great value. When I had Jeppe's map, that was quite sufficient. The maps sent us from headquarters latterly were very much better.

14454. There was something said not only about tongas being used for ambulance purposes, but Scotch carts?—The Scotch cart is a very uncomfortable conveyance. I have only been in it in the olden days going up country with the mail, and wounded I should not go into it.

14455. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How did the Boers carry their wounded—in Cape carts?—Yes.

14456. Are the Cape carts good things?—I would rather go in a Cape cart of the two, because it has got pretty good springs, while the Scotch cart has no springs.

14457. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is the Cape cart a long cart?—No, it has two seats, like a buggy; there is a seat in front for the driver, and then behind there is another seat. Where the driver sits you lift up half the seat, so that if I were wounded I should lift up that part of the seat, get into the seat behind, and

then put my legs up, and I should be pretty comfortable.

14458. There is a vehicle used in Australia, made in America, I think, called a buck wagon; that is very long?—We call the buck wagon a mule wagon.

14459. This is a vehicle without sides?—Then it is what we call a trolley. You mean with no sides at all, and very light?

14460. Yes?—That is a trolley, and that I used to carry wounded in sometimes.

14461. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You were talking about the great necessity of more training for the Volunteers, officers and men, and you alluded to some Regulations issued last year to ensure more training, but you are aware that that was strongly resented by a good many of the Volunteers?—I know, but they must recognise the fact, and so must we, that we must have efficient volunteers; pay for them if you like; if the Volunteers say: "We will not—we cannot do the work," then they cannot be efficient.

14462. Then you think it would be good to adopt the system you refer to in Australia of paying them for training?—I imagine it would, but then again I am not speaking with any great experience.

14463. Perhaps you do not quite understand the way in which they work that; in different parts of Australia there are different systems, but in the place where I was Governor the Volunteers were treated exactly like the Volunteers here, and they got no pay; they had drill, and so on, and were instructed; they were what are called partially paid forces, being civilians who get full pay for so many days in the year—16 or 12?—When they came out?

14464. And the day could be divided into four or five,

so that you could have a man out for Saturday afternoon, and give him a quarter day's pay, and, where financial considerations permitted, they went into camp for a week, and got full pay and rations. Whenever they went out they got 6s. a day, or a fraction of it, and the officers got their pay, and in that way they were kept more or less in touch with drill and military work throughout the year not having simply a month's training like our Militia. Do you think something of that kind would answer?—Certainly. I am always for paying a man his hire, and I think if you could do that you would get more for your money than at present.

14465. It is agreeable to a man, because on an afternoon when he would not be at work he would manage to earn 3s. or 1s. 6d.?—I think so, certainly.

14466. You do not think it would be very easy, however, to have them out constantly, and really to train them so as to be efficient?—No, my feeling is that as long as you can get the individual man well trained, and the company well trained, I should be satisfied. I was asked whether I alluded to brigade drill, but I do not go as far as that. I only want to see the officers of the company and the men efficient, and I think that is what you are wishing too. I think that the system you recommend gives a solution.

14467. I am reminded by Sir Frederick Darley that it has worked very well in Australia?—Yes, it has worked well.

14468. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) A great number of the men who went from Australia were that class of men?—If you pay men you will always get them to do more work than by absolute volunteering, and getting nothing at all.

14469. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything you would like to add?—Nothing.

Lieut.-General Sir ARCHIBALD HUNTER, K.C.B., D.S.O., called and examined.

14470. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to send us some notes (*vide Appendix, page 615 post*), upon which I will ask you questions. Before the outbreak of war were you holding a command in India?—Yes. At the outbreak of the war, on the 11th October, I was in Ladysmith. I went direct from India to Durban.

14471. You went from India to South Africa, on receipt of a telegram to say that you were designated to be Chief of the Staff to Sir Redvers Buller?—That is so.

14472. And you landed at Durban on the 5th October?—Yes.

14473. But as Sir Redvers Buller had not arrived your orders were to join Sir George White?—Yes. Colonel Ian Hamilton came out as Sir George White's Chief of the Staff for duty in Natal, but as I was there beforehand, and was to be Sir Redvers Buller's Chief of the Staff, or was so designated, he thought he would employ the interval between my arrival and his by using me on Sir George White's Staff, and therefore I should be able to go back to the Cape, or round to the Cape from Durban, and tell him exactly how everything was situated in Natal.

14474. Thereupon you took up the position of Sir George White's Chief of the Staff?—Yes.

14475. With the result that you never did join Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes.

14476. You were with Sir George White throughout the siege of Ladysmith?—Yes.

14477. After the relief of Ladysmith you left Natal, I think?—Yes, Sir Redvers Buller gave me the command of the 10th Division. Lord Roberts wired for a Division, and Sir Charles Warren's Division, the 5th Division, was actually sent, part of it embarked, and then they were disembarked. I was sent for, I believe by name, by Lord Roberts to go with my Division, some of it to go to Cape Town to work up the Kimberley line, while I myself had orders to go to Bloemfontein, and see the Commander-in-Chief, and there take his orders, which were the orders to organise the Mafeking relief column.

14478. And that relief was carried out under your superintendence?—Yes.

14479. Of course so far as we are concerned with regard to the operations of the war, we have not the duty of inquiring beyond the occupation of Pretoria, but I may just ask you, after that you were employed in the eastern part of the Orange River Colony, I think?—Yes.

14480. I ask you the question, because in the papers I find a report from yourself dated the 4th of August, 1900, concerning those operations which have certain remarks on general questions which I should like to refer to later on?—I have not prepared a statement, as a matter of fact, exactly of the dates as to how I was employed.

14481. But that is quite sufficient if that is right?—I eventually went into the Brandwater Basin after Prinsloo, where he surrendered to me, and after that my force was broken up; a good deal of it was sent to rejoin Lord Roberts at Pretoria, and after working a good deal in the Orange River Colony I was eventually appointed to the command of the whole of the troops in Orange River Colony in relief of the present Adjutant-General, General Kelly-Kenny. I was there until I came home. I got a touch of malaria, and they sent me home.

14482. You have been good enough to give us a *précis* of the subjects on which you are willing to give evidence. Of course you had nothing to do or say with regard to the preparations for the war?—No, nothing.

14483. Excepting that you were aware of the scheme for sending the contingent from India?—Yes, of course that was prepared in India. I have a copy of it here if you wish to see it, but I suppose you have it.

14484. The scheme for carrying out the details of the force, do you mean?—Yes.

14485. But you have no remarks that you wish to make with regard to that?—Except of course that going with the brigade of British troops from India it must be obvious to everybody that I went with thoroughly seasoned, thoroughly well equipped, well disciplined, and well trained troops. In the earlier part of my experience in South Africa I had no knowledge whatever of the raw material that came out from home—not till a considerable time after the siege of Ladysmith was over.

14486. In Natal you had seasoned troops from India?—Yes.

14487. And as to sea transport you have no remarks to make?—No. It would be a shameful thing of course for us to admit now that we are not perfect in sea transport with the amount of experience—I mean to say that we have over anybody else.

14488. The first point that was raised in the Memorandum which we sent you is the adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field at different dates.

Lieut.-General The Lord Methuen, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G.

13 Feb. 1903

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O.

Lieut.-
General Sir
Archibald
Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

Would you say what struck you with regard to that point in the Natal position?—When I landed on the 5th October, and went up to Pietermaritzburg, I saw, of course, the General Officer Commanding in Natal, General Penn Symons, and I think it must have been very largely upon his advice that the troops in Natal at that time were distributed as they were, that is to say, practically in two parties, one at Dundee and the other at Ladysmith. I knew that in his opinion either of those forces was quite sufficiently strong to meet and successfully combat any force of the enemy that would come against them, the one by the Transvaal border, Utrecht and Vryheid, and the other through the passes of the Drakensberg into Natal—I mean from the Orange River Colony via Harrismith. I think, myself, it would have been far wiser if he had recommended that every man in South Africa available for the field should have been concentrated somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith. All the stores were concentrated you see at Ladysmith. That was why it was absolutely necessary to hold and defend Ladysmith, because there was such an accumulation of stores and war material there that the amount of rolling stock and locomotives available was not sufficient in anything like a reasonable time, anything like three weeks or a month, to remove it anywhere else—it was a single line, and the railway, the material, and railway staff were nothing like sufficient to cope with the removal of those stores, which had been accumulating over a considerable period of time.

14489. We have had some evidence about the stores that were at Ladysmith at the time from Sir Edward Ward, and I think his evidence went to this extent, that at the time you speak of on your arrival in Natal, the accumulations in Ladysmith were two months' supply of the normal garrison, which was a smaller garrison based upon the troops which had been in Natal for some years?—Of course I have only got my memory to guide me and to draw upon, but I remember quite well seeing a telegram from the War Office saying that 90 days' rations were to be maintained in Ladysmith for its garrison. I must have seen that the first day I got there.

14490. But then its garrison was based upon the local scheme of defence?—Yes, that is so.

14491. And local schemes of defence, as you are aware, are drawn up under the regulations on the normal garrisons of the positions?—Yes.

14492. That was two months, or ninety days' supplies for that garrison which was in Ladysmith at the time?—Yes.

14493. Not the full supplies for Sir George White's force or the Indian contingent?—No.

14494. As you have referred to the local scheme of defence, did you ever see it?—No, there was nothing done that I know of.

14495. Did you see the document?—No, I did not.

14496. Because there were local schemes of defence?—To the best of my recollection I did not see it; I do not remember it at any rate. It was no guide to us whatever, I know, in drawing up the scheme of defence eventually adopted.

14497. At Ladysmith?—At Ladysmith.

14498. But the local scheme of defence for the colony did provide, under certain circumstances, at all events, for holding both Dundee and Ladysmith?—Yes, but I say events so long ago as that get driven out of your mind by others that follow, and so on.

14499. I want to know only whether you could recollect ever having seen the scheme of defence which did provide for the holding of those two positions?—I thought you were asking me about a scheme of defence for Ladysmith; that I do not remember; but for the colony, though I do not remember it, the chances are that I must have seen it; it is one of the first things one would ask for; but whether I did ever see it I have no recollection.

14500. It does not follow that you saw it, because we have had evidence from other officers that they did not?—I should think, as Sir George White's chief of the staff, and having to go back and tell Sir Redvers Buller all about it I should have seen it, because I did not know until almost the day before that I should not go back. I thought always up to the very last, the 21st October, that Sir George White might have spared me to go back to Sir Redvers Buller when I could have got away when General French and

Colonel Haig got out, or on many a dark night afterwards I could have slipped out.

14501. But you do not remember having seen it?—No, I do not.

14502. (*Viscount Esher.*) It was a printed document, of course?—I cannot recall it.

14503. (*Chairman.*) Sir Penn Symons probably had seen it and, of course, his dispositions may have been influenced thereby?—That is so.

14504. I think it is only just to him to bring that out. Then that being the position in Natal, do you think that the forces even with the Indian contingent, were adequate for the defence of the colony?—I think they were if they had been differently placed geographically in the colony; and I think if a much more active, instead of a purely passive, system of defence had been adopted—I mean to have gone forward to meet the Boers instead of waiting for them to come and find us. For example, if we had met them and faced them in the mouth of the passes into the colony, I think, to begin with, we should have saved what actually happened when they crossed over the border and found nobody—they became cock-a-hoop and jubilant. They thought they had only got to show themselves, and so on, to have it all their own way, and they became distinctly much more confident and aggressive in consequence of our taking up certain positions and merely waiting until they came to find us.

14505. At what period are you speaking of—before or after the fight at Dundee?—Before the fight at Dundee.

14506. But before the fight at Dundee were they in the colony at all?—They crossed over our borders, they invaded the colony, and went to attack General Penn Symons' position at Talana, at Dundee.

14507. Then is it at Talana that they ought to have been met in force?—I should have met them as they crossed the border.

14508. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) At Laing's Nek, do you mean?—Yes, that is one place, and they came from Vryheid, under Erasmus.

14509. And the Tintwa Pass?—Yes.

14510. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was there transport enough for operations of that kind?—I think so. I never saw the Dundee force until they came in; certainly they came in with enough transport from Dundee, and if it was sufficient to withdraw from Dundee to Ladysmith, it was sufficient to go the other way.

14511. (*Chairman.*) Do you mean that you would have met them at those points with the force at Dundee, or with the force at Dundee supplemented from Ladysmith?—The force at Dundee was supplemented from Ladysmith.

14512. Was the force at Dundee sufficient to do what was being tried?—I think so. They were an excellent body of men; they were beautifully equipped; they were full of pluck and go and enthusiasm; their health was good; their discipline was good; and they were fit to meet anybody you can imagine, in my opinion.

14513. And were they sufficient in numbers to cope with the Boers who came over in that direction?—Yes, I think they were.

14514. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was Dundee a place that could be held?—It proved to be a place that was very bad on account of the water. I never saw the place.

14515. (*Chairman.*) I understood your argument to be that instead of holding Dundee you would have moved the force against the Boers as they crossed the frontier?—Yes. If an enemy is going to invade your country I should lay it down as an axiom that the minute he puts his foot over your border you ought to be able to stamp upon his toe, and not let him come well inside and gather strength as he comes, if not material strength, moral strength; every step he comes inside he is getting more buck into him.

14516. I only wanted to know whether the people at Dundee were big enough to stamp on his toes or whether they wanted some assistance from Ladysmith to make them heavy enough?—About that I think myself they were, because it was practically proved by future events that they were, when they got quite the best of the Talana fight.

14517. You said just now that Ladysmith being full of stores it was necessary to hold it?—Yes.

14518. The withdrawal of any larger strength from Ladysmith would have left it open, would it not, on the Orange Free State side?—Yes, it would.

14519. There might have been that risk in those operations?—Yes. You know (I suppose it is generally well known) that there was a scheme to concentrate the whole of the forces in Natal at a place called Sunday's River Camp. I can tell you the reason why that concentration did not take place. I was present at Pietermaritzburg when Sir George White arrived there on the 6th October, 1899. He stayed there the night of the 6th, and, I think, the night of the 7th. Then he went to live with General Penn Symons, and I think it would be 8th or 9th of October that he came after dinner to Government House, to Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson's House, where I was living. He asked to see the Governor, and he asked that I might be present. He came then to advocate the withdrawal, and the concentration under his own command, of all the troops in Natal, and, undoubtedly, from a military point of view, he was indisputably correct; there is no question about it. But at the time he asked Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson what political effect it would have, and he said: "I have nothing to do with the military disposition of your force, but there are 70,000 Zulus sitting on the border waiting exactly to see which side of the fence to take, which side to jump, and how the cat is going to jump." I think those were his words, or words to that effect. He further said: "If you withdraw now, without a blow having been struck, the Zulus will interpret it and accept it as a sign of your being afraid to meet the Boers, and they will acknowledge the Boers as your masters, and the future effect of that I shudder to contemplate." For that reason the divided distribution of the troops in Natal was maintained.

14520. And you were present at that interview?—I was present at that interview, and perhaps it is somewhat presumptuous to say so, but I was practically asked to give the casting vote.

14521. I know you had been asked for your opinion?—I knew that what had happened that night was a very serious thing. I know Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson intimately well. I was his best man, and I have known him all my life. At that time he slept in his own dressing-room, and had given me his wife's bedroom. So much was I impressed with the seriousness of what happened that night that before I went to bed (and we did not separate until quite 1 o'clock, perhaps later) I sat down and wrote to Sir Evelyn Wood so far as I could remember word for word everything that happened that night—a letter of several sheets of foolscap. In the morning, just after Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson had had his bath, he came into my room and he saw the papers lying on my table, and said: "Hulloa, whom have you been writing to." I said: "I wish you would run your eye over this and see whether it is a correct description of what took place last night." He sat down and read it, and said: "I sat down and wrote home also" (I presume he wrote to the Colonial Office) "and my version of it practically tallies with what you have said." That really is the inner history of why the forces in Natal remained divided. That has nothing to do with whatever reasons they were divided on, but that is why they continued to be divided. Sir George White, as Military Commander, wanted to have the whole of the troops concentrated at some point in Natal, under his own command, where all could combat any advance either from the Transvaal border on Natal or from the Orange Free State border.

14522. And in that decision you concurred?—I concurred in the decision that he was right from a military point of view, but I remember in summing up I said, "Taking the long and short, the thick and thin, you are far wiser to leave things as they are, and abide by the result." He was very much concerned with what would be said in the future as to his military arrangements, and I told him that at any rate the truth would be told, and it would be known in the future (we could not all die), and it must be known eventually that he wanted to have the troops concentrated under himself, but for the political considerations; and that the political considerations were two-fold: on the one side was this big force of savages waiting to see what we were going to do, and of course the Boers would have

sent their agents amongst them, and have pointed out that we had run before we were hit, which would have had a very disastrous effect—it might have led to the massacre of almost every white man, woman, and child they could get at, and the whole of the eastern part of the colony, in Natal, at the foot of their mountains, would have been absolutely at their mercy, and also it would have had a very exhilarating effect, to say the least of it, upon the Boers themselves.

14523. Which was the point, did you say, at which Sir George White had insisted to concentrate?—I remember his consulting Sir Penn Symons. There was a camp, called Sunday's River Camp, Sunday's River Bridge, a point north of Elandslaagte, about 20 miles north, if my recollection serves me right, of Ladysmith. There was a big bridge there across the Sunday's River, a big iron bridge, and beautiful water, and it was reported as a very defensible camp. I never was beyond Ladysmith myself until after the siege; I never was as far north anyhow.

14524. You never saw that position?—I never saw that position.

14525. But it was north of Ladysmith. Was that with the object of covering Ladysmith?—It would have covered Ladysmith, and you would then have been ready to advance over the Biggarsberg, and to have met, and, I think, successfully contended with any force coming down from Dundee Junction, and also you were, as it were, straddled across the junction in the part of the country where the two forces must join coming from the Transvaal and from the Orange Free State, as it was then.

14526. It has been said that a position on the Tugela was the proper one; what is your opinion as to that?—With regard to any position south of the Tugela, if you look at the map, the Tugela would strike most people as being the best place, but the south bank of the Tugela is dominated altogether by the northern bank; therefore, for a defensive position I think I would have gone north of Ladysmith myself.

14527. It does not follow, when you say south of the Tugela that it need be on the banks; it might have been a defensible position, but south of the river?—But for a big military force like that you would have been confined to the banks on account of the water.

14528. Estcourt has been suggested?—I do not know the country well, except from maps. I only passed up once from Pietermaritzburg, and down again in the dark.

14529. (*Viscount Esher.*) Such a concentration as that would have been still more open to the political objection than the one that was contemplated, would it not?—Do you mean a withdrawal further south?

14530. Yes?—Still more; they would have said they had got you into the sea; that is how the Boers would have translated it—that you were making back to your ships.

14531. (*Chairman.*) But the decision having been taken, it is your opinion that it was necessary to hold Ladysmith?—Yes; absolutely indispensable. I do not see what else you could have done.

14532. You could not in the time have withdrawn the stores which had been accumulated there?—No; I do not mean to say that we could not have marched out. We could have marched away, and left the women and children, and burnt all our stores. Ladysmith is a great locomotive centre. There were large stores of coal for the railway, and everything that is required to feed and maintain an army in the shape of ammunition, food, medical stores, and engineering appliances, and a large amount of railway stuff as well. There was a large Natal Government Railway accumulation of stuff there, sleepers and coal and rails.

14533. Ladysmith itself was not a place easy to defend?—No, it was not; it was the bottom of a teacup. Ladysmith became Ladysmith merely because it was where, in the old days, the roads from three or four different places came down, one from Newcastle in the north, another from Harrismith, and another from the Zulu border, where they all met, and a place where the Klip River was easily forded, which was the reason why the roads all directed themselves to that particular place, to those drifts across the river.

14534. And there had been no preparations for defence in Ladysmith?—None whatever; and the conditions of the life of the garrison there were such with the local farmers, and so on, that you dare not go off the roads. The cavalry officers were supposed to do reconnaissances every year, and to send in sketch

Lieut.
General Sir
Archibald
Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903

*Lieut.-
General Sir
Archibald
Hunter.*
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

maps to show what work in this respect they had been doing. But there were simply sketches of the line of the track; they dare not go off it. Every farmer in the neighbourhood was a Boer or a Dutchman with Boer sympathies, and there was not a single man who had been on the top of Bulwana except one, and he is dead now—Captain Vallentin, of the Somersetshire Light Infantry. He had been asked by one of these young farmers to go out for a day's shooting, and in the course of the day he crossed over the top of Bulwana Hill, and went down on the other side, and he was the only man who had ever been on the top; nobody knew whether there was water on the other side or whether there was not.

14535. Do you mean that before the war, in our own colony, a British officer could not sketch the country?—I mean that in our own colony in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith—that is to say, within a girdle of ground that would be naturally occupied in any system of defence for the town, covering its stores and so on—there was not a single officer except this Captain Vallentin who had been on the top of the main feature or any of the features that dominated a position that had to be held—not one.

14536. Because the farmers would have offered violence?—No, they would have summoned them before the magistrate for trespass, and the magistrate would have given a decision against them, and they would have been bound by the magistrate's order.

14537. Did it ever happen?—It was threatened. I have heard a story of young Besters, the son of a man with a very big farm, Besters' Farm, just on the other side of the Wagon Hill position, which was one of the main points of attack on the 6th of January, and this attack was said to have been guided by one of the young Besters. The father was in the neutral camp sending out information of everything he could learn to his sons the whole time.

14538. What did he do?—There were a lot of guinea fowl there, and somebody (an officer) had gone after the guinea fowl, and I was told that young Besters had a gun in his hand and threatened to shoot the officer if he did not go. He said he had no right there, and he would put a charge of lead into him if he did not clear off. But that is the feeling, at any rate, that existed between the land occupiers and the land owners in the neighbourhood and the garrison.

14539. And to that you attribute some of the inefficiency of the reconnaissances?—To that I attribute the total ignorance and the absence of any information that could be procured. If we went anywhere and came to a place like London and wanted to make up a scheme of defence, there would be lots of people in the neighbourhood who could tell us all the important features round about, and would be willing to take us to them and show us how access is to be gained and how to retreat from them; there was not a single officer in Ladysmith who could tell you anything. It was not their fault; I am not blaming them; I merely tell you the attitude of the people in the neighbourhood to the British garrison, and the attitude was such that it was impossible for them to know anything about the neighbouring country.

14540. Then as regards the siege of Ladysmith, you understand, of course, that we do not want to trouble you with a narrative: we can get that from the official records; but if there is anything that you desire to say with regard to the events relating to the siege, or any lesson to be learnt from it, we shall be very glad to have it from you?—I think we learnt practically nothing from the siege of Ladysmith that could not have been learnt out of a text-book. We learnt the very same lessons that were taught by the siege of Plevna. The most difficult defence by far to hold, because it was the most dominated—it lay lowest—was Colonel William Knox's. He with two or three others after the siege of Plevna, visited the place, and to that visit we are indebted for the very fine way in which his defence was first of all entrenched. It was a mass of low-lying hills, frowned upon by the heights of Bulwana and Lombard's Kop, and from their superior position the long-range guns of the enemy could point down upon the top of Colonel William Knox. Colonel Knox used always to say to every officer and man in the defence: "If you do what I tell you there will not be a single man of you killed"; nor would there have occurred a casualty had they done so. He built up enormous stone traverses capable of resisting any shell-fire we have ever seen yet; and it was only from a disregard or carelessness in not obeying his orders that any

casualty did occur in his defence—and there were some very bad ones.

14541. That portion of the defence became impregnable, did it?—Yes, it did.

14542. The perimeter was very large?—Yes, the perimeter was very large and against the besieged. If we had been outside instead of being inside we would have been in, if we had wanted to be. Counting all the zigzags, we had practically 28 miles to defend, and if the Boers had concentrated they ought to have got in. It is always open to the outside attacker to concentrate where he wishes, and the inside man has to be ready everywhere, not knowing which point is going to be attacked.

14543. We have had the opinion expressed that a disciplined enemy would have got in; do you agree with that?—Yes. I would not use the word "disciplined," but the Boer is a man who is very careful of his life, or he was at the beginning of the war very careful indeed of his life. If the enemy had acted on the principle that it is worth incurring a certainty of loss in order to gain the position—in fact, if they had not been so ultra-careful of their own skins, they would have been in.

14544. But they never really did attempt it, except on the 6th January?—They never seriously attempted it.

14545. And that was a serious attempt?—Yes, it was. I have not read much of the history of the war, but one hears, of course, a great deal of talk about it; and the most of—I mean the one on Caesar's Camp and Wagon attack, on the 6th January, is the one that one hears most of—I mean the one on Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill. But there were two other attacks. On that day I was practically directing the operations, because, I think, on that day Sir George White was in bed—at any rate, he was not at the office; and I went to him at various times during the day and told him how things were going. It was, I suppose, the first instance on record of a fight over a considerable area ever being directed by the telephone. In the house that we had as the Headquarter Staff House a telephone exchange was arranged in the verandah, where a British officer sat day and night, all the seven officers in that house taking it in turns to relieve one another, so that there was always somebody there. In that way they got word from all parts; not only was the telephone connected up with the headquarters of each defence, but the headquarters of each defence were in telephonic communication with their outlying places, and they could be put straight through with one of these; they were just connected with one of them and they could hear the firing quite well on the telephone. There were two very determined attacks on Observation Hill, and against Colonel William Knox that day, which those on the other side altogether—on Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill could not hear, as it was a frightfully wild day, with rain and wind, and so on, and they all along failed to understand why I was not sending them all the troops they were asking for; of course, they understood it afterwards, but they did not at the time.

14546. Because you wanted them elsewhere?—Yes. There were only 200 men of the Natal Mounted Volunteers, I think the Natal Carbineers, who were not in action, and I kept them as a sort of reserve, if the worst happened, to try and get Sir George White out in the dark, that we might have got him away; that was my object—just as a personal escort to him. I thought they might get through down the river-bed, or something like that at night time, if the place had fallen, because, at one time things were very serious—very shaky on that day. That was the most determined attack they ever made.

14547. That was the scheme of defence, was it not: to have a body of troops that you could send in any direction?—There was a central reserve; all the men were not employed in the defence. And then, also, there was an interior scheme of defence, that is to say, that if the outer parts had fallen there was still a citadel. I had all the ammunition and flour and biscuit reserves moved into this, and we were ready, if we had been driven by force of arms out of the outlying portions, to come into this other place. There was an inner citadel of defence.

14548. Capable of being held?—I think so, limited by the amount of food.

14549. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) If the Boers had got possession of Wagon Hill or Caesar's Camp on that date,

ould that not have made the rest of the place absolutely untenable?—No, it would not have made Ladysmith untenable, because the tenability of the position as afterwards demonstrated by the long time that the Boers held out before he surrendered to Lord Roberts. He was commanded, surrounded and hammered with an infinitely greater number of guns than the Boers had to hammer Ladysmith, and yet he got to ground and held his position for some days. It would have made it very uncomfortable; it would have been a very hot place to live in, there is no doubt about that, but I think determined men could have held on to it.

14550. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you want to say regarding Ladysmith?—Not unless there is anything on which you want to have my opinion, which, of course, I am quite ready to give.

14551. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) By what date had the stores accumulated in Ladysmith to such an extent that it would have been very difficult to have removed the great bulk of them? We know they went up after Sir George White chiefly?—I have not got copies of these things at all, but I should say by the end of October. I forget what day it was that Captain Hamblton arrived—somewhere about the 29th of October. I have had nothing except my own small private diary to go by: everything else I handed in, and it went away with Sir George White, and will be in the Record Office if it is anywhere.

14552. Just going back to the argument that was used about the 70,000 Zulus sitting on the fence in case we withdrew from the northern apex of Natal; as a matter of fact, nothing did happen when we were driven out of the northern apex by the Boers?—No; but then, of course, we were driven out as the result of a fight. It was not as if we had turned tail before we were hit, and the result of the fight was an acknowledged British success.

14553. But then we were shut up in Ladysmith?—Yes.

14554. And the 70,000 Zulus were aware of that fact?—Yes, they were, and they saw us always holding out. And I think it is an acknowledged thing throughout the whole of South Africa that the fall of Ladysmith was to be accepted as the promised sign. They are very Biblical in their ways of thinking, and so on, and the Cape Colony, and the Zulus, and everybody else, were watching to see who was going to be master, were practically asked whether they would accept the fall of Ladysmith as the sign, and it was generally conceded, I think, by them all that they would accept it as the sign. Therefore, if Ladysmith had fallen, I believe all the Dutch in Cape Colony would have risen to the Zulus and everybody else. They would have lumped then for the Boers as their future masters.

14555. Quite so. But my question was as to the Zulus. I wondered whether the Zulus would not have been quite as much affected by seeing our Dundee brigade compelled to fall back upon Ladysmith, as you say they would have been by our withdrawing to Ladysmith?—No, I do not think so; it was no run-away.

14556. Our men came in in bad condition, did they not?—They came in in bad physical condition from the long hours in which they had performed the march, and the weather, but their morale was excellent.

14557. When they arrived at Ladysmith?—If you had been up for nights and wet through to the skin, and so on, you would feel jaded.

14558. But the morale was good?—Excellent; the same troops were used again afterwards, and they showed no signs of having suffered in their morale.

14559. (*Chairman.*) As you mention that, I may ask what was their condition after the fight outside Ladysmith, on what is called mournful Monday?—I was only concerned with one portion of that. I have not read any of the evidence which has been given before me here, and I do not know quite what the case was. I was sent by Sir George White to see the condition of affairs on that part of the ground that went from Lombard's Kop up to Farquhar's Farm; that is the place that was sent out the night before under an officer, whose name I have forgotten. I went there, and I brought back a report to Sir George White that they could make no headway, they could get no further on, and that there was only one thing to do, and that was to withdraw, and we withdrew, and in a very orderly way. The Artillery covered our withdrawal, and the long lines of Infantry simply marched back; it was like a field day.

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14560. We were told that the troops, as they came in after that fight, were demoralised?—When they got beyond a certain point they were home, as it were. I remained out at the outposts that night, and I did not see them. When they marched so far back that they actually formed fours, they went to their own camps. I do not suppose they were very cheerful, but they were certainly not demoralised; so long as they were with me they were not.

14561. I think, speaking from recollection—and I only speak from recollection—it was said that if the attack had been pressed at that moment, it would have gone very hard with you?—Oh, no. I will tell you where it would have gone hard—that the defences of Ladysmith at that time were not in the condition of perfection that they reached afterwards.

14562. I was taking it up on the morale of the troops. You do not agree that they were demoralised?—No, I do not. I think our men always fight whenever they are cornered. I think they play a far better up-hill game than they play when they are up the hill.

14563. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) No troops will fight hot when they are beaten. Being in a corner is one thing, being beaten is another?—But Napoleon said that we never know when we are beaten. I do not believe they did know.

14564. (*Chairman.*) We have been speaking all this time on the first head, namely, the adequacy of the strength of the troops at different dates. I will just ask you one question, which you can answer in a sentence, as to the adequacy of the forces in the field for the other operations that you conducted. They, I suppose, were adequate?—Ample. The adequacy of the forces that were sent for the relief of Mafeking was limited by one point only, and that was by transport. They had to have twelve days' food with them, and they had to take a certain amount of food to give to General Baden-Powell, and all that had to be carried with them at the same pace as they were marching. Therefore, the loads of each wagon were limited to the estimated capacity and endurance of the ten mules that were dragging each wagon, and, as the whole force was mounted, this transport had to be made really on the lines of flying transport; that is why the number of men who went with that column was limited, by the number of mules and light wagons, and so on, that were procurable.

14565. But that was a special operation?—Yes; otherwise we had ample.

14566. As it turned out, that was an ample force for the purpose, because it carried out its object?—Yes.

14567. The next point on which you were asked to speak is the quality of the men. Were you satisfied with the quality of the men that you had?—During the first part of the campaign I was, of course, associated with the British Army, the regiments that were in South Africa, and the seasoned troops that came from India. They are the flower of the Army—they are a survival of the fittest.

14568. Then you consider them good troops?—I do.

14569. The seasoned regiments of the Regular Army turned out well?—They did.

14570. And what do you say of the auxiliary forces?—The greater bulk, I should say, of the inhabitants of Natal are Scotch, or of Scotch extraction. I was associated with the Natal Mounted Volunteers; they went by different names—the Border Mounted Rifles, the Natal Carbineers, the Umvoti Rifles, and some rather unpronounceable names—but the one general descriptive name that included them all was the Natal Mounted Rifles. They were all excellent material; they were almost all young farmers and farmers' sons; there were a few men like young doctors, young lawyers, and lawyers' clerks, and there were a few men out of the towns like Durban and Pietermaritzburg, but the vast majority of them were men accustomed to riding and a hard outdoor life—men who had been brought up in raising stock, and all of them accustomed to handle arms, and game shooting and riding.

14571. You are speaking now of the irregular corps raised in Ladysmith?—Yes. Then the other force was the Imperial Light Horse; they were the picked 1,200 men out of about 12,000 refugees from Johannesburg; all the British refugees from Johannesburg were well-to-do men; they were all men getting big wages; they were either mine owners or mine managers, or electrical engineers, experts of one sort or another; many of them were men on the Stock Ex-

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

*Lieut.-
General Sir
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change, lawyers, doctors, solicitors, and very few of them were engaged in trade—shopkeepers and such-like; and they were all men who had either in prospecting, or as contractors, or as wood merchants, or in one form or another, done a lot of transport riding to and fro; they were the pick and the cream of the intelligent men who were going out to South Africa, and naturally, physically, they were very fine. The first time I ever saw them was on the first day I arrived at Pietermaritzburg. It was the first day they had ever been on parade as a regiment; up to that time they had only paraded as squadrons under their squadron leaders; it was the first day that Colonel Chisholme had ever had them under his command. Sir Walter Hely Hutchison drove up on to the ground, as he wanted to see them, and he asked me to go round and look at them. I had not long come from a tour abroad, where I had seen nothing but the picked Guards of Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Prussia, and Saxony, and there was nothing I saw on the Continent then, and nothing I have ever seen here, except the Irish Constabulary, that could put a patch on them. You can tell "men" when you look at them. Every man was a picture of manhood; he was beaming with intelligence. They were a lot of very highly-educated men; there were 10, I should think, or 20 of them with incomes of £10,000 a year; I should think over 100 that had over £1,000 a year of their own; they had been in the enjoyment of that, I mean, in Johannesburg. For a long time I do not suppose there were over 200 or 300 men who ever touched their pay; they all put it back into the regimental funds. Out of those regimental funds Government allowed, I think it was, £35 for a horse; they gave £45 for their horses. If there was anything to be procured for love or money, they got it. They all had Zeiss glasses; not a single British officer had a Zeiss glass unless he got it out of his own pocket. But they had them as a corps, and their physique, their intelligence, their morale, and their knowledge of the country were all excellent. Amongst them were men who talked Dutch, Kaffir, and Basuto, and they had every element of success in them, and they were a great success, a most undoubted success. They were the finest corps I have ever seen anywhere in my life.

14572. We are not confined under these heads to Natal. What is your opinion of the troops that you saw afterwards?—The next lot that I saw, which were not Regular troops, were the Volunteer companies. In my division I had two brigades—one the Fusiliers Brigade and the other called the Union Brigade. All the Volunteers were good. Of course, they were raw and green when they came, but by sandwiching them—putting them on guard with Regulars and the officers doing supernumerary duties before they were detailed to duties of their own—they very soon picked it up; but then, of course, they were the pick of the Volunteer regiments, as you know, from here.

14573. Did you have any Yeomanry with you?—Yes.

14574. What do you say of them?—I "blooded" a great many. By "blooding" I mean that I gave the baptism of fire to a great many Yeoman. All the Scotch Yeomen came under me first. I was their first General, and I "blooded" them all. Well, I am a Scotchman, you see, and I never want anything better myself than that first lot that came out. I saw the second and third contingents too, and they were all good; but I always think the first lot were the best; they were the keenest. They came first, and naturally, I suppose, they were the keenest of the lot.

14575. But a good many of them went home after a year?—Yes. Of course, some went home on one condition and some on another; most of them went home when they were relieved by an equal contingent of their own corps, such as Lovat's Scouts and the Scottish Yeomanry, the Ayrshires and the Berwickshires and the Fife and Forfars; they all sent out an equal number, and that relieved those who had been out.

14576. As you mentioned Lovat's Scouts, I see you referred to them in this report of August, 1900, which I mentioned, as being a very useful corps?—Yes, very. Lovat's Scouts are, of course, quite an exception. You cannot compare Yeomanry with Lovat's Scouts.

14577. I am aware of that?—The nature of their everyday life and the way they earn their livelihood, and so on, qualifies them far better for the work that the soldier has to do in the field than a man who is working on a barge.

14578. But is it not more than that with them; is

it not that from the nature of their employment as stalkers, and so on, they have exceptional value as scouts?—Exceptional.

14579. And that a body of that kind, particularly in a war like that in South Africa, has a special value of its own?—Yes.

14580. In the use of a spyglass, for instance?—Yes. I do not know whether you use a spyglass yourself, but it is a very difficult thing to use.

14581. I have tried?—Some people think you have only to put it up, and you can see everything. There never was a greater mistake. It is a thing that wants just as much knowledge almost as a gun.

14582. What I have been told is that in South Africa it was found that when Lovat's Scouts did use a spyglass they could tell you the movements of the enemy, that a Zeiss glass, for instance, would not have discovered?—Yes, that is so. Their value was recognised because everybody was begging for them afterwards; everybody wanted two or three.

14583. Then, passing from the general quality, as to the shooting of the men, what have you to say about that?—Of course, full advantage of being in Ladysmith to shoot was not taken. The idea gained ground in Ladysmith that you should not fire much; there were days when scarcely a shot was exchanged. If you fire, you attract fire back on you, of course, and it came to be almost an accepted axiom that the more you fired the more you got fired back on, and, therefore, the heavier the losses were likely to be, and the thing was not to fire unless you were fired on. Otherwise I think a great many men might have employed their time very profitably. I always advocated that they should fire. We had ample ammunition; we had nearly 6,000,000 rounds of small-arm ammunition in reserve when we were relieved.

14584. But could they shoot well?—That is very difficult to tell unless you go over the ground afterwards. When I have gone over the ground afterwards, I have never had any reason to be dissatisfied. I am not boastful, but I never wore anything but my proper distinctive uniform, with a gold band on my hat, and so on, which showed exactly who I was—a General. They used to fire at me every time I went round, and they never hit me.

14585. Do you think that the Boer shooting was overrated?—Quite. But I will tell you what there is on the Boer side. There are certain shots who have earned their living as professional hunters, and up to from 200 yards to 300 they are undoubtedly marvellous shots.

14586. At short ranges?—Yes; but at long ranges I think their superiority over us is very mythical myself. In some ways they are better than we are. Their natural eyesight is better. They live in a country where every boy is sent out at night to bring in the cattle, and until the cattle are in he is not allowed to come in. Cattle wander tremendously on a big farm with no fences, and so on, and the more that boy can see, the better he can see where his cattle are, and the less trouble he has to ride round and look for them; therefore he is practising his eyesight—eyesight is merely a matter of practice—from the days of his infancy upwards. Here we are not. How is a boy born in this street to do it? He is rather lucky in having the river to look across to the other side, but if he is born in Stepney or Hackney, in a narrow lane, how is he going to have any eyesight?

14587. Then marching you found good?—Very good.

14588. And horsemanship, too?—Yes.

14589. What do you say about horsemastership?—Horsemastership is very much a question of surroundings. Every country has its own practices, and there are certain things better adapted to one person than another. I think horsemastership which would be eminently successful in the Soudan would not be, perhaps, in rolling plains of grass lands like the Orange Free State or out in the Argentine. I think it depends very much upon where you are. I think our horsemastership, taking it all round, is good. I think our men are brought up to be careful of animals and kind to them, and so on, and horsemastership is so much a matter of attention and care that I think it comes much more natural to us to be good horsemasters than to most people.

14590. We have had some evidence that a good many men who were employed as mounted troops did not know enough about horses to be good horsemasters.

Was that your experience?—In the Mounted Infantry you would find that a man suddenly taken out of the ranks off his feet and put on a horse needed to be taught. You cannot expect anything else.

14591. And then in a campaign like that it was essential they should be good horsemasters?—Yes; but horsemastership indicates previous training, of course, to be a horsemaster. You cannot be a master without learning; but the horsemastership of the Regular Cavalry, and particularly of the Field Artillery, is good. I should give the Field Artillery special praise for their horsemastership.

14592. In that all seem to agree; but could you meet the deficiencies of men taken in an emergency if their officers paid more attention to these matters?—I do not think their officers ever wilfully neglected the thing; it was a case of ignorance on their part as well as on the part of the men. It is a matter that requires training.

14593. Then officers should be trained in horsemastership?—Yes; I think every officer should. I think myself they were a very badly-trained lot of officers as a body.

14594. We are coming to the officers presently. What about the general physique of the men?—Of course, in the men in Ladysmith, as I said before, we had really the survival of the fittest; we had men whom it would do your heart good to look upon. All of them who came out were not that, of course.

14595. Taking the Army as a whole, from what you saw of it in the war, are you satisfied with its physique?—No; taking the Army as a whole, I do not think it fairly represents the manhood of this Empire. The Colonials do, but then the Colonials are the picked men. A man does not emigrate who is a cripple; he (the cripple) remains at home. The Colonials are far better physically equipped than we are, man for man. It is the stir-about, and the adventurous and the physically well developed man who has in him that spirit of adventure that takes him abroad.

14596. Whatever their deficiencies in physique, the morale, you think, was good?—Yes, I think it was as good as you have any right to expect, and it is quite as good as is necessary.

14597. And as regards the intelligence?—I do not think the intelligence is as good as it ought to be. The educated intelligence is not.

14598. And intelligence is what you want in the soldier nowadays?—Yes.

14599. Can you get it in the class from which we now recruit?—The higher pay nowadays, of course, ought theoretically to attract a higher class, but it does not; at least, I do not see any difference.

14600. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But they have not begun to get yet a good increase in pay?—The men who have enlisted have got that prospect presumably before them, yet it has made no appreciable difference so far as I can see.

14601. (*Chairman.*) You have been watching it since you took up your command?—Yes, I see the recruits always.

14602. And you do not see any difference?—No, I do not see any difference.

14603. What suggestions have you to offer for the future training of the men?—It is forbidden, of course, to suggest that you should have conscription. I do not think any nation would ever adopt conscription until they had tried everything else. I remember having a long argument years ago with General Wauchope. He had this question very close at heart, and he worked at it. He was an employer of labour, and a friend of everybody—the man spoke straight to him and that kind of thing—and General Wauchope was a man well calculated, if anybody ever was, to get at the truth of anything he was interested in. He worked it out that to put a soldier on the same terms as one of the better class of his own miners you ought to pay him, feed him, house him, give him fuel and light, clothe him, shoe him well, and give him 2s. a day besides, free, not to deduct 2½d. and 3d., and ½d. for hair-cutting and washing—that is, 14s. a week clear for himself, and then he was as well qualified to marry and be happy as if he was working at an ordinary average artisan's employment.

14604. (*Sir John Jackson.*) And with these induce-

ments you would expect to get a very large number of recruits from that very class of good miners?—Yes, I should hope so, because I think in the body of our nation there is quite a sufficiency of adventurous spirited lads to accept such conditions.

14605. They like the idea of being a soldier provided they find they will not receive very much less money than they would receive as respectable labourers?—Yes. Then I think the men ought to be paid according to their value; you ought not to pay everybody a dead level. You do not pay everybody a dead level in any other sphere of life. We give them now good conduct pay, but that is practically the only thing. A man may be a flat-footed wretch, who cannot march five miles, or a man who will swing up a hill in front of everybody, and they are both paid alike. One may be a marksman, and another a duffer third-class shot, and both paid alike.

14606. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You know under the new system in 1904 the pay will be 1s. 11d. a day, without stoppages?—But, as you have said before, they have not got to that.

14607. You have not really tested yet what it will bring forth?—No, and, of course, future employment is a matter that affects a man enlisting.

14608. I presume the recruit to-day would not look forward to what he would get two years hence?—No.

14609. The thing must be in force actually, I should imagine, before he can realise that event?—Yes.

14610. (*Chairman.*) You have some notes here in your *précis* about the training of the men in the future; perhaps you will state your views upon that point?—I think every man is capable of being trained, and that training is a matter of degree. Some men you would have to work at for two years to teach them what you could teach other men in a couple of weeks. For instance, you could teach men of intelligence and physique and ability, provided you point out the reason of the thing—you could teach such men as the Imperial Light Horse anything in one teaching, the same as you could any well educated, intelligent, active young man. But if you get a town-bred population, as most of ours are that enlist now, you have to take them out into the country and show them what is what, and try and teach them what is on the other side of a hill.

14611. Therefore, you want large tracts of country?—Yes.

14612. Those are rather difficult to get in this country, are they not?—Yes; they are to be got though.

14613. You think you can get sufficient in this country to train the soldiers on?—Yes, I am sure you can.

14614. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) In England or Ireland, do you mean?—I am talking of what I know; that is in Scotland. I think there is a system of training and manœuvres that we have never tried them in yet; it was tried, I think, by three Continental nations last year—the Germans, the French, and the Russians. In their scheme of manœuvres they combine embarking and disembarking. That is very suggestive, inasmuch as they have nowhere to embark or disembark except against us; but that is neither here nor there. But it would infuse reality into manœuvres.

14615. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You mean embarking on board ship?—Yes. Supposing I am sent to land on the coast of Donegal and take up so many tons of shipping and so many thousand men and be off to wait for the naval escort to come out of the Clyde, and land them on the coast of Donegal, and then let the General Officer Commanding Donegal come and turn me off or prevent my landing; that would be a practical system of manœuvres calculated to train the people in this country to resist invasion at any rate, or to go to the rescue of any of our colonies, say, or to go to the homeland of whoever was invading us. Whatever we do, provided you start from here, or from Australia or Canada, you have to get on board a ship first. Canada has a border with another country, but that is not the question we are talking about. I mean we have very few land borders that we can cross with anybody yet, except with India and with Canada.

14616. (*Chairman.*) And you want to train non-commissioned officers?—Yes, I have seen a battalion in the German Army of non-commissioned officers speci-

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

13 Feb. 1908.

Lieut.
General Sir
Archibald
Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

ally being trained for their duties, and it struck me what a very fine lot of men they were. I think every battalion in the army sends up eight men per annum to it, and they go through a course of two years' training. They are taught really, and when they leave that school I should say they are as efficient as the average British subaltern of, say, five years' service.

14617. We have nothing of that kind in this country?—No, we have not. You have it in good regiments in classes under an officer. You have it in your Artillery, in classes I mean, for the training of specialists; but I think now, for example, in Scotland, we are going to perpetuate Lovat's Scouts. I think it would be a very good thing in the future, for these things can be very easily done. When Lovat comes out for training, he could have any number of these men attached to him. That would be one way, at any rate, of reaping the benefit and practical advantage of the knowledge that such men as Lovat's Scouts possess, that none, or at least very few, of us do possess.

14618. Shall we now pass on to the officers? You have certain views about the officers?—I think it was a great pity that we ever did away with the cadet system for officers for the Army. I was brought up in the Infantry myself. I was destined originally for an Artilleryman, but I never went up for the examination. I happened to go up for the Infantry examination first, and passed it; therefore, I went into the Infantry. I think we ought to enter as cadets, and go through a military school as a boy, and be brought up for this particular profession. We are not turned out as a scientific officer. I am neither acquainted with nor supposed to know anything about the scientific branches, until I become a General, and then how am I to learn if I have not taken the trouble to teach myself before? I am supposed to know nothing of electricity or the breaking strain of a girder, yet it may be very essential that I should know some day—it has been in my career. But I never was given a chance, simply because I was an Infantry officer, of learning that sort of thing. I think if you went back to the cadet system then you would have the men. I was reading a letter in the paper to-day or yesterday, asking why it was we had great scandals in the Army which we never had in the Navy. The reason given was that everything in the Navy was the subject of a judicial inquiry before any decision was arrived at. That is not the reason at all. The reason is because boys in the Navy are entered at thirteen or fourteen years of age, and they are taught and brought up to be what they are; they cannot help it. From the earliest days they are thrown into responsible and difficult positions, and they are made the straight, clean-minded young fellows that they are by their education. I say in the Army it ought to be the same, and we ought to be taught; everyone of us ought to be taught a great deal more than we are by the State to fit us for our positions as officers. In the junior ranks so very much is not required of you, but when you become a General Officer, with other men's lives resting on your shoulders, and so on, it may be a very essential matter that you should know all about gunnery, engineering, explosives, and electricity.

14619. You want to take boys as early as twelve years of age and put them into military schools without any mixture with other boys?—I should revive the cadet system at Sandhurst, and should teach every boy to be a fair linguist. Any boy can learn. We are all sharp enough to learn, particularly if it is the fashion to learn—everybody knows that. It is not that we are fools, we are by no means fools. There are certain languages that every boy in the Army ought to know. Hindustani is one. Then it does not matter a jot how old he is when he goes to India, he can understand, and make himself understood. French and German I would teach him, too.

14620. You do not think you would lose by not having an opportunity of taking a boy at a later age who has proved himself to be a capable fellow, though he may not have gone into a military school at twelve years of age?—I would not altogether confine it to boys taken in that way, because I would still keep open the possibility of a man enlisting and getting a commission. I know it is a very wide subject.

14621. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You would not preclude men rising from the ranks?—I would not exclude it.

14622. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You think that

military questions are technical questions that require special education, like any other profession?—Yes.

14623. And a much bigger one?—You have to be a lawyer, you have to know how to attack a position, how to write a report, and you are supposed to be able to write a dispatch; everyone is supposed to have in his knapsack a scheme of march and battle, and it is only those few who choose to educate themselves to be qualified for a post who should attain it.

14624. But you would not confine it to boys of twelve years old. You approve, I presume, of the system at Woolwich, where they still go in at sixteen and seventeen?—Yes; every boy that goes to Woolwich has an infinite advantage over every boy that goes to Sandhurst, because he is taught better a wider range of subjects; he is taught everything, at least, that he ought to learn, and what it would be an advantage and benefit for him to know.

14625. (Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.) You would have military schools specially adapted to those young men?—Yes.

14626. Beginning at the age of fourteen or fifteen, as in the Navy?—Yes.

14627. And you would have examinations afterwards as they advanced in position?—Yes. There is a certain class of officer I never would advance beyond. I should make it practically as it is in the Navy. Once a Commander there you go on to Captain, and then go on to be Admiral; but they do not necessarily promote you to be a Commander because you are Senior Lieutenant. The principle of selection is introduced. It is a very difficult one, and interferes with all kinds of other questions, vested interests, whether a man is married, or has a large family, or whether everybody knows who he is, and so on. I do not say those considerations weigh unduly, but they do weigh, and if you want to get the best men to the top you ought only to select of the very best. The matter is bristling with difficulties.

14628. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) How can you meet the difficulty of nepotism?—I do not think it prevails to any great extent. I could not quote a case where I know that a man has been given a position because he was so-and-so. I do not think it does prevail, and that is one of the very last of the arguments that I would put forward.

14629. (Chairman.) You want to prevent preference from the lower grades to the higher grades of any man who is not qualified to hold one of the higher grade appointments?—Yes.

14630. There is, of course, a Board of Selection for the higher grades already?—Yes.

14631. You do not consider it adequate?—I have never worked on it; I do not know. I know quite well that the only thing that a board like that could be guided by are the confidential reports upon that officer.

14632. (Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.) You would have an examination, in the first instance, just as they have in the Navy now?—Yes; and then, unless a man had shown himself to be possessed of qualities that would be the qualities required of him as a General Officer, I would not promote him. I am an enemy of the principle that says he is good enough for a Colonel, but not good enough for anything higher than Colonel. A Colonel might some day, by accident, by the death of others, and so on, find himself in the rank of General in command of a position; I do not think he ought to be open to that.

14633. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) He should not be a field officer at all?—Not a field officer at all. That I know again is a matter that bristles with difficulties, vested interests, and considerations of other people.

14634. (Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.) As a matter of fact, it is the case, is it not, that those wishing to enter the Navy now very often cannot pass the examination?—Yes.

14635. (Sir Henry Norman.) Can you be certain that a man who is a very good Colonel, and has done very well up to that rank, will make a good General, or that a man who has done very well in time of peace will do very well in time of war?—It is very difficult to theorise, really.

14636. I have such people in my own mind's eye?—I have known myself a man who was very slack as a Major, and, when he got command of his own regiment, suddenly transformed and became the keenest and most energetic Colonel that ever was. It is very diffi-

cult to judge of a man in peace time as to what he is likely to be in war. Some men have got no nerve at all, and they fear responsibility, and cannot do anything for themselves without half-a-dozen others to advise them, and so on; but I think if a man's character is closely studied, he ought to have given evidence one way or the other whether he is likely to succeed; it would be impossible, either in the Army or in any other sphere of life, to guarantee that your estimate of a man was absolutely right and the only just one.

14637. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The value of some men is never ascertained until responsibility is placed upon them?—That is so, undoubtedly.

14638. (*Chairman.*) There is another very important point you mention in your *précis*—that is, that there are too few officers?—That is very easily remedied, but it is a question of money.

14639. You point out what did happen: that when the line battalions went on service they took the officers from the Militia battalions, and the Militia battalions were left with none?—Yes.

14640. What suggestion have you for meeting that difficulty?—You can do it by an increase in the cadre of corps having more officers in peace time than are required for peace duties; then when war breaks out you have men available on whom you can draw; you have a fund, as it were.

14641. What would you do with the duplicated cadres in peace time?—For one thing, I would give everybody a much greater opportunity, a better chance of studying his profession. For example, so far as I know from my acquaintance with the Army, I only know two officers who know anything of the Japanese Army whatever, or whoever saw them. It would be a very good thing if, say, you sent a hundred officers to Japan. They have not sent their officers over to us in hundreds, but they have sent them over in scores in my recollection.

14642. You mean by having cadres?—You can employ them in all kinds of ways. Nowadays, if an officer attends a class for himself, signalling or musketry, his duties in the regiment devolve upon somebody else, who has his own duties to perform. There is no one available left specially to take over that man's duties. His duties are shared by others, whatever they are. His duties of guards, pickets, parades, clerical work with his company, his accounts, and looking after his men, and so on, all that falls upon somebody else.

14643. So long as you could find other occupation for some of the officers, either in taking classes or in assisting the auxiliaries, and so on, that would not imply an increase of the establishment of the regiment during peace time?—No; it would imply that there was always a normal establishment of officers with the regiment.

14644. But not a greater establishment than the present normal establishment?—Not greater than the present complete establishment.

14645. It was objected to by a high authority that to increase the normal establishment with the regiment would be detrimental?—It would be detrimental if it tended to idleness, of course, but I do not think it need do that at all. It would give you an opportunity for study and so on. I have had an exceptional career in the Army myself. I have been able to keep up my French. I have not spoken a word of German for 20 years; I mean I have not been in Germany to have more than a week at a time since then. If I had had an opposite number, as they are called in the Navy, I should have had three months in Germany to go to the German manoeuvres, or to go to the Austrian manoeuvres, to go out and see the Japanese Army, or to go to West Point and be allowed to study education on the American system. I have had necessarily none of these opportunities, or very few of them. I have been to some of the places, but not many.

14646. You also think that they are badly paid?—Yes; I speak for myself. I am not an extravagant man. I am a bachelor, and I do not keep many horses, but I never found my pay equal to the ordinary requirements that devolve upon me by holding the positions which I have held.

14647. And do you think that tells against the British officer?—A great many men with money, of course, come into the Army, but I do not think it is right, simply because a man chooses the Army as a profession, that he should die poorer than his brother who goes into some other branch of life.

14648. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You think he ought to have a living wage?—Yes, I do. Our pay, you see, is practically the same as it was. It is a question on which I have no historical knowledge at all, but I believe it has not been increased for very many years; and in the old days a shilling was worth probably what half a crown is now.

14649. (*Chairman.*) I think, with regard to the next head of our Inquiry, about supplies and transport, you have nothing very special that you wish to say?—No. Of course, I have had a great and varied experience of transport. Transport is a question that depends upon the theatre of operations, and so it is no good anybody studying the transport of the Khartoum Expedition or the South African War if we have war in China; you would learn nothing, except on the River Nile you might. Every country has a transport peculiar to itself. Elephant transport is one thing, camel transport is another; bullock transport, carried on the backs or on wheels dragged by bullocks or wheels dragged by mules, pack-saddles on mules or bullocks or donkeys, they are all different.

14650. But your system of organisation may be the same?—Yes, practically it might.

14651. Are you in favour of the regimental transport or the general transport system?—That is a very big question. If you have regimental transport, of course it means that your animals are, I think, better looked after. You take a much greater pride—that is only human nature—in what is your own, and you give it a greater share of attention than, say, if I have 50 wagons to-day, you have the same 50 wagons to-morrow, and someone else has them the next day. There come sore backs that ought not to be, galls, and a falling off in condition, and it is very difficult to say whether it was I or you, or someone else that was to blame for them. Then again, on the other hand, if I have transport, and you have transport, and someone else has transport, and you are sitting still to-day and I am marching, then your transport is doing nothing, and that is a loss to the Army. Taking it all round, I think the Army system of transport, although I know that is contrary to what was adopted for the South African War, is the right one. We tried it, and threshed it out most thoroughly, in the Egyptian Army for the Dongola Expedition and the Khartoum Expedition, and there we came to the conclusion that transport should be treated as a branch, almost as an arm, of the Service, exactly as you treat artillery. Because artillery happens to go with one division or brigade one day, there is no reason why it should always go with it, and if that brigade is sitting down where it does not want artillery, there is no reason why it should not go somewhere else.

14652. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There would always be an Army Service Corps officer in charge, who would have the same pride, I presume, as the regiment in keeping it in order, and have the same responsibility?—Yes.

14653. (*Chairman.*) Of the Medical Services and the Engineer Services you have nothing to say but good, I understand?—No; I have seen a great deal of work with both of them. I do not mean to say there are no faults to be found with the Medical Service, because nothing human is perfect, but I think they have been very harshly criticised in many cases myself.

14654. Then as regards guns, you say that you have some remarks to offer?—Yes. I think one of the chief lessons of the war that the Boers taught us is how to move guns of position about and use them as field artillery. I know when Long Tom, as it was called, fired its first shell into Ladysmith it was a tremendous surprise, and to nobody a greater surprise than to artillery officers, for they did not know how the Boers got the gun there; but they were wheeling it about the country and up and down steep hills as if it was an ordinary 15-pounder gun. Our guns, so far as they went up to the range that they carried were as good as anything, I believe, that ever was made, and our powder was, too—I am talking of black powder. We had two muzzle-loading 6-inch howitzers in Ladysmith. There was a man named Ewart in the Cameron Highlanders, who happened to be at Port Elizabeth or East London—staff officer there—who heard that we were short of artillery in Ladysmith, and he sent them into Ladysmith, forwarding them round by Durban, and everybody laughed. They said they were old, obsolete guns, with a limited range of 3,800 to 4,000 yards. I knew that the powder and fuses were made in this country in 1864, and the powder was as hard as glass, and as good for practical

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
Archibald
Hunter,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

13 Feb. 1903.

use in the year 1900 as when it was made in 1864, and there was no greater percentage of misfires amongst the fuses than there is amongst all fuses. That is pretty fair proof that the manufacture of powder, and so on, is satisfactory.

14655. And those howitzers were very useful?—Very; you could judge whether they were useful by the eagerness with which the different commanders used to squabble who should have them; they were almost at daggers drawn over it.

14656. Have you any other remarks to make upon the guns?—I think our guns were, up to their limit of range, very good. Our gun-laying in the Army, judging by comparison, and so on, is infinitely better than the gun-laying in the Navy. I know I am treading on very delicate ground when I criticise naval gunnery, but I say, and I know that it will not be contradicted by a great many men who were in Ladysmith, that the naval gunnery—is it within my province to say this here?

14657. Yes, I think it is?—I ask because what I say will raise a tremendous storm of indignation; but the naval gunnery left everything to be desired. The naval guns were fired from fixed, permanent platforms; there was no motion in the platform to disconcert the gunners, but the practice made with the naval 4.7's was—I do not want to use too harsh a term—well, it was such that I offered to take the girls out of the school to come and serve the guns, and make as good practice. I do not know whether that is not saying a very harsh thing, perhaps.

14658. But was that exceptional?—There were only two of them.

14659. (Sir Frederick Darley.) May the light have had anything to do with that—the clearness of the atmosphere?—But this did not extend over one day, it extended over the whole of the siege; they never profited to-day by the experience of yesterday. And they were firing off a fixed platform at a fixed target, not a moving target, as the Boer guns did.

14660. At a known range?—Yes, at a known fixed range. It was the same, probably, for more than a month—the Boer gun was in position in the same place, it never changed.

14661. (Chairman.) You were not satisfied with the practice?—No, I was not.

14662. (Sir Henry Norman.) Did it not produce a great effect upon the Boer guns and their practice?—It produced a moral effect, but it produced no other effect. I think they hit one gun; they claimed to have hit one gun in the nozzle.

14663. At what distance do you know?—I do not remember. I ought to know.

14664. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Where was the Boer gun—at Bulwana?—Yes, and this was on Cove redoubt.

14665. (Sir Henry Norman.) Can you say approximately what was the distance?—I ought to know it exactly, but I do not remember it. It would be something like 5,000 to 6,000 yards, but I know that the Boer gun was estimated to have been capable of ranging 11,000 and some odd hundred yards—11,600, I think it was. It was seven miles roughly.

14666. The examination has been so very full that I have not really anything left to ask you. You were saying that General Wauchope thought that if a man received everything that he required and 2s. a day you could get the pick of the men, but you went on to say something about his being able to marry. Is not one of the reasons why a man will not enlist that he cannot marry?—If a soldier marries, it implies that he must have married quarters, and then his wife and children are a great expense when you move.

14667. But under the present system they are not allowed to marry?—No.

14668. So that you cannot put the soldier quite on the same footing as a civilian?—Anyhow, he can save up his money against the day when he leaves the Army, and can marry.

14669. I should like to go back to what you were saying about the difficulty of knowing whether an officer in a particular rank, or in particular circumstances, will be efficient in another rank or in other circumstances. Have you never known a man who was a very good commanding officer, and knew his work thoroughly, and commanded his regiment in a station, and so on, entirely fail when he was suddenly put into a position of very great responsibility?—Yes, I have.

14670. It is not so very uncommon is it in great crises, say the Mutiny, where men suddenly fell into a position of enormous responsibility, and, I think, a great many men went down, failed, who had great reputations before?—Yes, that is so, and, of course, there were a great many in South Africa who did so too. You cannot make a certainty, because, of course, very often a man's passing momentary condition may account for it; if a man had dysentery badly, or something of that kind, or if he were over fatigued, that might have a tendency to make him lose his nerve.

14671. That is only temporary?—I think as in a school the master is very well known, and a boy's estimate, as a rule, of his master is a very just one, so in the Army there are men in whom you feel absolute confidence. You would say, "Yes, I will serve under So-and-so," without a moment's hesitation, and there are others of whom you would say, "Well, I hope it will never be my fate to have my destiny as it were decided, or hanging upon that man's decision." It is not only in the Army, it is throughout life that the same thing happens.

14672. But there is such an immense difference between the test of peace and the test of war, and not only war, but very often an enormous responsibility apart from fighting is suddenly thrown on you—will you attack or will you not, where there are very many reasons either for doing a thing or against it; but as you say, of course, in the South African War there were many instances, and, I suppose, in every war there have been and will be to the end, and I do not see, and, I suppose, you do not see how it is to be avoided?—No, I do not see how you are to possibly legislate with absolute certainty when you are selecting a man that he will be fit for the position that you are going to put him into.

14673. But you admit that in a long and continuous war you can begin to know what men you can trust?—That is how Napoleon made his Marshals—by practical test, by seeing them under fire, and also as is well known by favouring those who did not aspire to enter into competition with him.

14674. (Sir Frederick Darley.) I have only one question to ask. You spoke of the moving of these heavy guns by the Boers; was that, do you think, done on their own initiative, or do you think they had instruction from any foreign expert?—Of their own initiative. Every Boer is a past master you see in transport, every Boer can yoke oxen to a span, every Boer can drive a team of oxen, and every Boer knows quite well what a team of mules or a team of oxen can do with a particular weight, because for a long while their only means of transport in that country has been the ox or mule wagon and the Cape cart. That is where they had an immense advantage over us, because transport means mobility, and that is why they were always quicker than we were.

14675. (Sir John Jackson.) To return to getting round this "Long Tom"; how did they manage it—in a way we could not have managed similarly with guns?—We did afterwards. We removed the 5-inch guns afterwards.

14676. Have you ever studied the question as to how far motor carriages might be utilised for moving heavy guns about?—I have seen that traction engines were used.

14677. Steam?—Yes. These present day twentieth century motor cars I know nothing about. But there is one example where, if you had surplus officers you could sensibly employ them, in staff-rides, for example, on motor cars. Take my case for example. If Scotland is invaded, I would be held, I presume, responsible to deal with the invader. If I had motor cars and a surplus of officers, I should be employing them in every Volunteer regiment, every Militia regiment, and every Yeomanry regiment in going about the country in intimately learning, so as to do it in the dark almost, the various parts of the country that would be most liable to be attacked.

14678. You are speaking now, of course, of a country with good roads, as Scotland has?—Yes, but, then, in Austria I know they have been used on awful roads, and I have seen them in France going over the ordinary harvest stubble fields.

14679. There does not appear to be any reason why something in the shape of a motor carriage should not be able to move guns about?—I think it is one of the developments that this century will see brought to a high state of perfection.

See Q. 19124.

14680. You say you have had a great deal of experience of recruiting in Scotland?—Not of actual recruiting, but of judging the recruits. Whenever I go to a regimental district, I specially see these recruits, and see them stripped.

14681. At the present time, from what classes are the recruits mostly got in Scotland? Do they come from the scum of the few big towns?—We get the worst class of recruit, physically, from Dundee.

14682. From the east side?—Yes. I cannot tell you why, because I do not know. I have asked ministers, I have asked missionaries, and I have asked the local medical authorities in Dundee, and all the magistrates, and so on, but whether it is water or not I cannot tell you. Anyhow, the people who live in Warrington in Lancashire (I belonged to a Lancashire regiment, and all our recruits in the regiment were either miners or mill hands), and work in the mills under the same conditions of life exactly as the people that live in Dundee, were of nothing like the inferior quality that these Dundee boys are: whether it is from early marriages, or whether, as some people say, it is because they no longer sup their porridge, but live on bread and butter and the teapot; whether it is the want of milk, or the want of meal, or the want of lime in the water, or what it is, I cannot tell you, but the fact remains that they

are the worst. Then, of other people, we get a very small proportion of the agricultural class, and then the rest are the artisan factory hands, miners in some districts—about Hamilton and Lanark, and so on, they are all miners, of course. In Glasgow you get the casual labourer.

14683. You get a great many Irishmen?—Yes, wharf loafers; yes, a good many Irishmen.

14684. Then, speaking generally, you would rather see the men drawn, at any rate, from a rather higher class, the better class of miners and the agriculturists, than those loafers of the town?—Yes; they are better fed, better developed, and more intelligent. Intellect and physique march side by side; the development of the brain and the development of the body generally go along together.

14685. In point of fact, I take it, to put it this way, that you would rather have your Army 25 per cent. less in numbers if you could have them of a better class?—Yes.

14686. Even if you had to pay them 33 per cent. more money?—Yes.

14687. You would consider that a more efficient service?—Yes.

Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O.
13 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-FIFTH DAY.

Monday, 16th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable The EARL of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Honourable Sir FREDERICK-MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EGDE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

General Sir GEORGE S. WHITE, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., and Colonel E. A. ALTHAM, C.M.G., called and examined.

(General reference may be made to the Selected Telegrams and Despatches and the Siege Correspondence. Vide Appendices, pages 617 and 631, post.)

14688. (*Chairman.*) (*To Sir George White.*) I think before the outbreak of the war in 1899 you were Quartermaster-General at Headquarters?—Yes.

14689. I ask you that question because in our examination of Sir Charles Clarke he said that before the date of the 16th September you were responsible for any preparations for the war?—Any preparations for the war?

14690. The question was, "Before that date, in any preparations for the war, Sir George White was responsible?" and his answer, "He was responsible for the Branch"?—Yes, for the Quartermaster-General's Branch.

14691. Is there any remark that you would wish to make with regard to the preparations for the war, which is the first head of our reference?—I presume, you wish me to say whether there was anything as to which I think fuller preparations might have been made?

14692. Yes, certainly?—I think we were unnecessarily restricted in the question of expenditure for certain things that we asked for. We were met more than once by their saying that there had been no provision made in the Budget; and there were certain things that the Army Board, as I think we then called ourselves, definitely asked for, that we were told we could not get.

14693. Yes, we have had a good deal of evidence to that effect—and you support that view?—Yes, I do.

14694. Can you say at what date you began to represent that there were deficiencies outside the Budget provision which ought to be met?—No, I cannot.

14695. Was it June or thereabouts?—I would be afraid to say. I have nothing but a defective memory to fall back upon for that.

14696. At any rate, it was probably in the course of that summer?—It was in the course of that summer, undoubtedly.

14697. At that time there were special matters in which the preparations were defective which your Department then put before the Army Board, and the Army Board backed your representations?—Yes.

14698. But you could not get the money to carry them out?—We could not get the money to carry them out. I am quite ready to say that I think it was the Chancellor of the Exchequer who put so heavy a check upon the Secretary of State for War, that it became practically almost impossible for him to get what he wanted.

14699. We have had it in evidence that up to a date in September, I think it was the 22nd September, sanction was refused to their requisitions?—Yes. I remember one specially which was for transport, and which was negatived on account of there having been a good deal of money granted, I think, as an extra for that particular branch, and that there was no further provision; and we did not get it. I remember it specially, because we sent in a protest.

14700. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was it land transport or transport by sea?—Land transport.

14701. (*Chairman.*) In South Africa?—Yes.

14702. And these requisitions that you speak of were brought up because you were apprehensive of an outbreak of war in South Africa?—Undoubtedly. We sat

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16 Feb. 1903.

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16 Feb. 1903.

as an Army Board, under the presidency of Lord Wolseley, with Sir Evelyn Wood as Adjutant-General, myself as Quartermaster-General, and General Brackenbury as responsible for the Ordnance; there were special sittings, so far as I recollect, from day to day for the immediate consideration of what was wanted, as the crisis was imminent.

14703. We have seen the records of those meetings?—I did not know that.

14704. Then, beyond that statement, there is nothing else you would wish to say with regard to the position of the Quartermaster-General's Department before you left it?—No.

14705. Then you were appointed to the command in Natal in September, 1899, I think?—Yes.

14706. And you arrived at Cape Town on the 3rd October, and were in Natal on the 7th?—I think those were the dates.

14707. You have been good enough to give us a statement, and, if you have no objection, we should propose to treat it, as we have other statements, as a part of the evidence?—That will quite meet my views.

The statement is as follows :—

In accordance with the permission conveyed to me in a letter from the Secretary of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, dated 7th January, 1903, I have the honour to submit the following summarised account of the military operations directed by me during the period I exercised an independent command in Natal. In the course of this statement I will endeavour to dwell on those events and decisions which have hitherto been looked upon as of the highest public importance, with a view of laying before the Commissioners the circumstances and conditions which surrounded the questions at the time I had to decide them; and the reasons that led me to issue the orders in each case. I embarked at Southampton for South Africa on the 16th September, 1899. I may here mention, as the point has been referred to in the evidence I have been allowed to see, that, previous to starting, I had received no orders, except that I was to assume command of the forces in Natal; and that the General Officer commanding at Cape Town was to exercise his command independently of me. I was not informed of any plan of campaign against the Boers, or asked to operate on any given lines. I therefore considered myself unfettered in meeting the emergencies which I had to face immediately on landing, as I thought best for the preservation of Natal. I arrived at Cape Town on the 3rd October, and had a short interview with Sir Alfred Milner. From what he told me I was convinced that Natal would be the main objective of the Boers, and that war was imminent. I accordingly changed my plan of going by sea to Durban from Cape Town, and proceeded the same evening overland to East London, where the Durban mail steamer had been detained for me. I landed at Durban on the 7th October. Major-General Sir W. Penn Symons met me there. I may, perhaps, here say that at Durban I met Captain Holland of the Indian Marine, who was helping in the transport service, and who had served with me when I was commanding the Field Force during the war in Upper Burma. I asked him about the coal supply, and urged him to get as much as possible from outside sources, as even then I had grave doubts as to my ability to cover the Dundee coalfields in the north of Natal. From Major-General Symons I learned the distribution of the Imperial and Colonial troops then in the Colony. This is given in the second paragraph of my despatch, dated Ladysmith, 2nd November, 1899, which, with my other despatches, is, I presume, before the Commissioners. The troops were distributed between Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Colenso, Ladysmith, Glencoe, Eshowe, and Helpmakaar. The information available to me regarding the disposition of the Boer forces is given in paragraph 3 of my despatch above referred to. The Governor of Natal, Sir W. Hely Hutchinson, informed me on the 10th October that the outbreak of the war on the 11th October was certain. On learning the disposition of the troops, I had been much impressed by the exposed position of the force at Glencoe, and had discussed it with Sir W. Penn Symons. He had given the subject great thought, had consulted the Colonial officers and local civil authorities, and was most confident that he had sufficient troops there to hold his own against the Boers. He also dwelt to me on the advantages that the ground round Glencoe offered for the tactics of his trained troops against burgher levies. Notwithstanding his opinion, I considered the Glencoe force should be with-

drawn. Ladysmith appeared to me the most advanced post that could practically be held against the two main divisions of the Boer Army. We knew that both Transvaalers and Freestaters were making every preparation to take the initiative and to assume at once an active offensive. The screen of mountains which separates both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State from Northern Natal gave the enemy exceptional opportunities of manœuvring behind it. He could start from many bases, and yet his forces, acting in combination and aided by the extraordinary mobility of their organisation, could mass suddenly at a selected point of vantage in Natal. If too heavily threatened on any point by the slower-moving British forces, they could fall back to the inaccessible fastnesses of the border land, where, it was apparent to me from the first, it would have been folly to follow them with any force I could hope to attack them with, at so great a distance from the base at Ladysmith. But in addition to the considerations given above, my transport only allowed me two or three days' march from a railway. The facility with which the enemy could cut communications behind me if I had given them a long line to strike at, would have involved me in probable disaster. Feeling that Ladysmith was the most advanced post that I could hold in force to use as a shield to cover the vitals of Natal, I sought an interview with the Governor, Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson, to tell him of my intentions to concentrate there. He has himself given an account of that interview, which took place at Pietermaritzburg on the 9th October, 1899. His account was laid before Parliament in January, 1900, and is no doubt before the Commissioners. It will be seen that Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson gave a most decided opinion that a withdrawal from Glencoe would be disastrous, involving the probability of the Dutch, not only in Natal, but also in the Cape Colony, throwing in their lot openly with the Boers. He further said that the effect on the natives, of whom there are some 750,000 in Natal and Zululand, might be disastrous, and that loyalists would be disgusted and discouraged. He also informed me that the opinions he had expressed were not his only, but were shared by the Prime Minister and by every member of the Natal Government. The dangers described above have since been referred to as mere political considerations, which should not have been allowed to over-ride military principles; but I submit that to dismiss them thus, after the danger is passed, is to deprive them of the weight that was due to them when I had to decide. The issue that appealed to me with greatest force was the rising of 750,000 of perhaps the most warlike and bloodthirsty natives in our Empire. Had it taken place, it would have been as great a disaster in a military sense as in a political. With reference to the probability of these results, I was bound to give the greatest possible weight to the opinions of the Governor and the Ministers. They had all the threads of information, both as regards Dutch and native feeling, coming direct to them, and they had had experience of these races for years. If I had ordered withdrawal, and their anticipations had turned out true, it would have been said, with reason, that after a few hours' experience of a country in which I had never been before, I had acted in direct opposition to the opinions of all my responsible advisers on such a point, who for years had had their fingers on the pulse of native opinion, and that I had thus brought about a most terrible disaster. On the other hand, there was a chance of success, and Sir W. Penn Symons was most sanguine, as were the whole of the local Government. Failing a success, there was the chance of being able to effect a withdrawal from Glencoe later, as was actually accomplished, after the Glencoe force had inflicted a very stopping blow, the after effects of which had far-reaching results. It turned the over-weening confidence with which the Transvaalers crossed the frontier into a hesitancy which not only aided the Glencoe column in getting away, but was of immense value to me in affording me more time to get up reinforcements, which were arriving daily.

I may, perhaps, here be allowed to notice the evidence given by Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, as follows: "The question, then, is, did Sir George White make the best of the situation as he found it? This is a most difficult point to decide, but it has always seemed to me that it was still possible for Sir George White to give effect to the great military principle of meeting the enemy with massed forces while they were still separated. I think the various actions and movements of Sir George White's troops must be

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regarded from that point of view, and that if so regarded they cannot be considered as altogether satisfactory. It seems certain that Talana might have been fought with a much stronger force, although I admit that Ladysmith would have been in some danger of attack by the Orange Free State troops for the space of a few days." In the earlier part of the evidence Earl Roberts gives the strength of the force available in Natal when the crisis came as 13,630 men, including militia, volunteers, and police. His Lordship further says that the task set before these 13,630 men was to hold their own against 50,000 or 60,000 Boers for a period of two months at the least. The method he has now advocated was to meet the enemy with massed forces. He also indicates Talana as an instance in which this massing ought to have been applied. Coming from so high an authority, I feel the conclusion he has arrived at deeply. I, however, beg, with the deference due to his Lordship's great ability and well-merited success, to ask consideration for the following views. To be quite impartial towards my own contention, I must begin by stating that I consider 50,000 to 60,000 Boers too high an estimate of the numbers I had to fight against. In order to argue within my own convictions of the odds against me, I will divide Lord Roberts's estimate by two, and work on the basis of 30,000 Boers. It would perhaps be a fair division to give the Transvaalers 18,000 and the Orange Free State 12,000. As a matter of fact, in a report dated 12th October, 1899, laid before me by my Intelligence Staff officer, it was estimated that on the 10th October the total force of Boers assembled on the northern and western frontiers of Natal amounted to 27,000 men. The enterprise of massing in strength against the enemy while they were still separated divides itself, naturally, into a choice between two objectives: (1) the Transvaalers, generally speaking, to the north; (2) the Orange Free Staters to the west. It must not be taken for granted that I could have advanced the force from Ladysmith, either north or west, without every move being known to the enemy. Ladysmith itself was full of Dutch partisans. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose that I could have taken any of the principal detachments of the advancing enemy by surprise. They would have had certain information of my movements. In case their numerical strength, or the still greater strength they know so well how to take advantage of in the selection of strong positions, had not given them the better of the chances, they would have fallen back on the fastnesses, which everywhere presented themselves in the mountain ranges which screened the advance of both Transvaalers and Free Staters. In any such manœuvring the superior mobility of the Boers would have given them the very greatest advantage. I had positive evidence from an eye-witness that most of the Free Staters had three ponies. A force so equipped could have manœuvred round me. They could cover 30, or even 40, miles with less fatigue than our infantry could march 12 miles. In an advance of any length towards the enemy it would have been necessary to provide for the safety of the base at Ladysmith and the line of communication with it. After making these provisions, the numbers that I could have brought up into fighting line would have been wholly inadequate to meet the Boers in any position in which they were likely to make a stand. It will be readily understood that out of 13,630 men in Natal, or even many more, but a small number could be brought to the fighting front. The Boers had the advantage of being strategically on the offensive, but, tactically, they could at any time assume the defensive. Besides, I should have had to make a long advance under the disadvantage of not being able to move more than two or three days from a railway, as my transport was not adapted for more. The positions the Free Staters could have taken up to the west have been aptly described as a succession of precipices. These are specially adapted for Boer defensive tactics, and all the experiences of the war show the impossibility of defeating Boers so placed without greatly superior numbers. In my case the British would have been actually fewer than the defending force. With special reference to the propriety of massing my troops against the Transvaalers in the north, the arguments I have used above are generally applicable. The nearest point at which I could have hoped to strike at any force would have been more distant from Ladysmith than in a similar operation to the west; they would consequently have had longer notice of my approach, and I do not believe I could have brought 8,000 men into action. According to the data of

strength I have taken, the Boers could have massed some 18,000. The initiative resting with them, they could have awaited my attack without loss or inconvenience in selected positions. Every hour so occupied would have made my position worse. The Free Staters would have been drawing nearer and nearer to Ladysmith, to find it depleted of its garrison, an easy prey and a prize of immense value. I may here state definitely that my ultimate hopes of saving Natal from being overrun by the Boers were centred in holding Ladysmith. Personally, I never underrated the enemy's fighting power. I knew they were fighting for what they knew was national existence and according to their national instincts. I had had letters from officers and men of my own regiment who were engaged at Majuba, and who had fought under me all through the Afghan War, 1879-80, and I knew that the Boers who had forced Ian Hamilton, Hector Macdonald, and others to surrender were no despicable enemies. With special reference to Talana, if the Boers had known—and they would have known—I had massed there it is not likely that Meyer would have made his isolated attack without waiting for the co-operation of Erasmus and the support of Joubert. But I could not foresee the date of Talana. It took General Yule's column, marching for their existence, the 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th October to reach Ladysmith. I could not depend upon moving a large body of cavalry, artillery, and transport by rail on a single line with very steep gradients. To be present then, and fit to fight on the 20th at Talana, I would have had to quit Ladysmith on the 14th, when many of the troops had not yet arrived there. But it will be remembered that General Koch occupied Elands-laagte on the 19th, and cut the railway communication with Glencoe. The position of the British force massed at Talana would then have been as follows: A superior force with six-inch guns in front of them, an intercepting force at Elands-laagte, and the whole of the Free State Army either at or close to Ladysmith, which would have been unentrenched, and without a garrison capable of defending it. It may fairly be said that under such conditions capitulation would have been a question of days, if not of hours. Let us now consider what was really accomplished under the system of strategy I adopted, and of which the ruling factor was: "Take care of Ladysmith, and use it to cover the capital and south of Natal." I have already shown why, contrary to my strategic instincts, I was induced to leave the force at Glencoe. I was confident that that fine soldier, Sir William Penn Symons would strike with the greatest energy. This he did at Talana, taking immediate advantage of the defective co-operation of the Boers. These latter, from the individuality and independence of their organisation, were incapable of recovering their energy rapidly after such a shock. I therefore think that it was to this bold stroke of Major-General Symons that we owe the facility with which General Yule managed to withdraw his force. But General Koch's force would have barred Yule's line of retreat had there not been a sufficient force at Ladysmith to make a more decisively victorious attack on it than was made at Talana. I may perhaps be pardoned if I here quote from that great strategist and writer, Admiral A. T. Mahan, who reviews this part of the campaign without any personal or political bias, and who expresses my convictions in language more lucid than I can use: "Duly to appreciate the merits and results of these two successful days of fighting at Talana and Elands-laagte, it must be remembered that the British, in a general sense, and at Dundee locally as well, were upon the defensive, and that the Boer movements were each a part of one general plan directed, and most properly, to overwhelm and destroy the detachments—Dundee and Ladysmith—in detail; they together being considered one fraction of the enemy's force present, or hurrying over sea. So regarded, the vigour with which the British took the initiative, assumed the offensive, themselves in turn attacking in detail and severely punishing the separate factors of the enemy's combinations, is worthy of great praise. Sir Penn Symons is perhaps entitled to the greater meed, because to him fell, with the greater burden, the greater opportunity to which he proved not unequal. Such men are worthy of the steady forward gallantry shown by officers and men. Both leaders and led easily carried off the palm from the more phlegmatic opponents, who failed to sweep them away. The result was to save Ladysmith, or

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16 Feb. 1903.

See Q. 10183.

rather—what was more really important—the organised force that was there shut in. The brilliant antecedent campaign, the offensive right and left strokes, the prompt and timely resolve of Yule to retreat just as he did, and the consequent concentration utterly frustrated the Boers' combinations, and shattered antecedently their expectation of subduing the British by the cheaper method of exhaustion."

I will turn now to the opinion expressed in Earl Roberts's evidence, that within 48 hours of Brigadier-General Yule's return to Ladysmith, it would have been possible for me to strike a blow with my whole force either against the Free State troops or those of the Transvaal. With reference to this, I submit the following consideration: The Brigadier-General's force marched into Ladysmith on the 26th October, and the Orange Free State and Transvaal troops joined hands on that very day at Modder Spruit. Even on the 27th and 28th the troops that had returned from Dundee were not fit for work in the field, and needed more rest. I had not lost sight of the importance of massing for an offensive effort. On the contrary, it was a prominent feature in my general plan. There were, however, limitations to the scale on which I could carry this out. The fighting power, the numerical superiority and greater mobility of the enemy working against me from divergent bases, precluded me from assuming the strategical offensive. I could only concentrate and wait till he gave me a chance of acting tactically on the offensive. In the great successes that were obtained later in the war the British had a very great numerical superiority. Lord Roberts must have had four or five times the number of troops that surrendered with Cronje. Towards the end of the war the Boers were estimated at about 20,000; the British had 250,000. In the latter phases of the war, also, the mobility of the British force was greatly increased. When Natal was invaded the relative numbers were all the other way, and the mobility also.

See Qs.
8872, 8903.

In reading over Lord Wolseley's evidence, I find he entirely condemns the holding of Glencoe and Ladysmith, and says that it should not have been even contemplated. I find in my file of telegrams one from Lord Wolseley, dated War Office, 17th October, No. 370: "Is Glencoe rationed for 60 days, as ordered? If not, for how many? Comply with orders, and report action." This conveyed to me the meaning that at that time Lord Wolseley contemplated Glencoe being held, and that he was also anxious that there should be the means of holding it for 60 days after the enemy had cut its line of supply. I received a second telegram from Lord Wolseley, No. 419, dated 23rd October, from which the following is an extract: "I do not wish in any way to hamper your discretion, but, personally, I am anxious about the safety of Colenso Bridge." On the date on which this telegram was despatched, viz., 23rd October, there does not appear to me to have been any suggestion from his Lordship of withdrawal from Ladysmith. I interpreted it as calling my attention to the importance of the bridge as on my line of communication from Ladysmith, and on the 31st October, in attention to Lord Wolseley's telegram, I despatched out of my already too small force in Ladysmith, the 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Natal Field Battery by rail to Colenso to assist in the defence of the bridges over the Tugela. In reply to Question 8875, Lord Wolseley says: "No one ever thought that the troops would occupy Ladysmith. The district in front of Ladysmith is called Biggarsberg, a very strong position. Ladysmith is in a hollow. It is no position at all." To this I can only reply that when I arrived in Natal, and I believe before, there was a general opinion that Ladysmith was a point to be held. Its selection as the principal station for troops in Natal received the very high sanction of Lord Wolseley himself. Everything that has since come to light shows that the Boers were confident that it would be held, and laid their plans to concentrate on it accordingly. It was their chief objective, and its fall was to be the guarantee to waverers that the Boers were too strong for the British in the field, and that, therefore, the time had come when it was safe for them to join the Dutch standards. In November, I believe, the Tugela was fordable from the Drakensberg to the Buffalo River. I have, however, given my reasons for holding Ladysmith, at some length, in paragraph 3 of my despatch, dated 23rd March, 1900, which I reproduce here, as it deals more fully with this most important issue: "3. It may be

well to state here shortly the reasons which governed my choice of this position. Ladysmith is the most important town in Northern Natal; and there was reason to believe that the enemy attached very great, and perhaps even undue, importance to gaining possession of it. It was suspected then, and the suspicion has since been confirmed, that the occupation of that town by the Boer forces had been decided on by the disloyal Dutch in both colonies as the signal for a general rising; as in fact, a material guarantee that the power of the combined Republics was really capable of dealing with any force the British Empire was able to place in the field against them. Our withdrawal would, therefore, have brought about an insurrection so widespread as to have very materially increased our difficulties. Strategically, the town was important as being the junction of the railways which enter Natal from the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and until the Republics could gain possession of that junction their necessarily divergent lines of supply and communication prevented their enjoying to the full the advantages of combined action. Tactically, the place was already partially prepared for defence and offered a natural position of some strength; and although the perimeter which must be occupied was very great for the number of troops available, yet it afforded a possibility of maintaining a protracted defence against superior numbers. On the other hand, the mere fact of a retirement behind the Tugela would have had a moral effect at least equal to a serious defeat, and would have involved the abandonment to the enemy of a large town full of an English population—men, women, and children—and of a mass of stores and munitions of war which had been already collected there before my arrival in South Africa, and had since been increased. The line of the Tugela, from the Drakensberg to the Buffalo River, is some 80 miles long, and in a dry season, such as last November, can be crossed on foot almost anywhere. Against an enemy with more than double my numbers and three times my mobility I could not hope to maintain such a line with my small force, and any attempt to prevent their turning my flanks could only have resulted in such a weakening of my centre as would have led to its being pierced. Once my flank was turned on the line of the river, the enemy would have been nearer Maritzburg than I should have been, and a rapid withdrawal by rail for the defence of the capital would have been inevitable. Even there it would have been impossible to make a prolonged defence without leaving it open to the enemy to occupy the important port of Durban, through which alone supplies and reinforcements could arrive, and for the defence of which another retreat would have become eventually essential, thus abandoning to the enemy the whole colony of Natal from Laing's Nek to the sea. On the other hand, I was confident of holding out at Ladysmith as long as might be necessary, and I saw clearly that as long as I maintained myself there I could occupy the great mass of the Boer armies, and prevent them sending more than small flying columns south of the Tugela, which the British and Colonial forces in my rear, aided by such reinforcements as might be shortly expected, could deal with without much difficulty. Accordingly, I turned my whole attention to preparing Ladysmith to stand a prolonged siege."

To return to Lord Wolseley's evidence: The Biggarsberg was not provisioned, and the main routes and the railway from the Orange Free State entered Natal in rear of it. Had I, therefore, posted my force on the Biggarsberg, Ladysmith—their most coveted possession—would have lain open in my rear. The position Natal would then have been in needs no explanation. But, though the Biggarsberg has been referred to by Lord Wolseley as a strong position, I am not, even now, assured that it would, even judged apart from the considerations with which it was connected in my mind, have been found a suitable position for a division of all arms which had to occupy it for a long period. So far as my information went, the water supply was off the plateau and at its foot. It will be recollected that General Sir Redvers Buller, signalling to me on the 17th December, said: "I find I cannot take Colenso, and I cannot stay in force near, as there is no water" He could not get water in presence of the enemy, even though close to the Tugela. Even if I had looked upon the Biggarsberg as tenable under strategical conditions, the time at my disposal, or that of my staff, would have been too short to thoroughly go into questions so vitally important to its tenability as this and others. Ladysmith had been fixed upon

Vide Blue
Book, Cd.
458, 1901

since 1897, on the highest authority, and had been tested by occupation. The assured water supply for war may have had an influence on its selection. Though the ordinary water supply for peace was cut off by the Boers, the Klip River supplied us, and they could not divert it. When I arrived at Ladysmith the Boers were marching on Natal. It was necessary to accept something that had been gone into and settled by my predecessors in command. Had I made changes which required considerable time to carry out I should have been caught "swopping horses in mid-stream." With regard to Ladysmith being in a hollow, I held the heights around, and took advantage of the hollows, which were screened by the heights from the enemy's observation, for hospitals, ammunition parks, etc. With reference to its being no position at all, I can only urge that I defended it for 119 days against the headquarters and united armies of the South African Republics. Letters in my possession, extending from 30th October, 1899, to 21st February, 1900, prove that all this time the headquarters were north of Ladysmith. They are all dated from "Headquarters, near Ladysmith," and are nearly all signed by "P. I. Joubert," Commandant-General, South African Republic, or by "S. Berger," for him. On the 9th February, 1903, I saw for the first time Lord Wolseley's telegram to Sir R. Buller, dated, apparently, 31st October, in which he tells the latter that he had warned me before I left England of the importance of Colenso. I can only say I have no recollection of this warning. With regard to this, I will quote the last part of paragraph 2 of my despatch, dated Cape Town, 23rd March, 1900. "On the 31st October General Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to me as follows: 'Can you not entrench and await events, if not at Ladysmith, then behind the Tugela at Colenso?'" On the same date I replied, stating my intention to hold on to Ladysmith, and on 1st November I received Sir Redvers Buller's approval of this course in a telegram which commenced as follows:—"I agree that you do best to remain at Ladysmith, though Colenso and line of the Tugela River look tempting." It will have been observed that Field Marshal Lord Wolseley considers that the proper strategy to resort to before the superior forces of the Boers was to retire behind the Tugela. Field Marshal Earl Roberts, on the contrary, attributes the subsequent difficulty to the neglect in the opening campaign of the great principle of advancing against the enemy's armies with massed forces while they were still separated. When two such very high authorities take views so exactly opposite of what the right course was, it may, at all events, be allowed that strategy is not a very positive or exact science, the study of which leads to uncontentious conclusions.

I will next give some account of the operations I entered into with a view to clearing up doubtful points regarding them, and of removing misconceptions. On the 16th October I had a general scheme prepared for fortifying Ladysmith. On the 19th October I made an inspection of the fortifications, and made some alterations. The actions of Talana and Elandslaagte have been described in my despatch of the 2nd November, 1899. I have nothing to add to these accounts and to what has been written in this paper. On the 22nd October General Yule found he was unable to hold his ground at Dundee, and he notified to me that he was retiring. His notification led me to believe that he meant to retire on Halpmakaar. I accordingly sent him an order to fall back on Ladysmith, and promised that I would, if necessary, fight out to help him in. I have quite lately learned from him that he always intended to retire on Ladysmith. The telegraphic communication lasted long enough to enable me to get an order to him to retire on Ladysmith, and a promise that I would, if necessary, fight out to help him in. In fulfilment of this promise I marched out on the 24th October to ascertain if his route was clear. I found the enemy in a strong position commanding the road from Newcastle. I engaged him, and forced him back, thus clearing the way for Yule's force, which might otherwise have had opposition here. Yule, hearing my guns, sent him in hopes of giving help; but we were further from him than he thought, and his guns returned to his bivouac without effecting a junction. This was the action at Rietfontein, described in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of my despatch, dated Ladysmith, 2nd December, 1899. The expenditure of gun ammunition was heavy, and caused me anxiety with regard to the future, as the supply of such ammunition was very short. During this action I had sent orders to the cavalry, who were guarding my right, to make an attempt to turn the enemy's left and get in on his

laagers, or field bases, which I knew to be there. This was found impracticable owing to a position held by the enemy north of Intintanyone, which, though not occupied by large numbers, was naturally so strong that it was impossible to take it without great loss, or to pass it. The reason for describing this incident will appear later. On the 25th October I sent out the 19th Hussars and some squadrons of the Imperial Light Horse to observe the position of Rietfontein and ascertain that it had not been reoccupied. This was to cover the right flank of General Yule's column from attack by the Free Staters as it marched into Ladysmith. I also sent a force, under Lieutenant-Colonel Coxhead, R.A., to meet the Dundee column, and, if necessary, help it in. All help, however, was declined by General Yule, and his column marched into Ladysmith on the 26th, very weary and travel-stained. They had done some 60 miles by forced marches in very bad weather, but without loss in men or material. It was, however, evident that both man and beast of this column must have rest before being fit to answer fully to any fresh call on them for service in the field. The 27th, 28th, and 29th were employed in reconnoitring the enemy, whose approaches from the north and west were simultaneously and carefully carried out. If I had advanced any considerable distance to attack one section, my flank and rear would have been exposed. At that time I was fortunate enough to have the services of General French, to whom I entrusted the duty of reporting to me any favourable opportunity he might be able to detect of striking a blow at the enemy. On the 29th October he located a considerable Boer force, with guns, on Long Hill, north-east of Ladysmith, and near enough for me to attack without uncovering Ladysmith. I was most unwilling to settle down to the secondary position of a besieged force without making an effort in force to defeat the enemy in the field before he had entrenched himself round Ladysmith. A partial victory could do no permanent good. I therefore thought the occasion called for incurring certain risks in order that if I might gain any advantage over the enemy, I might have the means of making it as decisive as possible. My plan then was to attack Long Hill at daybreak. The force I detailed for this was a brigade division of the Royal Artillery, the Natal Field Battery, and five battalions of infantry. The 5th Lancers, 19th Hussars, and the Natal Mounted Volunteers were to cover the right flank of the troops making this attack. These troops moved out to the north-east of Ladysmith, with guides to show them the roads and tracks. In addition to the above, and in order to cover the left flank of this attacking column, I sent another infantry brigade, consisting of five battalions of infantry, under Colonel Ian Hamilton, by a road more directly to the north, to take up a position at Limit Hill. The divisional troops, consisting of a brigade division Royal Artillery, 5th Dragoon Guards, 18th Hussars, Imperial Light Horse, and two companies mounted infantry accompanied this force. This brigade was to wait for the development of the attack on Long Hill, and if it was successful, to attack and carry Pepworth Hill, which was occupied by the enemy. Knowing, however, the facility with which the mounted Boers could get away in case of defeat, or even of anticipated defeat, and remembering how my mounted troops had been prevented in the action at Rietfontein, on the 24th October, by a small force from getting home on the Boer laagers behind Intintanyone, I sought for some way of getting to the west of Pepworth and Intintanyone, where I had information there was open ground, on which mounted troops could move rapidly, and thus ride round the left flank of the enemy if retreating, seize his field bases, and attack him, with a prospect of bringing about a panic such as had been produced after Elandslaagte. Major W. Adye was on my staff in the Intelligence branch. He was an officer who had impressed me by his high courage and great enterprise in reconnaissance. He had personally examined this ground, and told me of the route through Bell's Spruit to Nicholson's Nek. This nek was the pass into the western valley which I wanted to use. He explained to me that the route up to Nicholson's Nek was a defile. I specially inquired from him whether, if the column failed to reach the nek, which was six or seven miles off, there were strong intermediate positions that could be utilised for a short defence. He told me there were many. I am always doubtful of reaching a desired point by a night march through a difficult country, but the result I aimed at seemed to me to justify the risk. War is a balancing of risks against results. In this case the result is known, and was disastrous. I have not, however,

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sufficiently authentic information to enable me to say the numbers of Boers who were engaged at this particular point, but it still remains to be proved that, under ordinary calculations of strength, the British might not have been expected to make good their retreat to Ladysmith. The account of the action at Lombard's Kop is given in my despatch dated from Ladysmith, Natal, 2nd December, 1899, paragraphs 6, 7, 8, and 9. (*Vide Blue Book* Cd. 458, 1901.) I will here supplement it by saying that in the night (29th-30th October) the enemy had slipped away from Long Hill. They either got information of my plan or divined it from the news they received from partisans in Ladysmith, that preparations were being made to move out. At all events, Long Hill was found evacuated, and the enemy ready to attack my attacking force in flank, which attack they delivered. There was some confusion in meeting this attack, and I had to divert some of the force at Limit Hill that I had intended for other purposes to restore the balance of the action. It was soon reported to me that by the aid of these reinforcements the enemy was well held; but on coming under rifle and shell fire many of the water and ammunition mules had broken away, and the enemy was too strongly posted to give me a hope of driving him out. There was also a rapid expenditure of gun ammunition, which was very precious to me, as the supply was very limited. I saw that there was no longer any chance of doing anything decisive, and I therefore determined to withdraw into Ladysmith. As soon as I had come to this conclusion I had made careful arrangements to cover the withdrawal, placed batteries so as to check pursuit, occupied ridges that covered the road into Ladysmith with infantry drawn from Limit Hill, and, when all was ready, ordered a retirement in *echelon* from the left. Previously I had dictated a telegram to Lieutenant-Colonel Altham, who was with me all day, directing Lieutenant-Colonel Carleton and the Nicholson's Nek column to retire on Ladysmith. The order was given by me about 8.30 a.m. The reports that the retirement from Lombard's Kop was a rout were untrue. Our troops disengaged easily. There were one or two attempts to follow up. These were easily checked by a few rounds of shrapnel, and the Boers went back to their previous and more sheltered positions. The enemy did not follow up our retirement. I think it necessary to mention these details to controvert reports published at the time, and that have since appeared.

It has often been stated that the fortification of Ladysmith had been neglected until after the withdrawal of the troops on the 30th October which I have just described. I am glad to be able to refute this charge on the high authority of the Commandant-General of the Boers. After the action at Lombard's Kop I had, under flag of truce, called General Joubert's attention to the fact that his guns had been directed on buildings over which the Red Cross flag was flying. I give below an extract from his reply:—"Headquarters, 4th November, 1899. Honoured Sir, In answer to yours of the 3rd instant, just received I beg to reply to the same, and to inform you that I regret that under circumstances over which I had no control certain persons unconnected with the present military operations should have been killed. When on Monday last the attack from Ladysmith was made on my position I found that the whole town was a fortified camp, and it appeared that there was no side to be seen from which my position and men were not fired upon." While on this subject I may say that as early as the 16th October I had a plan of fortifying Ladysmith laid out, and the work was proceeded with as the various other duties would admit of. I also telegraphed to the Admiral asking him to send me some heavy guns with which to arm the defences. It is a matter of history now that owing to the energy of Captain Hedworth Lambton the guns and gun detachments arrived the day before communication with Ladysmith was closed. It was thus that the long-standing neglect to fortify this frontier town or to provide armament for its defence was repaired. The daily incidents of the siege have been given at sufficient length in my despatch dated from Cape Town, 23rd March, 1900. I ought perhaps to call attention to paragraph 30 of that despatch to show the preparation I had made to assist in Sir Redvers Buller's first attempt to cross the Tugela. I have a number of copies of messages that passed between me and officers outside with relation to other incidents of the siege and the relieving operations. The movements in pursuit of the defeated Boers are given in paragraph 36. I shall be prepared to answer any questions that may be put to

me, and to produce any messages or communications that may throw light on the operations.

Before I close this paper I would like to submit to His Majesty's Commissioners that my resolve to hold Ladysmith and its successful accomplishment resulted in the complete overthrow of the Boer plan of campaign. That plan was to overwhelm the British in Natal before their reinforcements could arrive, and by a rapid *coup* conquer that province to the sea. The overthrow of that plan had been accomplished even before the reinforcements landed. During the time the Boers could have carried out their plan they were held at Ladysmith. The holding of Ladysmith, therefore, saved Natal. My task was thus fulfilled. If I could keep the Boers round Ladysmith, and thus preserve the integrity of Natal as a province, its capital city of Maritzburg and its seaport at Durban, during the interval, when the Boer's power of early mobilisation and concentration on Natal enabled them to attack with greatly superior numbers, I had every confidence that after that interval the greater resources of the British Empire would be put forth to help my force. I cannot justly be held responsible for the losses incurred in the relief. When Sir Redvers Buller was actually face to face with the difficulties of the position he was confident of his power to overcome them. On the 7th December, 1899, he signalled to me in cipher:—"I have decided to advance by Potgieter's Drift. Expect to start 12th December, and take five days." On 8th December I signalled in reply:—"Captain Heath reported yesterday from balloon that very large laager of enemy, consisting of about 300 tents, is on this side of the Tugela, in neighbourhood of Potgieter's Drift." On 9th December Sir Redvers Buller rejoined:—"The balloon was correct, but they have not enough men to stop me. I am only waiting for wagons which I am impressing. I still hope to start on 12th, and arrive near Lancer's Kop on 17th, but may be a day or two later, though I hope not. If I have hard fighting near Ladysmith, I shall look to you to feed my force for, perhaps, two days. I can only take three days' supplies across the Tugela river, but that should be enough."

If other schemes of operations are put forward, in the calmer aftertime of to-day, as having carried with them the probabilities of more complete and more rapid success, they must for ever lack the final proof of accomplishment. They must also be weighed as regards their intrinsic probabilities of attaining the object aimed at. They must further be most carefully weighed and considered as regards the consequences they involved in case of failure. In this connection the last is all-important. The most momentous lesson of the late war has been, that any advance against Boers on a line of operations, astride of which lie several good positions for defence, requires great superiority of numbers. Frontal attacks proved most costly. The greater the detour required for a flanking movement the greater the superiority of numbers necessary. Otherwise, the centre must be unduly weakened. Mounted Boers fighting in a defensive position, which secures the advantage of interior lines, could rapidly mass considerable proportions of their forces against the very much slower and wider movement of our infantry flank attack. The intended flank attack thus becomes locally a frontal attack with its attendant dangers. The Boers constantly practised this manœuvre. Watching them from our observation points in Ladysmith position, we could not at first understand why they galloped *ventre à terre*, from one hill to another. It was at first put down to the result of a panic. Later, we recognised that they were practising moving from one alternative position to another, and testing the time required to carry it out. This power practically doubled their numbers, and the manœuvre was effective over a very wide area. The Boers could be in a position facing the British force on the Tugela, and in an hour and a-half later could be attacking Ladysmith. To trust to manœuvring infantry against a force capable of such mobility, is to stake your fortune on the pace and striking power of a stage-coach against those of an express train.

I wish to add, if I may, something which I think will strengthen the statement I have made, on the high authority of Lord Roberts.

14708. If you please. Will you do it now?—Since I wrote the foregoing, a speech made by Lord Roberts on the 12th January last has come under my notice, which being the latest utterance of the highest authority on this subject comes in most appositely in support of the views I have expressed above. "It is no longer possible for foot soldiers, no matter what wonderful marching they may be capable of, to hurriedly re-

Vide Blue Book, 458, 1901.

inforce any particular point that may be hard pressed, or to bring a flanking fire upon a widely extended enemy, or to make a sufficiently sweeping turning movement. For such purposes we must have troops who can travel more rapidly than the fastest infantry." That is all that I care to add to my written statement.

14709. I gather from your statement that your feeling, on making yourself acquainted with the situation in Natal, was that it would be desirable to concentrate your forces?—Certainly.

14710. Was that at Ladysmith, or at a point beyond Ladysmith?—At Ladysmith.

14711. We have had it stated that previous to the interview which you had with the Governor on the 9th October, you had formed the impression that you had better concentrate at Sundays River?—I cannot recollect that. I cannot recollect any like train of thought that would have led me to concentrate at Sundays River. It may have been possible that I discussed it, but I do not recollect it. I knew that the stores were at Ladysmith.

14712. From the first then, it was your opinion that your stand would have to be made at Ladysmith?—I looked upon it that Ladysmith was the most advanced point which I could hold to stop the Boers from invading to the south of it, to act, in fact, as a shield to the rest of Natal.

14713. How far was that opinion derivable from any scheme of defence which had existed before that?—Ladysmith had been pointed out to me as a place regarding which there was a consensus of opinion that it should be the most strongly held in northern Natal, by all the officers who had been in command before me, and by the preparations they had made, and even by the schemes of defence which General Symons talked over with me when I met him at Durban.

14714. When I spoke of schemes of defence I was alluding to certain schemes of local defence which had been drawn up by the General Officers Commanding in Natal at different periods, and I think the last one was drawn up by Sir William Butler in 1899. Had you seen these schemes of defence?—I have asked myself that question before, and I really cannot quite say. But an explanation of that I would like to state to the Commissioners that I think they were so inapposite to the altered conditions that I should only have treated them as a line for my guidance, and in no way considered myself fettered by them.

14715. Quite so, but, of course, it might have forestalled your opinion with regard to Ladysmith?—They, everything I heard, and the preparations made, did confirm my opinion.

14716. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And with regard to Dundee?—No, I do not think as regards Dundee in the abstract it fettered me. I had not before me anything to lead me to suppose that there was any position there.

14717. (*Chairman.*) But in the local schemes of defence, I think in all of them, there were provisions for holding Dundee?—Yes. There were provisions, but it was "provisions" in the eating sense.

14718. I mean that there was a provision in the scheme for a force being stationed there?—Yes.

14719. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) It was only a weak detachment, which could not have resisted the Boer army?—I cannot stand cross-examination on that scheme; I do not pretend to have attached any weight to it. I am not certain that I had that scheme in its details before me. I cannot help thinking that any scheme of that sort must have contemplated that the Orange Free State joining the Transvaal was very doubtful.

14720. (*Chairman.*) Had you any instructions before you left home with regard to your proceedings?—None.

14721. I suppose you had conferences with the authorities here in this country?—None that I can recollect. I remember one. Of course I do not know what your Lordship and the Commissioners may have before you; but the only conversation I can recall was when I went to say good bye to Lord Lansdowne, and when I asked him to give every consideration he could to an extra ammunition train that I was very anxious to get. I remember his reply to me being "But your position will be a defensive one." So far as I can recall, my reply was, that it was impossible to say before war commenced what position I might have to take up. In further explanation of that reply, I would like to say,

as regards expenditure of ammunition, that a defensive position often entails the necessity of a greater expenditure than when attacking. If you are an attacking force the initiative rests with you, and you need not attack unless you have sufficient ammunition; but when you are on the defensive you must reply to the guns of the attack.

14722. But written instructions you had none?—Written instructions I had none.

14723. That we were told?—I merely mentioned that conversation with Lord Lansdowne; I do not think he meant in any way to lay down a system of defence; it simply fell out, as I have given it to you, in conversation.

14724. Then was your objection to holding Dundee mainly because you wished to keep your forces massed?—Certainly; and I also looked upon Dundee as a long way out.

14725. Had the nature of the position anything to do with it?—No, not at the time.

14726. The position was not a good one for defence, was it?—I have not seen it. Perhaps in reply I may say that when I sent Sir William Penn Symons to take command at Glencoe I directed him to get a defensible position, to entrench it, and I gave him definite directions to be certain that he had an assured water supply inside it. I had better tell the story out. I sent, I think, Sir Henry Rawlinson up there on some staff mission, and when he came back I asked him about the position, and on getting some facts from him which made me doubt its strength and completeness, I communicated with Sir William Penn Symons that if he had not got an entrenched position, with an assured water supply inside it, he must vacate Glencoe at once.

14727. And there was a difficulty about the water supply, I gather?—His reply to me (I think I have it amongst my telegrams) was: "I cannot give you the assurances you ask for; and, therefore, I must obey your orders." He then went into the details of retiring; he said that he would make a feint towards the front, and that I must send him rolling stock to take away everything that could be taken away. I think women and children were amongst them. I forget the exact date, but it must have been within a couple of days of the action at Talana. I wired in reply: "It is too late to do that," and I asked him whether he personally thought that under the circumstances, and knowing what he had to remove, he had better stand. He said: "I am certain we must remain here." I then wired back to him: "I accept it, and I will support you."

14728. Is it not rather singular that there had not been an examination into the water supply before?—I think it was part of the grand confidence of the man. He had enlarged to me on the advantages of Glencoe as a field in which he could work his trained soldiers (and I may say they were splendidly trained; he was about the finest tactician I have known); he wanted to work them in the open against the advancing enemy, and I think he was carried away more by his own convictions upon that point than upon the precautions I directed him to take. This is the telegram: "Sent at 1.30 a.m., 18th October, to General Symons. I have been in communication with the Governor, and he thinks the political importance of your force remaining at Dundee has already greatly decreased. Maritzburg is now threatened, and I have to reinforce it heavily. If, therefore, you are not absolutely confident of being able to entrench yourself strongly with assured water supply within your position, fall back on Ladysmith. Send reply as quickly as possible." On the same date I sent, a couple of hours afterwards, the following telegram: "From Chief, Natal, to General Symons. With regard to water, are you confident you can supply your camp for an indefinite period? The difficulties and risk of withdrawing civil population and military stores are great. The railway may be cut any day. Do you yourself, after considering these difficulties, think it better to remain at Dundee and prefer it?" General Symons' reply to me is dated 18th October: "Clear the line. We can and must stay here. I have no doubt whatever that this is the proper course. I have cancelled all orders for moving." Then on the 18th October I rejoined to that: "Your 1.34 to 'clear the line.' I fully support you. Make particulars referred to by me as safe as possible. Difficulties and disadvantages of other course have decided me to support your views."

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C.M.G.

16 Feb. 1903.

14729. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Might I ask what influenced your sending a second telegram two hours after the other in a different sense?—It is not in a different sense, is it? It never struck me that I had contradicted myself. You mean the difficulties and risk of withdrawing?

14730. Yes?—I think the telegram has been lost from the file, but he had asked me for carriage for the women and children; and when he came to work out what he would require his demands on me were what I could not possibly have given him; it would have risked the whole of the rolling stock. I must think out that point on the spot now. The line between Ladysmith and Glencoe was cut (this was the 18th October) by General Koch on the 19th at Elandslaagte. Have I answered your question? Was that what you wanted?

(*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Yes, I think generally.

14731. (*Chairman.*) When I asked the question about preparations for a water supply I did not so much mean to refer to General Symons, but to the whole of the schemes of defence of the colony. When Dundee was suggested I should have thought the question of water supply would have been one of the first that was attended to?—I agree.

14732. But apparently it had not been thought out?—Apparently it had not been thought out even by the officer who was in presence of the situation.

14733. Then another consideration which I understand weighed very much with you in acceding to the views of the Governor was the presence of the natives on the frontier?—Yes.

14734. That you considered a serious danger, which you were obliged to take into account?—I thought it a most serious danger. I was probably the only one in South Africa at the time who had been all through the Indian Mutiny, and I felt a very heavy responsibility in acting against the advice of my responsible, I might say, my constitutional, advisers on what the effect of a given order of mine might be upon 750,000 natives. I pressed the Governor with regard to it. I said: "You have put before me terrible risks with regard to the result of my proposed action that I think I would not be justified in facing." He adhered to his view most firmly, and also, as I think I have said in the statement which I have submitted, he told me that it was not only his opinion, but that it was the strongly-held opinion of every member of his local government. I think it is only fair that people judging on that decision of mine should put themselves absolutely in the position that I was in at the time when I had to decide.

14735. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you think the Governor was aware of the fact that there was a possibility, if our troops did not withdraw from Glencoe, that they might have been beaten at Glencoe?—I think he had overwhelming confidence in their standing.

14736. Because, of course, it is palpable that their being beaten out of Glencoe would have had a worse effect upon the natives than their withdrawing?—Yes; but, of course, there was always the element of hope that they would not be beaten, and there was a chance of getting them back if fighting an enemy on equal terms.

14737. (*Sir John Edge.*) But is that quite so? The Governor may have been aware of the fact that there was a risk of our being defeated, but would not a good fight, even if we had to retreat afterwards, have impressed the natives more with our power than if we had retreated without fighting? The natives might not understand concentration at all; they might think that we were running away; but if we had had a good fight, as we had, and then retreated, and then concentrated, the natives might have looked upon it from a different point of view?—I am not a native, and I cannot say. I may, however, say *à propos* of what Sir John Edge has suggested, that I attach the greatest importance to the blow struck from Glencoe, and I have brought that out in my statement.

14738. (*Chairman.*) That is to say, that although we had to retreat afterwards, still the fight at Glencoe had its effect?—If I am not wasting time I would like to say exactly how it was put to me by a man who knew both the Boers and the Zulus. I was told that the Boers had come over the passes, declaring that one Hollander was worth four Englishmen; that the fool Englishman would be in a red coat and white hat, and stand at the top of the hill, and the wily Boer would

shoot him, not over a rock, but from round the side of a rock. That over-confidence was knocked out of them at Talana.

14739. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) On the whole you think that the holding of Glencoe had a beneficial effect?—I think it had a very beneficial effect, not only as regards the general question of the relative fighting value, man to man, of Briton and Boer, but it gave us so much more time, and it certainly paralysed the readiness with which the Boers were prepared to advance and fight, and I believe it had a very strong influence in enabling General Yule to get away as he did.

14740. (*Chairman.*) You are speaking there of the effect that it had upon the Boers?—Yes.

14741. Do you think it also had an effect upon the natives—the Zulus?—I really cannot enter into that. I do not know what effect it would have upon the Zulus. I would rather not commit myself to any opinion on that.

14742. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do I rightly understand that in the first instance you say that your military instinct was in favour of retiring from Glencoe?—Concentrating.

14743. But that on retrospect you think it was fortunate that that position was maintained; is that what we are to understand?—No, I will not go so far as that, but I will say that the incident at Talana, which, of course, was contingent on the force being there, and their being attacked, had a very strong stopping effect on the advance of the Boers.

14744. You do not go so far then as to say that you are glad on the whole that we remained at Glencoe and fought at Talana?—I never thought of it in that way.

14745. (*Chairman.*) What has been represented to us is that if you had been concentrated you might have made attacks upon the Boers as they came over the border, and therefore you could have fought the fight at Talana under perhaps more favourable circumstances?—I have tried to argue that point in my statement. I wrote it deliberately. I might perhaps read it.

14746. If you will just refer me to the particular point?—That is in regard to what the Commander-in-Chief said about Talana: "With special reference to the propriety of massing my troops against the Transvaalers in the north, the arguments I have used above are generally applicable. The nearest point at which I could have hoped to strike at any force would have been more distant from Ladysmith than in a similar operation to the West; they would consequently have had longer notice of my approach, and I do not believe I could have brought 8,000 men into action." I may here add that I could not have brought nearly so many into action. With regard to Talana, that engagement was fought on the 20th October; by that date troops were massed at the Drakensberg to the west of Ladysmith.

14747. The Boer troops you mean?—Yes, and they, who, according to the data which I take in my statement in reply to Lord Roberts, were at all events some 10,000 or 12,000 in number, could with their extra mobility have ridden into Ladysmith in a day. Therefore if I had fought with greater strength at Talana I should have opened Ladysmith to an attack from the west.

14748. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And a little lower down you say: "To be present, then, and fit to fight on the 20th at Talana, I would have had to quit Ladysmith on the 14th"?—Yes, about that.

14749. Then many of the troops had not arrived?—Quite so. And another point in regard to that, which only a soldier in command can fully realise, is that men coming off board ship and horses coming off board ship, were utterly unfit to be moved up. The colonels used to come to me and say: "The horses are mere rags; give us a rest of a few days to get them fit." I think that will come home to anybody with actual campaigning experience.

14750. (*Chairman.*) Then in the concentration which you did advocate at Ladysmith, what was the particular object which you had in view; was it to resist the Boers at the point of Ladysmith, or had you any intention of attacking them before they got that distance?—As the attack developed I was watching all along for an opportunity to strike without uncovering Ladysmith, and I looked upon Ladysmith as the point from which I could do that with the greatest force and with reasonable safety. I do not know whether I have quite caught the point of your question.

14751. I think perhaps I did not quite make myself

understood. What I wanted to put to you was this: Your plan, with which you went to the Governor on the 9th October, was to withdraw from Dundee and to have all your forces at Ladysmith?—Yes.

14752. I want to know whether at that time, the 9th October, you contemplated after that, if and when the Boers crossed the frontier, attacking them somewhere nearer the frontier than Ladysmith?—Yes, if I could get an opportunity; if I saw a way of doing it. I moved out one day when it was reported to me that the Boers from the Free State were advancing down from the Drakensberg, in the hopes of getting them in some open ground where I could attack them.

14753. That was after the decision had been come to to leave the force at Dundee?—Yes.

14754. What I was putting to you is whether, supposing you had not left your force at Dundee, but had had the whole force at Ladysmith, you had any idea in your mind as to where you would have resisted an invasion of the enemy?—No, I had no intention of moving out far from Ladysmith. That would always have meant the Boers being able to get to Ladysmith on either flank. If I had advanced far to the north, the Boers on the west could rush Ladysmith, and I considered the Drakensberg impregnable.

14755. I asked you the question partly because a good deal has been said about the fact that the railway was not damaged north of Ladysmith?—Damaged by whom?

14756. Damaged by us?—Quite so. I often considered whether I ought to do that, but I had not troops concentrated to strike. My telegrams will show what my mind was full of with regard to that. I had not men concentrated to strike with real force until after the return of the Dundee force. I then hoped that I might be able to do something decisive from Ladysmith itself, and if the railway bridges had been destroyed that would have destroyed my hope of making any success I might gain decisive. I further knew that from the Boers being accustomed to that country and moving so rapidly, they could get twice the draught out of an ox that we could, and it would not have really impeded their advance very much.

14757. But their having the railway no doubt assisted them afterwards?—Yes, but I do not think destroying the railway would have prevented their massing as they did; and at the time the rivers were fairly low. It would not, I think, have prevented their concentrating on Ladysmith.

14758. And you wanted to retain the railway with regard to the possibilities of an advance of your own?—Quite so.

14759. Does that apply even so far north as Laing's Nek?—No, it does not. There again I should think Laing's Nek had gone out of my control really before I got to Ladysmith.

14760. Do you not think it would have been an advantage if something had been done to the culverts at Laing's Nek?—I do not think it would have protected us eventually. It is wonderful how soon the Boers get over a thing of that sort. It might have been a check and an inconvenience, but I do not think it would have stopped their advance.

14761. But was it ever considered?—Colonel Altham, who was Intelligence Officer, tells me that it was considered, and that it would have been necessary to blow up the tunnel. (Colonel Altham.) Before the tunnel was made the construction line ran over the Nek when the railway was being made, and the stations with embankments were still in existence; we had them examined by an officer sent out from the War Office. (Sir George White.) And they could have made a diversion. (Colonel Altham.) Practically so, unless the mountain had been blown up, unless the whole line had gone. We looked at it from the point of view of what we should do if the Boers had blown up the tunnel.

14762. That is the point of view from which most of these things were looked at—from what you could do?—Yes, I think so at the time. (Sir George White.) Undoubtedly it was.

14763. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Supposing you had followed your original plan of withdrawing the forces from Dundee, I suppose in that case they would have destroyed the bridges and culverts as they came back, would they not?—I would be afraid to say. I would have had the same thing in my mind. I would

always have been in hopes of being able to give them a real good push back, and then the bridges would have been important to me.

14764. But supposing they had advanced over them and held them even for a day, they would, when they retreated, have blown them up?—No doubt, unless they had hopes of advancing again.

14765. And you would not have had the railway to go by?—No; no doubt they might have done that; in fact, they did it at Colenso.

14766. And elsewhere?—Yes, but then they had thrown up the game. 16 Feb. 1903.

14767. (Chairman.) I do not want to take you through the statement of your reasons for remaining at Ladysmith; you have given them in your statement, and we have had the views expressed before us by Lord Wolseley and by Lord Roberts. The question I should like to ask you is, do you think that there was any opportunity, supposing it had been advisable, for withdrawing your force from Ladysmith behind the Tugela after you once reached Ladysmith?—No, I did not contemplate that. Of course, I thought of it, but I cast it out as not the better course to pursue. I have also said in that quotation from my despatch that it is very doubtful whether behind the Tugela there was a position.

14768. I quite understand that, and I was not arguing it. I only wanted to know whether in your opinion it would have been a practicable operation. Sir Edward Ward told us that at the time of your arrival in Natal the provisioning of Ladysmith was going on; some of the provisions were still at sea, and therefore the railway was fully occupied taking stores up to Ladysmith?—Yes, I do not think it would have been a practicable operation.

14769. You could not have taken those stores back again?—I think not; there were so many other things to do as well. The troops were all arriving at the time, and I think it would have been impracticable to remove the stores. You would first of all have had to select a position, then you would have had to look out for water, then you would have had to consider many points which certainly, after my arrival, I would not have had time to do; I should have been caught probably "swopping horses in mid-stream," as I have said. But having arrived at the Tugela, I think I should have had to go back again. I have brought out in that extract that Sir Redvers Buller, with three times stronger a force than I had, could not stand on the Tugela in the presence of the enemy, because there was no water. That means that you cannot make full use of water with your cavalry horses and all the transport animals under the direct fire of the guns of the enemy.

14770. By the way, I have omitted one point that I meant to have asked you with regard to your possible movements. You say in your statement that you could not have moved more than two or three days from the railway, as your transport was not adapted for more. What transport did you have?—As far as I recollect we had two and a half days' what was called regimental transport; that is to say, carriage for two and a half days' supplies, and we had a reserve of three or three and a half, that is, five and a half days' or six. Let point A (describing) be rail head. You move out three days, three days' provisions are used, three days more in returning without a halt.

14771. But was that amount of transport the regular amount to be allotted to a force of your description?—That was the line on which it was organised for the Natal campaign; I mean that that was the decision of the highest authority with regard to it; that is what we got money to buy.

14772. What I ask is, was it in your opinion a deficient amount of transport?—I think it was.

14773. You thought so when you arrived?—Yes, when I arrived.

14774. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) And if you had had more you could have done much better?—I could have got further. I cannot say more. I think that was too short a supply.

14775. (Viscount Esher.) Who were the highest authorities who fixed the amount?—I presume the Commander-in-Chief was the man who did it.

14776. The Commander-in-Chief in England or in South Africa?—In England.

14777. (Chairman.) If you had had a larger amount of

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16 Feb. 1903.

transport would your force have been a more effective instrument?—I cannot say that I have in my mind at the present time any occasion upon which I was restricted in my operations for want of transport.

14778. But still *à priori*, before you used your force, your force would have been a more effective instrument if you had had a larger transport?—Undoubtedly, because I could have struck further; but at the same time more transport means more escort; it would have used up a good many more men.

14779. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Would the Commander-in-Chief have the control of that department?—I really cannot say exactly where that ruling came from.

14780. (Viscount Esher.) But I suppose what you mean is that the military authorities in Pall Mall, whoever they were, were responsible?—Yes.

14781. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Regimental transport is a fixed quantity?—Two and a half days' supply, if I remember right.

14782. (Chairman.) But I think you said at the beginning of your evidence, when speaking of the Quartermaster-General's Department, that transport was one of the things for which you asked additional money, and you could not get it?—I think what we asked for on the occasion to which I referred was that amount of transport for certain battalions which was refused to us.

14783. (Sir John Edge.) Anyhow, it was the transport you found there, whoever was responsible?—Yes. I hope I am quite clear upon that point. I do not think we were refused any increase over that, but that for certain regiments for which we applied for that amount of transport we did not get it.

14784. (Chairman.) Then the regiments had not got their full regimental transport?—No.

14785. Were these regiments actually at the Cape?—Yes, in South Africa; so far as I recollect, at the Cape.

14786. (Sir Henry Norman.) Did the Indian troops of your force bring transport with them?—No, I think the transport was provided in the country.

14787. (Viscount Esher.) You see, Lord Roberts has rather criticised your action for neglecting in the opening of the campaign the great military principle of advancing against the enemy with massed forces while they were still separated. Supposing you wished to do that, had you the transport to enable you to do it?—One of the reasons, as I have already shown, which would have made an advance in massed forces against a position where it was absolutely in the power of the enemy to move back to at any time unwise, was that it would have been paralysed by my want of transport.

14788. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) With regard to Sir Henry Norman's question, you may remember that in India they found mule transport for regiments, ammunition, entrenching tools, signalling equipment, and medical panniers, and the War Office was responsible for all other transport?—I forget exactly how it was shared.

14789. (Sir John Edge.) I suppose that with regimental transport you could only advance a certain distance from your base?—Yes.

14790. You might have advanced two days or two and a half days?—Quite so, from the railway or even three.

14791. In the comment of Lord Roberts he does not explain where you might have advanced your massed forces to. Of course, you were limited to your base at Ladysmith?—Our base was Ladysmith. There was provision also at Glencoe, but not for so large a force. But in advancing like that it would have been incumbent on me to go on until I got in contact with the enemy. As the enemy would have been drawing me further and further from Ladysmith, he would probably have made a feint of standing at, say, point A, and would then have withdrawn further northward to B. Every march they forced me to make northward would have made Ladysmith a greater certainty for the Free Staters, who would have found it denuded of its garrison—unfortified, in fact, their most coveted possession lying open to them.

14792. Anyhow, even if you had elected to attack them with massed forces, you would have been limited in your point of attack by the distance from your base?—Yes.

14793. (Chairman.) Then, as you have just said, Ladysmith was unfortified when you reached it?—Yes.

14794. But you at once set to work to draw up fortifications?—I at once told off the strongest committee I could. So far as I recollect, it was presided over by Sir Archibald Hunter. I put the Commanding Royal Engineer, the officer commanding the Royal Artillery, Sir Ian Hamilton, and other officers in whom I had great confidence, to lay out a plan of fortifying it. I altered the plan myself afterwards on some points; and we set to work, so far as other work would allow, to fortify. If later I read the telegrams of the day to day occurrences, or if you follow the account given in my despatches, you will see that I was trying to carry out an offensive defensive all along, and I went out constantly wherever I could see anything I could strike at. These operations interfered with the progress of the entrenchments.

14795. But the plan was formed and the defences were carried out. They involved a very large perimeter?—A very large one—14 miles.

14796. And it took you all the men you had with you to hold that perimeter?—All the men I had with me. In point of fact, the perimeter was too big for any school rule to hold, with the men I had. I had to play to a certain extent a game of brag with regard to the positions I held. Knowing the great range of their guns, and also from my early experience, I took up positions not because I thought they were advisable abstractedly in the defensive, but to deny them as artillery positions to the enemy; if he had occupied them he would have made Ladysmith untenable.

14797. Some complaint has been made as to your retention of cavalry; do you wish to make any remarks upon that point?—Yes. Sir Redvers Buller asked me to send one regiment of cavalry out, I think it was to the east, to prevent Ladysmith being turned, and Maritzburg, and later, perhaps, Durban being attacked. I resisted any of the cavalry going; my object in keeping the cavalry being the question upon which you have just examined me; it was a question of the enormous perimeter. The cavalry was the only mobilised reserve I had to gallop from point to point for the ready reinforcement of any threatened point. As regards the positive proof of that, it was the cavalry that saved Ladysmith on the 6th January. I could not have moved infantry from the central point where my reserves lay to the top of Wagon Hill or Caesar's Camp in time to have prevented a disaster.

14798. You consider that the cavalry were an essential part of your defence?—I do. And with regard to that my Chief of the Staff (Sir Archibald Hunter) did not agree, and I told him that I considered it would take away the whole of my powers of reinforcing any point in this very long perimeter to lose the cavalry.

14799. Sir Archibald Hunter did not agree with you?—He yielded in deference to my opinion, but I may say that he was consulted independently of me by Sir Redvers Buller.

14800. Did Sir Archibald Hunter suggest as an alternative a restriction of the perimeter?—No, he did not, but I would not have accepted it if he had, for this reason, that you could not restrict the perimeter without leaving unoccupied posts that the enemy would have had his guns on the next morning.

14801. I entirely understand your position. I only wanted to know whether Sir Archibald Hunter when he suggested that the cavalry should be sent, also suggested that the perimeter should be reduced; because you could not have done it probably?—I could not have done it. I would not have done it, at any rate. This is the heliogram to which I refer. It is dated the 31st of October, when things had pretty far advanced: "From Sir Redvers Buller to Sir George White. I agree that you do best to remain at Ladysmith, though Colenso and line of the Tugela River look tempting; but I would suggest for consideration whether if you can reduce the perimeter of defence you might not send one battalion and one regiment of cavalry to a position in the direction of Albert or Howick, or even Greytown, or somewhere covering Maritzburg from a raid from the north-east. You have a large force of mounted troops now on left of Tugela River; some of them might be better were they on the right of that river. It will be at least three solid weeks before I can attempt to reinforce you, and at present I fancy the best help I can give you will be to take Bloemfontein. Good luck to you. You must

have had some merry fights." On the 31st I also said I did not think at that date that the cavalry could get through without terrible loss. I had better read the words themselves: "I think the cavalry could not get through without heavy loss, so I have countermanded them. If roads clear will send one cavalry regiment across Tugela. I cannot reduce perimeter without yielding artillery positions that would make Ladysmith untenable. Their guns are better than our field guns. Do not ask me to detach another battalion. The enemy are in great force."

14802. (*Sir John Edge.*) What is the date of that?—The 1st of November.

14803. To Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes.

14804. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And you had despatched a regiment and a battery the day before?—I forget how long it was—about the 30th—I sent the Dublin Fusiliers and Natal Field Battery to Colenso to try and give some confidence to the Governor and the people at Pietermaritzburg, and in attention to Lord Wolseley's call to me to "take care of Colenso Bridge."

14805. And they were not able to remain there?—They had to fall back when the enemy came in force. They did not stay for a fight, I think. As regards that the lines of communication at that time were under the command of a very good officer, and I know that Sir Redvers Buller approved of his withdrawing the troops.

14806. (*Chairman.*) But if you had a difficulty in sending out the one regiment of cavalry you would have had still greater difficulty in doing, as it has been stated you might have done, letting your whole force of cavalry go out?—I considered this a direct order, and that I no longer had an option. It was dead against my views of what was right.

14807. (*Viscount Esher.*) Even to send the one regiment?—Even to send the one. I looked upon it all along in that light. You see here I say: "Do not ask me to detach another battalion." That shows the spirit in which I viewed the order he gave me. This will be readily understood with a perimeter of 14 miles, and when you consider the topography; that Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill were great mountains. It would have taken infantry a very long time to get from the centre of a position, the outposts of which are so far distant, and which at the same time entail such very heavy gradients to get at them. The action would have been lost before they got there, and my men were pretty heavily worked and played out; they had had a good deal of fighting.

14808. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was the distance from the centre of Ladysmith to Caesar's Camp, and again to Wagon Hill?—From three to four miles, but that scarcely conveys an idea of the time. It will perhaps come home to you what a long time it would take infantry to get there laden, as they would have been, with all the ammunition. In the absence of mounted infantry the cavalry was, as I said before, the only mobilised reserve I had.

14809. (*Chairman.*) If you had had a larger number of infantry, I suppose it could have been done?—I would then have had posts very much more strongly held, but with regard to that I might mention that the perimeter of Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill alone was $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles. You see, to occupy a position of that perimeter, according to any school rule, would have entailed an enormous force, whereas I had to hold them with a mere handful.

14810. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do you mean that Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill were $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart?—No, I mean to say that Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill joined in one group with a neck between them, but that the perimeter round them alone was $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles. Another point which I know has been discussed very much, and for which we have been abused, was not fortifying it. But you can imagine what fortifying $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles of the edge of a very big plateau would have been. The work would have been enormous, and having fortifications of that extent for which you have only got enough force to man a very small part, hands over the advantages of the fortifications to the enemy; they get behind it and fire into you.

14811. Were these wooded hills—covered with wood?—No, they were not wooded; if there had been wood there we would have cut it down at once; they were bare, rocky, stony hills.

14812. (*Chairman.*) And, therefore, with the numbers

of the garrison that you had, the cavalry was an essential part of your defence?—I consider most essential.

14813. And they, as a matter of fact, did assist you throughout the siege?—Enormously. I made mounted infantry of one regiment—the 5th Dragoon Guards, and I gave them Lee-Metford rifles.

14814. There is one question I would like to ask you about the naval guns. They arrived just at the last moment?—When I was in action it was reported to me that the naval guns had arrived and were in action; this was on the 30th of October.

14815. And, as you say in your statement, they were of great assistance to you throughout the siege?—Very great assistance. They were a great assistance to me in this way, that they could reply to the fire of the enemy's guns, and I have no doubt kept the enemy's guns at a greater distance from us than they otherwise would have been.

14816. We have had in evidence some doubt expressed about the accuracy of the shooting. Have you any observation to make on that point?—No, some of the naval guns were outranged in trying to reach the 6-inch Creusots, but we could not expect them to be accurate beyond their effective range. But as regards the 4·7 naval quick-firers, I think their fire was accurate and well maintained all through by the sailors.

14817. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Did they shut up any of the enemy's guns?—Not to my knowledge. I do not think they did. It has been a lesson to me that in modern warfare it is pretty hard to dismount an enemy's guns.

14818. (*Chairman.*) But that was not from any deficiencies on the part of the people who worked the guns?—I think not.

14819. You had full opportunities of observing them. I suppose?—I was constantly in the batteries. Of course our platforms were not like what we have at Gibraltar and such places, which ensure far greater accuracy; they were temporary makeshift platforms, and I think were wonderfully good considering the circumstances in which they were made.

14820. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) The enemy's guns did not shut up our guns, did they?—I cannot recollect their dismounting a single gun. Colonel Altham, my Intelligence Officer, says that they did not.

14821. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Then where does the superiority of the enemy's artillery come in of which we have heard so much?—Because their shells, although they did not dismount the guns, were falling all about the place, and one shell caused 22 casualties.

14822. Your total losses were not great?—No; the total losses from projectiles from either shell fire or anything else in the whole of the war were not great.

14823. (*Chairman.*) But the enemy's guns were superior to ours?—Undoubtedly they were; they fired over 10,000 yards into my position with Creusots.

14824. That was because they brought into use larger guns than the Army possessed at that time?—Yes, than the Army possessed, mobilised as the Boers mobilise. If I had not telegraphed for those naval guns the moment I came up I should have had to fight the Boer guns with our field gun, which was a 15-pounder, the effective range of which was 3,500 yards, and when directed at an objective 4,000 yards off began to fall off rapidly.

14825. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you think that those naval guns produced any great effect upon the enemy?—I think they kept the enemy's batteries a good way further off me than they otherwise would have been. Of course, the Boer batteries would have been brought up as close as they could with immunity. These 4·7 and the 12-pounder guns of the Navy outranged my soldier guns by 100 per cent.

14826. (*Sir John Edge.*) The ranges of the guns show exactly what would have happened?—Yes, it was extraordinary the way in which the Boers could put a 6-inch Creusot gun into a wagon and go off with it as if it was a sack of wheat.

14827. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Why should the Boers be able to do that quicker than our men?—My belief is that our transport drivers were largely corner men; the transport drivers of the Boers were men who had been driving oxen all their lives; they knew every ox in their team by name, and could get the last pound out of each. Our drivers would never have got those guns up to the top of Bulwana.

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14828. (Chairman.) I do not want to ask you questions in detail about your operations, but there is one question with regard to the fight outside of Ladysmith which I should like to ask, because of the evidence which has been given to us in reference to that. You say that the reports that the retirement from Lombard's Kop was a rout are untrue?—Absolutely.

14829. We have had some evidence to the effect that the troops retired into the town on that occasion in so demoralised a condition that if the attack had been pushed the consequences might have been serious?—It is impossible to say whether they might not have been serious, but I can only say that we disengaged from the enemy perfectly easily. Before I gave the order to retire I came to the conclusion that the object I had aimed at, viz., a rapid stroke that would have made the enemy retreat, was no longer at all likely to succeed; and, having determined not to use up any more ammunition, which was gold to me, I made the calmest preparations for retirement before I ordered the withdrawal. I placed batteries to cover the retirement. I got a regiment from Limit Hill, from a brigade I had intended for another purpose. When that purpose fell through, this brigade became a reserve, and I posted regiments from that reserve in successive positions covering the line of retreat into Ladysmith. When I ordered the retirement I ordered it in echelon from the left; the left was where the 60th Rifles were, who had had some hard knocks at Talana, and they disengaged from the enemy absolutely easily. I was watching it with intense interest myself and a certain amount of anxiety. There was one attempt to follow up the left of the 60th, and I said to the officer commanding the battery: "Give them some rounds to stop them," and a few rounds of shrapnel not only stopped them, but sent them back to the position they had occupied before. They came out a little way over their ridge as if pursuing, and went back again when they got a round or two of shrapnel.

14830. The batteries were pretty hard pushed, some of them, were they not?—Of course, the enemy's guns, particularly that 6-inch gun on the top of Pepworth Hill, did a great deal of harm, but I do not think that there was any considerable loss in the artillery. They had a hard fight undoubtedly; they had to fight on two fronts to begin with; they had to keep under the fire from Pepworth Hill, which was at that angle (describing) from our front, and they had to answer the fire from the direct front, and help the advancing infantry with shrapnel fire as far as they could. So far as I recollect, two batteries were facing different ways, forming an angle like that (describing the same).

14831. They did make a great reputation, did they not?—I think they did splendidly; it was quite pleasant to see them. I saw a shell bursting under the bellies of one team; the horses naturally got into a canter; they pulled up in the grandest way when they got the word "Trot," and they trotted calmly on. I never saw them go out of a trot afterwards.

14832. At any rate, you do not think that it took two or three days for the troops to recover their morale on that occasion?—I think that the troops' morale was a little bit shaken before that. I think the 60th particularly. A regiment cannot be brought up into the fighting line time after time without being a little bit shaken, and I think some of those regiments were not what they would have been if it had been their first fight.

14833. There have been also statements made with regard to the cavalry retirement on that occasion?—I remember seeing that statement. So far as I observed I saw nothing whatsoever that would justify the slightest imputation of bad behaviour on the part of the cavalry. I do not know whether your Lordship is going to examine Sir John French about it, but he was in command of the cavalry who are supposed to have behaved badly, the cavalry that I sent out in the early morning to cover my right.

14834. Sir John French will come here later?—I would like it if that question could be put to him. I know it has been stated. I think, in Mr. Amery's history—"The Times" History of the War in South Africa. I must say I fail to recognise the accuracy of that account.

14835. "A seething mass of clumsy, broken cavalry charged down the narrow neck on the west of Lombard's Kop"—that I did not see. The Intelligence officer who had to collect every report is here. Did he ever hear it from an authentic source? (Colonel

Altham.) I never heard it all the time I was in Ladysmith.

14836. (Sir Frederick Darley.) (To Sir George White.) I was just going to ask you, did you ever hear it in Ladysmith at the time?—I walked about the room using strong language when I read it; I never heard it before.

14837. (Chairman.) Then passing on to the time when the siege was progressing, and when efforts were being made for your relief, were you forming plans for co-operating from Ladysmith?—Yes, in every case. Perhaps you would give me an opportunity of reading the history of the siege so far as I can answer for it, and show vouchers for what I say; it is contained in this series of heliograms which I have here, and which I should like to have an opportunity of reading.

14838. If you please—we shall be quite willing to hear it?—They will be very long. Would you like them from the very beginning? I do not know how far you have had these already before you, but will your Lordship stop me if I am simply repeating? Most of them will, I think, treat of points that your Lordship either has put to me or would be likely to put to me.

This is a telegram:—"From Governor" (Maritzburg) "to General, Ladysmith, 12th October, No. 4. The High Commissioner has wired me copy of telegraphic correspondence with the President of the Orange Free State, from which I gather that the Orange Free State has quite decided to throw in its lot with the Transvaal, but it is not quite clear to me that they will attack if we do not move further up country. Am sending you copy of correspondence by post." I put that in my list to show that there was a certain pressure on me on the 12th October not to go too boldly north or west.

"From Governor to Chief, Natal. No. 1, 25th October. Your cipher telegram of yesterday—what is word between 'view' and 'sending'? Undecipherable, please repeat it. I am communicating with Admiral. Do I understand you have determined to keep all the troops at Ladysmith? If you have I ought to be informed at once, as there seems no doubt now that part of General Joubert's force will come in by Greytown, and we are practically defenceless here and in Durban." I think that has a bearing, my Lord, on the situation as showing the drag-back which was constantly being applied to me, and which would have been one factor with which I would have had to deal if I had massed my troops and gone to the north.

"From Governor to Chief, Natal. No. 5, of 26th October. Urgent. Clear the line. When I telegraphed to you I certainly expected to keep Rifle Brigade or Border Regiment. Both Maritzburg and Durban are now practically undefended, and offer actual temptation for raid even on a small scale, which would do great damage and produce very bad moral effect. If you leave me one battalion we can, with the 'Powerful's' guns, Naval Brigade, and corps now being raised, at all events check raids unsupported by guns; and I think we ought at least to try this. We might be raided here within next three or four days, and I should like to complete arrangements at once. Therefore I should like to keep Rifle Brigade here." That has the same tendency, my Lord.

"From General Sir George White to the Secretary of State for War. No. 2 of 11th October, 1899. Boer ultimatum finds us short of 5th Dragoon Guards, Gloucesters, Borders, and Royal Irish Fusiliers. I therefore considered it sounder in a military sense to withdraw from Glencoe and concentrate at Ladysmith. The Governor, however, considers withdrawal from Glencoe would be disastrous politically, involving great risk of native rising and Dutch rebellion in Colony. I have, therefore, determined to hold on to both places." This shows what very little law I had, as those regiments had not even arrived on the 11th of October.

"From General Sir George White to the Governor, Maritzburg. No. 3 of 12th October, 1899. Four thousand Boers with 18 guns have invaded Natal from Free State via Tintwa Pass. They are probably encamped to-night ten miles west of Acton Homes. I move out to meet them at 3 a.m. to-morrow with 5th Lancers, three Field Batteries, one Mountain Battery, Liverpools, Gordons, Manchesters, and one other battalion, which comes from Glencoe by train to-night. Also with 250 Natal Carabineers and a Colonial Battery." That shows that I had every wish to take the offensive if I could.

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16 Feb. 1903.

"From General Sir George White to Secretary of State for War. Governor, Maritzburg. O.C.'s Glencoe, Estcourt, and Colenso. No. 13 of 13th October, 11.15 a.m. Moved out this morning with strong flying column, and occupied position covering Ladysmith. Reconnoitred for enemy. He shows no disposition to come on, and is reported to be inside Berg at foot of Tintwa Pass in force, with a second commando at Oliviers Hoek. Troops return to quarters." That shows that those Boer troops were really posted in the fastnesses of the Drakensberg, where it would have been madness to attack them.

"From G.O.C. Ladysmith to G.O.C. Communications, and General, Cape Town. No. 15 of 14th October. Movement of flying column yesterday was satisfactory. The Dublin Fusiliers left Glencoe Junction at 4 a.m., 13th instant, joined flying column west of Ladysmith, and started back for Glencoe at 5 p.m. Their arrival there has been reported by telegram. A dye ascertained personally that Boer commando is no longer at eastern issue of Tintwa Pass." They had gone back, I presume.

"From Chief, Natal, to Governor, Natal. No. 16 of 14th October. Ladysmith is full of the enemy's spies. Can you expel persons known to belong to the Republics?" (At this time, although it was 14th October, there was no Martial Law.) "It is impossible to carry on operations on equal terms when every move is known to the enemy. Runners are said to be despatched constantly—vide High Commissioner's Proclamation of 11th October. I have ordered my outposts to stop and arrest all persons against whom there is reasonable suspicion."

"From General Sir George White to the Governor, Maritzburg. No. 18 of 14th October. I have heard from the stationmaster sent in from Harrismith what I consider the most valuable news I have had with regard to Boer intentions. They are in greater numbers than I expected. They speak openly of concentrating all their columns on Ladysmith." (That is important evidence.) "I think it right to give Symons another battalion, and purpose to keep Imperial Light Horse here. With the big town and railway station to defend, and the forces in front and on my flank to defeat, I am too weak. Would you now consent to give me half King's Royal Rifles, issuing the arms you have in store to your best Volunteers? If so, I would put King's Royal Rifles in the town where the most valuable stores are, and contend the position here so as to throw every possible man into the fighting line."

"From Chief, Ladysmith, to G.O.C. Glencoe Junction." (That was General Symons.) "No. 26 of 17th October, 1899. Helpmakaar, reported threatened by large commando. The Carabineers there have retired on Pomeroy. Railway to Glencoe is likely to be interrupted. You must entrench. It will help you even on the offensive. I am entrenching here."

"From General, Natal, to Wolseley, War Office. Sent at 9.30 p.m. 17th October, 1899. Your number 370. Glencoe Junction has over 60 days' rations."

"From General Sir George White to Secretary of State for War" (and others). "No. 36 of 19th October. Boers commenced descending western passes on Tuesday, and came in contact with my patrols. Yesterday they continued their advance, halting for the night with their left at Bester's Station, centre at Blaauwbank, and right more retired at Acton Homes. Lieut. Gallwey, Natal Carabineers is missing. Trooper Spencer, same corps, slightly wounded. I moved my camp into a position I have selected with a view to covering town of Ladysmith, and hoped that to-day Boers might have been sufficiently near for me to strike a blow. To-day, however, enemy seem to have retired westward, patrols getting touch nowhere except with comparatively small body at Bester's Station. Railway communication with Glencoe was cut to-day at Elands-laagte, where a goods train was captured by a Boer force advancing over Biggarsberg Nek. Telegraphic communication is still open via Greytown. With consent Governor, Natal, I am bringing Imperial Light Horse back here to augment my mounted troops. Rifle Brigade will be sent on to Cape Town as directed." This shows that even some of the troops that came into Natal I got orders to send on to Cape Town.

"From General Officer Commanding, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War, London. No. 60 of 21st October. Though victorious, troops at Glencoe heavily hit yesterday. Cannot expect equal efforts a second

time, and without Symons. Effect on attitude of Boers not yet ascertained. One squadron, 18th Hussars, still missing. Ladysmith troops are now engaged at Elands-laagte with Boer force from Botha's Pass. Situation in Natal not yet assured. Consider Rifle Brigade should be landed Durban. Please approve."

"From General Sir George White to Governor, Maritzburg. No. 46a of 22nd October. The situation of Glencoe very critical. Give me 60th and Liverpools, take Rifle Brigade, and I will hold Ladysmith, and try to save Glencoe. Trust to my military judgment in this matter, and run smaller and undefined risks to save certainty of heavy disaster."

"From G.O.C., Natal, to G.O.C., Glencoe Camp, via Dundee. 22nd October. If you must retire, make careful arrangements for move beforehand, and, if possible, signal to me the word 'Act' and the date you propose to move. I will do what I can to meet you. Move via Meran. Try to send messengers through to me."

"From General Sir George White to Secretary of State for War. Ladysmith, 22nd October. Your No. 409 of to-day. Two Boer guns captured yesterday, when Boers lost heavily. Official report from Dundee says Boers lost 200. No mention of guns. Private reports say loss more heavy, and Boers' guns taken. Boer columns at Dundee were Lucas Meyer's, and some of Joubert's. Yesterday we fought Viljoen's column with Hollander and German corps. Besides these, there is a large Orange Free State force west of Ladysmith. Estimated strength: Joubert, 10,000, with twelve guns; Lucas Meyer, 4,000, with five guns; Viljoen's column, 1,800; Free State force, 9,000, with thirteen guns. Yesterday Yule wired that Boers were shelling camp with guns of position, and that he had moved south of railway. The following message, dated midnight 21st-22nd October, received from General Yule, begins:—I am marching on Glencoe. Have been obliged to evacuate Dundee, leaving stores and wounded. This causes me gravest anxiety. With consent of Governor, I have called up reinforcements, ordered the Rifle Brigade to land at Durban, and will watch an opportunity to advance towards Glencoe, at the same time holding Ladysmith with sufficient force."

"From G.O.C., Natal, to Secretary of State, London. 23rd October. Yule wired from Dundee last night that wounded doing well. Following received from him, dated 8.30 a.m. to-day, begins: Propose camping at Beith to-night, and march to Sunday's River on Beith-Ladysmith Road to-morrow, starting at 2 a.m. Ends. I go out to-morrow to give him a hand." You will stop me, my Lord, if you think these are too tedious.

"From General, Ladysmith, to Governor, Maritzburg. No. 99 of 25th October, 1899. Yours, 25th October. I most earnestly request that pressure may not be put on me to reduce force here. The report of threat on Maritzburg via Greytown may be misleading. All the enemy's efforts so far have been directed against the Army. If I am strong here, and can strike out, the country is unconquered. If I am shut in here the Colony is at the mercy of the enemy, and will have to be reconquered from the sea. While I have sufficient force to strike out they dare not do more than raid. If I am reduced in force I cannot go on striking out. Enemy's guns range further than ours. Our men cannot be expected to face heavy loss day after day fighting superior numbers in strong positions. I consider Rifle Brigade and Borderers could best be used here in the interests of the Colony, but will not press for them. The effects of dissemination of force at Dundee, even on victorious troops, is a lesson. A small force cannot save you if the troops here are shut in, though it may help me to deal a decisive blow." That shows the light in which I viewed the military situation at the time, and events have since verified my forecast.

"From General Sir George White to Secretary of State for War. No. 110 of 26th October. Your No. 473, Secret. I have no trustworthy information that Boers intend attacking Durban or Maritzburg." (The Secretary of State had asked me.) "These places, so far, are not threatened by Joubert's force. While I am strong enough to keep the field here, I do not anticipate they will be attacked. While I hold Ladysmith enemy cannot move heavy guns south of it" (I am sorry to say they did) "as they move them by railway. It is very difficult to secure reliable information about movements of Boer force. General Yule's column

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has marched in. When they have had a couple of days' rest I will move against any enemy that offers me a fair chance. The true policy is to concentrate all possible force here. If I am beaten or shut up, one or two battalions will not save either Maritzburg or Durban, and they might enable me to strike decisive blow. I now have a fine force, and will use it."

"From General Sir George White, Natal, to Secretary of State for War. No. 375, 29th October. Hope I have located a sufficiently strong force of the enemy with guns to make a good objective. Move out to-night with view to attacking early to-morrow."

"From General, Ladysmith, to Governor, Maritzburg. 30th October, 1899. I have ordered the Dublin Fusiliers to Colenso, with six guns, Natal Volunteer Artillery, as the best measure that can be taken for the preservation of the Colony."

"From General Sir George White to General Sir Redvers Buller. No. 109a of 31.10.99. The Boers have established themselves in very strong positions in the hills west, north, and east of Ladysmith. Each man has one or two ponies. They resent intrusion so much that it is impossible to ascertain their numbers. They live on the country, and their mobility gives them great advantages. They say themselves they will attack. Ladysmith is strongly entrenched, but the lines are not continuous, and the perimeter is so large that Boers could exercise their usual tactics. Our men want rest from fighting, but I have the greatest confidence in holding Ladysmith for as long as necessary. I could not now withdraw from it. I think it would be politic to send some of the Fleet to Durban, to keep up public confidence there. I will put off answering Joubert about exchange prisoners. Hitherto I have considered the interests of the Colony south of this required me to hit out. Yesterday's fighting showed me there were risks and limits to this. I wired Governor yesterday that I would send Dublin Fusiliers to guard bridge at Colenso as best step I could take for protection of Colony. I intend to contain as many Boers as possible round Ladysmith, and I believe they will not go south without making an attempt on Ladysmith."

"From General, Ladysmith, to the Governor, Maritzburg, 31st October. My intention is to hold Ladysmith, make attacks on the enemy's position whenever possible, and retain the greatest number of the enemy here."

"From General Sir George White to General Sir Redvers Buller, Capetown. (No date.) "Welcome. Have a very strong force in front of me, with many guns. Natal Colony requires earliest reinforcement possible. Troops here very heavily worked, especially cavalry. I will do all my means admit to conquer enemy. Very short of staff and officers. Hunter indispensable to me."

"From General, Natal, to General Buller. No. 191a of 1st November. Your No. 3z. I have information that a commando estimated at 2,000 men, Free State, with guns, have arrived within a few miles Colenso. I had ordered French with two cavalry regiments and 400 mounted volunteers to try and help, but later information shows that all the roads are strongly held by enemy. I think the cavalry could not get through without heavy loss, so I have countermanded them. If road clears will send one cavalry regiment across Tugela. I cannot reduce perimeter without yielding artillery positions that would make Ladysmith untenable. Their guns are better than our field guns. Don't ask me to detach another battalion. The enemy are in great force."

"To G.O.C. Communications. No. 7r, 10th November, 1899. To Buller (in cypher), 'Repeat G.O.C. Communications. Enemy entrenched all round us, but I believe we contain the whole force. They are bringing more guns into position against us. We can count 22 already. These guns outrange ours, and we have only our naval guns to reply with, while our necessarily very extended position prevents great concentration for counter-attacks. We have repulsed all attacks so far. Clery should advance to Colenso as early as possible, and I will help to open road for him via Onderbroek on learning his dates."

"From General Sir George White to General Clery or Hildyard. (Without date.) "Do not risk advance until you are very strong; I cannot go out far to meet you. Do not waste force south of Tugela; throw all into fighting line. Try to advise me of your plan before you advance. No danger to Ladysmith while you occupy large force of enemy on Tugela, but try not to lose touch of him. Bring plenty gun ammunition; mine running

low. I could feed three extra brigades and my own force for a month; also provide forage. Arrange earliest repair of railway."

"From General White to General Clery. Maritzburg. Repeat Buller, Capetown. No. 17r of 24th November. Your message of 20th November received. Reliable native scouts saw, 20th November, large force of enemy proceeding past Los Kop on Little Tugela towards Tabamhlope. They were informed by local natives that a large commando had preceded this force. State of road confirmed this. This force is said to be making for Hlatikulu, with intention of cutting railway about Nottingham road. A large force of enemy is concentrated behind flat-topped hill six miles south of Ladysmith. Enemy is reported to have only patrol between Estcourt and Colenso. Large wagon convoys have gone south during last few days from Free State railhead at Smith's Crossing. General situation here unchanged, but enemy is mounting more guns, and bombards town with increasing effect. Please send me information as to general situation in South Africa and Europe. Many alarmist rumours from Dutch sources current here. Should be glad to be in a position to contradict them authoritatively. Tell me of any change in date you expect to advance."

"From General White, Ladysmith, to Buller. No. 28r, of 11th December. Last night Lieut.-Colonel Metcalfe, 2nd Rifle Brigade, with 500 men of his battalion, made a sortie to capture Surprise Hill and destroy the 47 howitzer mounted there; they reached the crest of the hill undiscovered, and drove off the enemy, the gun being destroyed with gun-cotton successfully by Digby Jones, R.E. When returning they found their retirement barred by Boers, but forced their way through, using the bayonet freely. Boer losses considerable." I do not think I need go into the list of killed and wounded. These messages show we were not idle.

14839. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You telegraphed to General Clery or General Hildyard on 10th November, "I could feed three extra brigades and my own force for a month"?—Yes.

14840. If that fell afterwards into General Buller's hands, would not that give him an idea that you would be short of provisions about the end of December?—It hangs on this—that that, I think, was a reply to a telegram from him, asking me if I could do that.

(After a short adjournment.)

(Sir George White.) During the interval I have made a search with regard to the question put to me by Sir George Goldie, but I cannot find the telegram to which the one just read to me was a reply; so that, as far as I can say, the remark must stand in the abstract. That is the point you wanted to make in justice to Sir Redvers Buller, Sir George?

14841. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You do see that that, perhaps, might lead him to imagine that towards the end of December you would be hard up for provisions?—Yes, that might be so. Of course, upon my own side of the question those returns were as to the period during which I could feed my men on full rations, but the moment I found we were in difficulty my 10 days' rations would feed my force for 20 days.

14842. I quite follow that?—And also, with regard to that question, an impression might be formed which would be misleading, and that is what I want to avoid. The later telegrams from me gave the rations and the rounds of ammunition almost to a pound of meat and a rifle cartridge.

14843. That was about the 30th November?—Yes; absolutely the 30th November.

14844. (Chairman.) Will you resume your statement, Sir George?—The next telegram which I think of importance to read is one "From Secretary of State, War Office, to G.O.C. Ladysmith. War Office, London, 16th October, 1899. Her Majesty has signed a warrant empowering Secretary of State to raise local forces in South Africa. A number may be enrolled not exceeding 1,000 in Natal, with a rate of pay, etc., the same as for British troops. The terms of the men's enlistment should be for service in South African Colonies and neighbouring territories, and for such period as their services may be required." I think with regard to that I might remark that later in the year those men who were to be paid at the rate British soldiers receive were paid 7s. 6d. and more a day.

14845. We had some evidence from Colonel Thorneycroft about the raising of his regiment?—His regiment was a part of the thousand men; he had 500, and Major Bethune had the other.

14846. He told us that a difficulty arose at the beginning because of that restriction to the pay of British troops, and he said that he did not know how it was got over, but he supposed you would be able to tell us?—My idea is that it was got over by the patriotism shown by the men in Natal, who would have served for nothing.

14847. But you did make representations to the Secretary of State about the rate of pay?—I do not recollect having done that.

14848. Would it have been through the Governor?—It probably was through the Governor; very likely my telegram may have been repeated, but I find a telegram in one of my files of telegrams in which I said, "The pay is too little, but some men may serve from a feeling of patriotism."

14849. But it was changed very shortly to 5s. a day?—That I do not know.

14850. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) It was stated as one of the reasons that in former wars the local troops raised in the Colony had been paid at the rate of 5s. a day?—That is not before me; you see, I was shut up very soon, and I was not in communication with the outer world. I do not think I knew of that.

14851. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) There is a telegram from you—I daresay you have it there—from Ladysmith, dated 17th October, in answer to that telegram you have just read?—I have not got it in my file; please read it out.

14852. "Ladysmith Camp, 17th October, 1899, 2.25 p.m. Referring to your telegram of 15th October, I have selected Major Bethune, 16th Lancers, and Major Thorneycroft, 2nd Battalion Scots Fusiliers, to raise a regiment of 500 mounted rifles each. Having regard to rates of pay given to Imperial Light Horse, I think those now offered too small. I urge that new regiments be granted terms allowed to Baden-Powell's regiments, and thus place them on same footing in this respect as Imperial Light Horse here. I request that local rank of lieutenant-colonel be conferred on Bethune and Thorneycroft"?—I am very glad you have turned that up. I do not know that I have it. I am glad to have that on record, because in the Colonial papers they have declared that I said I did not want Colonial troops at all, which was absolutely untrue.

14853. (*Chairman.*) There is an answer to you, Sir George, dated from the War Office, 25th October, 1899, 5.55 p.m.: "Referring to your telegram of 17th October, Bethune, 16th Lancers, and Thorneycroft, 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers, granted local rank of lieutenant-colonel, with status of assistant adjutant-general." But it does not say anything about the rate of pay?—I have not got that on my file; my telegrams were put together under difficulties.

14854. You do not know how the rate of pay question settled itself?—No.

14855. But it did settle itself?—It did, and according to my recommendation, which I am glad to have on record.

14856. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You sent another telegram on the 25th October, 1899, 12.30 p.m. to the Secretary of State for War on that subject, in the course of which you say: "They should all be on the same rates as Baden-Powell's corps"?—That is the one that has just been read by Sir Frederick Darley.

14857. No; this is a later one. It is in continuation evidently?—I have not got that, either.

14858. The War Office do not seem to have replied to your earlier telegram on that point, and you reiterate the thing?—That I have not a record of, and my memory would not carry it.

14859. The full telegram is from the G.O.C., Natal, to the Secretary of State for War, dated 25th October, 1899, 12.30 p.m.: "Referring to your telegram, No. 410, I have issued notice calling for volunteers for two mounted corps. I cannot urge too strongly that there be no change in this, as men of the right stamp will not come forward as infantry. To ask them is useless, and only creates dissatisfaction in the colony. They should all be on the same rates as Baden-Powell's corps. The position in Natal is critical, and it is real economy to raise funds for good Colonial corps, and maintain public confidence"?—That is from me?

14860. Yes?—I am delighted I sent it; I am very much obliged to you for unearthing it.

14861. Again, the Secretary of State for War answers you on the 27th October, 1899, in which he says he has received no reply; that is dated two days later, and I cannot understand it, you having sent the telegram on the 25th?—It could not have been intercepted, as everything was open at that time.

14862. Then there is a telegram from "The G.O.C. Lines of Communication, Natal," dated 28th October. Is that General Hildyard or General Clery?—Neither; it was Wolfe Murray.

14863. He telegraphs to the Secretary of State for War to say: "General Officer Commanding Natal directs me to inform you that he has placed the two new corps on same footing of equality as Imperial Light Horse in every respect, considering this action absolutely necessary to allay dissatisfaction at the unsettled state of the question, and to enable enlistment and formation of corps to proceed." And there is a reply on the 28th October: "From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding Natal. In reply to your telegram of to-day's date, No. L. 182, action is approved with regard to rates of pay, two new corps, but rates sanctioned only for six weeks"?—The next telegram I would like to read is: "From G.O.C., Lines of Communication, to G.O.C., Ladysmith, Maritzburg, 16th October, No. 1129. Following received from War Office, begins: Referring to your telegram 27 of 11th of October. After consultation with Chief and Buller, it does not appear advisable to send out battery Horse Artillery from India."

"From General of Communications to Chief Staff Officer, Headquarters, Maritzburg, 16th October, No. L. 3. Your 24 to day. Thorneycroft accepts, and can be spared. Bethune also accepts, and can be spared, but he is serious loss to me. I am making following arrangements:—Lawson, who arrived to-day, will be my Staff Officer; Gaisford, now at Durban, will be Commandant here; Toogood, now assisting at Durban, to be Disembarking Officer there. I beg most earnestly that no more officers be taken away from line of communication, and particularly that my Staff Officer may not be changed again. Continuity very important, and number of officers on the line is too few already. Am about to confer with Governor."

"From the Secretary of State for War to the G.O.C., Ladysmith, War Office, 18th October. Your telegram, No. 101, Commander-in-Chief considers the exigencies of Cape Colony are at present greater than those of Natal. Unless, therefore, you have strongest reasons against, send 'Jelunga' on arrival, with the 2nd Rifle Brigade, to Cape Town, for which port Border Regiment is also destined."

"From General Yule to General White, Ladysmith, Glencoe Camp, 9.50 p.m., 20th October. Post quite clear. Impati Mountain not occupied. Navigation Colliery still probably occupied in force. Return of casualties now being made out; approximately, eight officers killed, 24 wounded; non-commissioned officers and men: 30 killed, 153 wounded, and 33 missing. One squadron 18th Hussars and one section Mounted Infantry not returned."

14864. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) There were two telegrams before that. From Lord Wolseley to the General Officer Commanding Cape, and they must have been repeated to you, I suppose, the first being dated the 17th October, 12.55 p.m.: "Has Glencoe rations for 60 days, as ordered; if not, for how many? Comply with that order at once, and report what you have done"?—I have brought that out, Sir Frederick, in my written address.

14865. Then, on the same date: "From Sir George White to Lord Wolseley. Ladysmith.—Your number 370. Glencoe Junction has over 60 days' rations"?—Yes; that is in my statement.

"From General Yule to Chief of Staff, Ladysmith. Glencoe Camp, 21st October, 7.30 a.m. Am all quiet here this morning. B Squadron, 18th Hussars, with Colonel Moller, not yet returned. Last seen going in the direction of Navigation Colliery."

14866. The telegram you wrote about the 2nd Rifle Brigade was answered on the 18th October?—I think I have read that it was considered that their services would be more needed at the Cape. The next I should like to put on record is this: "From General, Cape Town, to General, Ladysmith. Cape Town, 22nd October, No. 9574. If you consider it necessary to

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retain 2nd Rifle Brigade in Natal I shall not raise objection." That was from General Sir Forestier-Walker, and I want to put it on record, as I think, under the circumstances, it was a most magnanimous act of his.

I think this also is of great interest to be put on record, for it is "From Commandant-General Joubert to General Sir George White, Ladysmith. Glencoe, 10.50 a.m., 26th October. In answer to your telegram of this date, with reference to General Symons, I must express my sympathy, and inform you that he was unfortunately badly wounded and died yesterday, and was buried. I trust, the good God will speedily bring to a close this unfortunate state of affairs, brought about by unscrupulous speculators and capitalists, who went to the Transvaal to obtain wealth, and in order to further their own interests misled others, and brought about this shameful state of warfare over all South Africa, in which so many valuable lives have been, and are being, sacrificed; as, for instance, that of General Symons and others. I express my sympathy to Lady Symons in the loss of her husband."

I think this also should be put in: "From Secretary of State for War to General, Ladysmith. No. 494, dated 27th October. Please understand that we expect you to act strictly in accordance with military requirements of the situation. Governor is within his rights in directing your attention to political consequences of your arrangements, but responsibility for the decision rests entirely with you. You may find steps necessary which may run counter to public opinion here and in the Colony, but we shall unhesitatingly support you in adhering to arrangements which seem to you, from military point of view, sound."

"From Sir Redvers Buller to G.O.C. Natal. Clear the line. No. 200z. Your telegram of 30th October, regarding exchange of prisoners—as the prisoners we took have already left Natal, I think it would cause a bad impression here to send them back at once. Cannot you temporise a while? In addition to your telegram to me, one has come to High Commissioner from Governor, Natal, in which he says you are sending Dublin Fusiliers to Colenso as the only course to save the Colony. Please telegraph me accurate description of your views of the situation. I doubt if Boers will ever attack you if entrenched. Hitherto you have gone out to attack them; can you not entrench and wait for events, if not at Ladysmith, then behind Tugela, at Colenso? No reinforcements can reach you for at least 14 days. Why not try and play the game now played by the Boers? The only thing I can do is to send some of the fleet to Durban to protect our base. Let me know if you wish that done. Please telegraph to me as explicitly as possible."

"From General Clery to General Sir George White. No. M. 5, November 21st, 5 p.m. No material change in situation. Enemy appears to be moving south, leaving containing force round Ladysmith. Hope you will keep him occupied, particularly on south side. His parties reported on both sides of railway, Colenso to Nottingham Road. A strong force near Ulundi, reported three to four thousand strong. Tactics appear to be raiding and injury to railway in our rear, avoiding engagements with our troops. I hold Estcourt and Mooi River in force, but am tied to railway for want of mounted troops. Reinforcements arriving daily. We hear guns firing. Many unofficial reports of your successes. Good luck. All quiet at home. Ministers speak with confidence, and advocate firm measures."

The next one is from a different series, which I have headed "Siege Correspondence."* "From General Sir George White to General Clery. No. 18p. 26th November. My supply of hay will only last at reduced ration till about 20th December. Other supplies ample, but gun ammunition running low. When you are ready to cross Tugela I propose to create diversion by fighting towards Onderbrook Hotel. Enemy has entrenched positions commanding this route, and we should attack on same date. What force can you advance with? Give details. May I reckon on 12th or 13th from Colenso, or other point on Tugela? Report Buller's movements and situation, Kimberley, and Mafeking."

"From General Sir G. White to General Clery. No. 19p, 27th November. Received your No. 5m, 21st November, and Campbell's, 25th November. Runners report, verbally, successful action Mooi River and advance to Frere. Best congratulations. Two or three thousand Boers moved past Ladysmith to-day from south, believed returning Orange Free State, part by Drakensberg, part by rail through Transvaal. Propose

to try and break gap in investment line through which my mounted troops can harass these movements, and shall be glad of your early co-operation. Natives report Commandant South African Republic, returned here yesterday. To avoid loss, officers should dress like men and carry rifles. Repeat General Buller."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. Maritzburg, 29th November, No. 47, cipher. I am organising relief force, and only waiting for artillery. Have driven enemy north of Tugela River. Small force at Weenen; they have destroyed bridges at Colenso. Look out at night in two or three days' time for searchlight about Highlands. Methuen is at Modder River, en route for Kimberley, having defeated enemy in three battles, in last of which they were 8,000 strong and entrenched, under command of Cronje. Advertising to affairs in Europe, no chance of intervention. If you hear me attacking, join in if you can. I do not yet know which way I will come. How much longer could you hold out?"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 20p, 30th November. Flashing signals, clouds seen last night for first time. Following portion only read: 'I do not yet know which way I will come. How much longer could you hold out? From Maritzburg, from Buller.' Commencement of message and date not read. Situation here unchanged; but enemy still mounting additional guns against some of our essential positions. I have provisions for 70 days, and believe I can defend Ladysmith while they last. Hay or grazing is a difficulty; I have 35 days' supply of this at reduced ration. Small arm ammunition, 5½ million; 15-pounder guns, 250 rounds per gun; 4·7-inch naval guns, 170 rounds per gun; 12-pounder naval guns, 270 rounds per gun; 6·3-inch howitzer, 430 rounds per gun. Enemy learns every plan of operations I form, and I cannot discover source. I have locked up or banished every suspect, but still have undoubted evidence of betrayal. Native deserters from enemy and our native scouts report enemy much disheartened by news of advance on Free State, victory on Mooi River, and consequent retirement north of Tugela River. With regard to road of advance towards Ladysmith, I could give most help to a force coming via Onderbrook Hotel or Springfield; but enemy is making his positions on that side stronger daily. If force south of Tugela can effect junction with me, I believe effect will be immediate and decisive. At present cannot go large, as I am completely invested, and must reserve myself for one or two big efforts to co-operate with relief force. It will be the greatest help to Ladysmith if relief force maintains closest possible touch with enemy. Hospital return—wounded, 225; dysentery, 71; enteric, 15; other fevers, 12; other diseases, 109. Additional portion of message deciphered: 'If you hear me attacking, join in if you can.' Please repeat entire message. I will keep a good lookout, and do all I can. Repeat General Clery." As to this telegram, I should like to say that I here give specifically the provisions, and when I mentioned that I had full provisions for 70 days I meant full rations. You will see that, in reply to his question, I give in detail exactly the provisions that I had, and that telegram also shows that I had every intention of co-operating with him if I got the opportunity. The telegram speaks for itself, and I need not enlarge upon it.

14867. (*Viscount Esher*.) When you say, in that telegram you have just read, "With regard to road of advance towards Ladysmith, I could give most help," is that the only suggestion you ever made to Sir Redvers Buller as to the best road of advance from the Tugela to Ladysmith?—Yes, I think it is. I did not suggest to him which way; Sir Redvers is not altogether a man to interfere with, and I did not like laying down the way he was to come, but I felt myself justified in saying which way I thought I could render most help. (*Colonel Altham*.) By Sir George White's direction, I sent a message to the Intelligence Officer with the force south of the Tugela suggesting that a reconnaissance should be made of the country near Potgieter's Drift, with a view to the possible advance of the relieving force in that direction.

14868. Colonel Altham, did you ever suggest to the Intelligence Officer what you thought would be the easiest way of approaching Ladysmith?—That was the only telegram of that nature sent from me. (*Sir George White*.) You were the man who suggested that; the road I suggested by Onderbrook Hotel was suggested in consequence of a consultation between my Intelli-

* This series as supplied to the Royal Commission by the War Office, is printed as an Appendix to this Volume, page 631, post.

gence Officer and myself with his intelligence before him.

14869. (*Sir John Edge.*) Colonel Altham, you have not given us the approximate date of the telegram about Potgieter's Drift?—To the best of my recollection, it was about the middle of November, but that is only speaking without the book. If I can find the telegram I will put in the date afterwards.

14870. (*Chairman.*) Colonel Altham, just to make it clear, you sent that telegram because the Intelligence Officer was then under your direction?—He was, in this way my Lord, that I was at that time head of the Intelligence Department in Natal, and I had been informed by telegram that I was to be Assistant Adjutant General of Intelligence under Sir Redvers Buller, so that to a certain extent I had general responsibility for the intelligence work throughout the country. I obtained Sir George White's authority to send anything that conveyed an order in any way.

(*Sir George White.*) To proceed with the siege correspondence. The next is "from General Clery, Frere," to General Sir G. White. 3rd December. Your questions by heliograph to Weenen received, and yours by runner to-day. The bulk of my troops are here, and, I hope, will be able to move about 11th. Demoralised Boers were seen to have retreated north of Tugela River. Buller is still at Maritzburg. There has not been much fighting on this side yet. Hildyard made a night attack on the Boers south of Estcourt on 22nd and 23rd, and drove them out of their positions. The next day they commenced retreating. Kimberley and Mafeking are still all right, former probably practically relieved by now. Lord Methuen was slightly wounded at Modder River, but has returned to duty. The German Emperor has been well received in England, where present war creates greatest enthusiasm. Will inform you as to my exact plans later. We are using flashing signals nightly."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 58, 4th December. Your No. 20P, 30th November, received. I shall have concentrated four brigades of infantry, five batteries of artillery, one regiment of cavalry, 1,000 mounted Volunteers, by 6th December, and shall attack. I cannot yet say which route, but will communicate with you in several cipher messages before I advance. I shall also send by searchlight messages in clear, but they will be false ones sent in order to deceive the enemy."

"Received without address, signature or date by runner, on 6th December. No. H. 59, cipher. The dispatch to Natal of cavalry and artillery has been somewhat delayed; but I still hope to commence my general advance, 12th December, possibly sooner. Will try to let you know again. Sir Redvers Buller is now at Maritzburg. Very anxious to know strength and position of Boer force north of Colenso."

"From General Clery to General Sir G. White. No. H. 63, 5th December, Highlands. Buller says he will send you all sorts of messages by heliograph and flashing signals, in clear, but you are not to believe them. You are only to believe messages sent in cipher or in Hindustani."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 21P, 6th December. Have strong evidence that Orange Free State Boers are proceeding in large numbers to Orange Free State, both via Drakensberg and by rail through Transvaal. My cavalry is now shut in, and, as regards arrival relieving force, it is too early for me to take and occupy more extended positions, so as to free mounted troops to harass Free State withdrawal. Perhaps you can hurry advance, or, if you think it necessary, I will try to harass Free State Boers at once. I believe large portion of enemy's force now faces Tugela."

"From General Sir G. White to General Clery. No. 21P, 7th December. Your No. H. 63, 5th December, received. Do not use Hindustani for true messages. Boers would have no difficulty in getting them translated. Inform Buller."

The next is an important one, which I should like to call attention to specially: "From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 65, 7th December. I have decided to advance by Potgieter's Drift. Expect to start 12th December and take five days."

14871. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you want to comment upon that?—My object in reading that is to show that that intimation was that he would come within reach of me about the 17th; he really attacked on the 15th.

(*Colonel Altham.*) I now find that it was on the 17th of November that I suggested Potgieter's Drift.

(*Sir George White.*) "From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 24P, 8th December. This morning I made a demonstration with cavalry to the north and east to draw enemy back from Tugela direction. Cavalry could not get far as enemy still in force to north and east. About twenty casualties." My object in laying stress upon that telegram is to show that I was working hard to keep the enemy around me.

14872. That was in view of his telegram of the 7th December, the telegram you have just read about the date he told you he was likely to advance?—Yes; it was with a view to try and show the enemy that I had power of striking out, so that they might not deplete the forces in front of Ladysmith and mass against him.

Then "From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 23P, 8th December. Last night I sent out General Hunter with 500 Natal Volunteers under Royston, and 100 Imperial Light Horse under Edwards, to surprise Gun Hill. The enterprise was admirably carried out, and was entirely successful, the hill being captured and a six-inch gun and a 4.7-inch howitzer destroyed with gun cotton by Captain Fowke and Lieutenant Turner, Royal Engineers, while a Maxim was captured and brought into camp." I lay stress upon that, as showing again that I was as active as I could be, with a view to lightening the task in front of Buller.

14873. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) That telegram goes on further?—Yes, but as it is on record already, I did not read it; that is the only part I wanted to make a remark upon. The balance of the telegram is: "Our loss—one killed; Major Henderson, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and two men slightly wounded." It will be on record *in extenso*, but I wish to call attention to the part I have read.

14874. There is the last part beginning "At the same time"?—Yes; "At the same time Colonel Knox seized Limit Hill, and one squadron 19th Hussars rode round Pepworth Hill, burning kraals and cutting Boer telegraph line. No casualties." That was done with the absolute intention of holding the Boers around me.

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 25P, 8th December. Captain Heath reported yesterday from balloon that very large laager of enemy, consisting of about 300 tents, is on this side Tugela, in neighbourhood of Potgieter's Drift. Boers usually yield to heavy shelling."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 26P, 8th December. Your message No. 65, 7th December. I cannot make sense of eight groups which come between 66130 and 00852, although I have had them several times repeated. Please have ciphering checked, and heliograph this part of message again."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 69, 9th December. The balloon was correct, but they have not enough men at Potgieter's Drift to stop me. I am only waiting for wagons, which I am impressing. I still hope to start on the 12th, and arrive near Lancer's Kop on 17th, but may be a day or two later, though I hope not. If I have hard fighting near Ladysmith, I shall look to you to feed my force for perhaps two days. I can only take three days' supplies across Tugela River, but that should be enough."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 27P, 10th December. Your No. 65 of 7th December received and understood. Am I right in supposing you will force crossing of Potgieter's Drift morning 15th? If so, I will move out night 14th-15th, and work towards you as far as I can. As time is all-important factor in co-operation, you will, I am sure, inform me of any change." I call attention to that as another instance in which I show my determination to go out and help him. The next telegram from Sir George White to Sir Redvers Buller, dated 11th December, is already on record, and that is another instance of an attack, when we destroyed some of their guns.

There is another telegram which I should like to call attention to, from the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief to Sir George White: "Clear line. No. 72, cypher, 11th December. Your No. 27P. I sent Barton's Brigade and six naval guns this evening to a point beyond Chieveley, whence during next two days they will bombard defences of Colenso. I propose to march with three brigades, two regiments of cavalry, 1,000 Volunteers, five batteries

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field artillery, and six naval guns to Springfield on night of 13th, force the passage of Pogieter's a.m. 15th, advance to water near Dewdrop 16th, attack Lancer's Hill 17th. But my actual movement depends on arrival of impressed transport. I may be disappointed, so cannot fix dates accurately without risking undue delay. Consequently, I think you had better not look forward to helping me before my attack on Lancer's Hill unless you feel certain of where I am. Heavy rain before 15th may also delay me." He did not reach Lancer's Hill; so that you see I had not the opportunity of helping him. He tells me not to help him; he says: "I think you had better not look forward to helping me before my attack on Lancer's Hill."

14875. (*Viscount Esher*.) "Unless you feel certain of where I am"?—"Unless you feel certain of where I am."

14876. What means had you of knowing where he was?—By his guns, and I was actually looking on at some of his fights.

14877. And heliograph?—Yes.

14878. Was he not able to communicate to you exactly where he was by heliograph?—No, he could not. For instance, after he had told me he had got Spion Kop, he was beaten off again, and he did not at any time say to me, "I have arrived at the point when you can help me."

14879. Did he communicate with you by heliograph in the course of these fights while they were going on?—(*Colonel Altham*.) During Spion Kop, which lasted seven or eight days, he did.

14880. During the earlier ones did he?—On the contrary, he never told us the date of the attack on Colenso.

(*Sir George White*.) The next telegram is:—

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. Clear line. No. 29P, 12th December. Your No. 72, 11th December, received and understood. Shall look out for heliograph on hills south of Potgieters, and act according to circumstances."

"From General Clery to Sir G. White. No. 65H, 11th December. We think it possible that the Boers have flashing signals, and may use it to interfere and confuse our messages."

This is an important one:—

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 78, cipher, 13th December. I have been forced to change my plans. Am coming through via Colenso and Onderbrook Spruit."

Then:—

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 30P, 13th December. Your No. 78 of to-day received and understood. Shall be very glad if you will let me know your probable dates."

"From General Sir G. White to General Clery. No. 31P, 13th December. Your No. H65 of 11th. Boers use searchlight to hinder cloud signals, but not successfully."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 80, 13th December. Three brigades concentrate at Chieveley to-day. Fourth brigade go there to-morrow. Actual date of attack depends on difficulties met with; probably 17th December."

14881. Have you any idea why he changed his plan?—I have not an idea. I do not know whether the first was a ruse or not, and I have never known. I might here state that I published a "Special Natal Field Force Order" on the 14th of December, 1899, in anticipation of having the opportunity of helping Sir Redvers Buller's force, and perhaps Colonel Altham will read it.

(*Colonel Altham*.) "Organisation.—(1) In order that a force may be ready organised to move out from Ladysmith for offensive operations at short notice, the following arrangements will be made by officers commanding sections and others concerned for the defence of Ladysmith during the absence of the flying column:—(2) The flying column, which will be under the personal command of the Lieut.-General Commanding, will take with it three days' supplies for men and animals in the wagons, one day's preserved meat, in addition, being carried on pack mules. (3) Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., will command the garrison, and the detachment Royal Navy, under Captain the Honourable Hedworth Lambton, will co-operate in the defence of Ladysmith. (4) The troops will be divided as follows, and arrangements will be made forthwith by officers commanding sections of the defence for the troops remaining at Ladysmith to take over their defensive duties immediately the flying column leaves:—

UNDER COMMAND OF THE LIEUTENANT-GENERAL COMMANDING.

Troops for the Flying Column.		Troops for the Defence of Ladysmith, under Colonel Knox.	
Commander.	Unit.	Section.	Unit.
Cavalry Brigade under Brigadier-General Brocklehurst.	5th Dragoon Guards. 5th Lancers. 18th Hussars. Imperial Light Horse. Supply Column.	Reserve	19th Hussars. Dismounted portion of Cavalry of Flying Column.
7th Brigade under Colonel Hamilton.	1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment. 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders. 2 Companies 1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers. Supply Column.	"C" Section under Officer Commanding 1st Battalion Manchester Regiment.	2 guns 42nd Battery Royal Field Artillery. Natal Naval Volunteers. 1st Battalion Manchester Regiment. 3 Companies 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps.
8th Brigade under Major-General Howard.	5 Companies 1st Battalion Liverpool Regiment. 6 Companies 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade. Supply Column.	"B" Section under Officer Commanding 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps.	4 guns 42nd Battery Royal Field Artillery. Two 15-pounder Royal Field Artillery Guns under Lieut. Belcher, R.A. 4 Companies 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps. 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps. 2 Companies 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment.
Divisional Troops.	13th Battery Royal Field Artillery. 21st " " 53rd " " 67th " " 69th " " 2 guns No. 10 Mountain Battery Royal Garrison Artillery. 1st Brigade Division Ammunition Column. 2nd Brigade Division Ammunition Column. 23rd Company Royal Engineers, and Details Telegraph Section. Natal Carabineers. Border Mounted Rifles.	"A" Section under Senior Officer.	Howitzer and Nordenfelt Details. Balloon and Telegraph Sections, Royal Engineers. 3 Companies 1st Battalion Liverpool Regiment. Details 1st Battalion Gloucester Regiment. Details 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.
		The Flats.	Natal Mounted Rifles.

Mounted Infantry companies will accompany their respective battalions, except the Mounted Infantry company of the Manchester Regiment, which will accompany the 7th Brigade on flying column.

"All details not mentioned above, and capable of bearing arms, will be available for the defence of Ladysmith under Colonel Knox's orders. The principal medical officer will make the necessary medical arrangements.

"By order,

"A. HUNTER, Major-General,
"Chief of the Staff, Natal Field Force."

(Sir George White.) I dwell upon this to show that I had before me intelligence which led me to believe that an attack would take place on the 17th December, that I got that information on the 13th December, and that I immediately, on the 14th December, issued that order which you have heard read, with a view of having everything in readiness, when I got the opportunity of moving out, to assist as far as my means would admit of the advance of Sir Redvers Buller's force. These are directed towards the attacks which have been made upon me for not co-operating.

Then the next telegram is:—

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. Clear line. No. 88, 16th December. I tried Colenso yesterday, but failed; the enemy is too strong for my force, except with siege operations, and those would take one full month to prepare. Can you last so long? If not, how many days can you give me in which to take up defensive position? After which I suggest your firing away as much ammunition as you can and making best terms you can. I can remain here if you have alternative suggestion, but unaided I cannot break in. I find my infantry cannot fight more than 10 miles from camp, and then only if water can be got, and it is scarce here." I must supplement this by saying that when I got that I said to my staff officers, "The Boers have got hold of the cipher; ask Sir Redvers Buller to repeat that telegram." Then there is a note: "In his No. 92 of 17th Buller said above message had been signalled correctly, but asked us to make following corrections:—'Strike out from "if not, how many," down to "after which," inclusive, and substitute, "how many days can you hold out?" Add to end of message, "Whatever happens, recollect to burn your cipher, decipher, and code books, and all deciphered messages."'"

14882. How did you interpret that "except with siege operations"; what did you think he meant by that?—I thought he meant sapping up to the position, which I thought would be a very tedious process in the rocky hills.

14883. It struck you, at any rate, as rather a curious proceeding, did it not, the idea of siege operations before Colenso? Did you know the position?—No; I could not say I knew it.

14884. I suppose you formed an idea of it in your own mind?—Yes; I had only passed through rapidly in the train. You see, he again asks how many days I could hold out, and my reply is pretty well known:—

"General Sir George White to General Sir Redvers Buller. No. 32, 16th December. Your No. 88 of to-day received and understood. My suggestion is that you take up strongest available position that will enable you to keep touch of the enemy and harass him constantly with artillery fire, and in other ways as much as possible. I can make food last for much longer than a month, and will not think of making terms till I am forced to. You may have hit enemy harder than you think. All our native spies report that your artillery fire made considerable impression on enemy. Have your losses been very heavy? If you lose touch of enemy it will immensely increase his opportunities of crushing me, and have worse effect elsewhere. While you are in touch with him, and in communication with me, he has both of our forces to reckon with. Make every effort to get reinforcements as early as possible, including India, and enlist every man in both Colonies who will serve and can ride. Things may look brighter. The loss of 12,000 men here would be a heavy blow to England. We must not yet think of it. I fear I could not cut my way to you. Enteric fever is increasing alarmingly here. There are now 180 cases, all within the last month. Answer fully. I am keeping everything secret for the present till I know your plans." With regard to the passage there, "and enlist every man in both Colonies who will

serve and can ride," that was given in another list of telegrams as, "and enlist jungle men in both Colonies," or something of that sort, and Sir Redvers Buller's remark upon it was that he did not know what I meant by "jungle men."

14885. Your first impression, when you got that telegram of the 16th, was that the cipher had fallen into the hands of the Boers?—Yes.

14886. You mean by that that it was incredible to you that such a telegram could have emanated from the General; is that what you mean?—Yes, that is what I mean.

14887. What you did was to send this telegram of encouragement, because that is really what it amounts to?—No; it was to make certain that it was a genuine telegram, and came from Sir Redvers Buller himself, because it had a most important bearing upon our position, and I considered it the proper thing to do, as soon as I had it confirmed by repetition, to call the attention of some of the senior officers about me to it.

14888. (Sir John Jackson.) Then No. 28 appears to be in reply to that telegram?—"From General Sir Redvers Buller to General Sir George White. Clear line. No. 93, 17th December. I find I cannot take Colenso, and I cannot stay in force near there, as there is no water; but I am leaving there as large a force as I can to help you; but recollect that in this weather my infantry cannot be depended on to march more than 10 miles a day. Can you suggest anything for me to do? I think in about three weeks from now I could take Colenso, but I can never get to Onderbroek."

14889. (Viscount Esher.) He asks you there to suggest what he should do?—He says also: "I am leaving there as large a force as I can to help you. . . . Can you suggest anything for me to do?" My reply to that was: "Clear line. No. 33P, 18th December. Your No. 93, 17th December, received and understood. It is difficult for me to make suggestions, as I do not know situation outside or whether you have made serious attempt to take Colenso, and with what loss. Your messages were previously confident, and I had made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek, and could still do so if you had Colenso. I cannot advise leaving small force in advance of main body. It would probably be invested, and be no real threat to enemy. Your front line should be held in full strength. Abandonment of this garrison seems to me most disastrous alternative on public grounds. Enemy will be doubly strong on Tugela if Ladysmith falls. I can only suggest getting every available reinforcement in men and guns, and attacking again in full force as early as possible. Meantime, I will do all I can to maintain an active defence, and will co-operate with you to the extent of my power if you advance again. How are you getting on in the Free State? We know nothing. Detailed news desirable, to contradict mischievous rumours here." I also advised him against sending a small force in advance of the main body, but I do not think there is anything for me to dwell upon in that. I think it tells its own story, unless somebody would like to ask me any question about it.

14890. You tell him in that telegram that you have "made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek"?—I think it is almost a dull reiteration my going on with that; I told him so often.

14891. (Sir John Jackson.) In that telegram, No. 93, of 17th December, General Buller said he could "never get to Onderbroek"?—Yes; and I think I replied to that that I could even now fight out towards Onderbroek if he had Colenso.

14892. "Your messages were previously confident, and I had made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek, and could still do so if you had Colenso"?—That has again the same tendency; it shows I was quite ready and only too willing to get the chance of attacking, but it was no use attacking without co-operation at the other end, and that co-operation required to be very carefully timed. It would be apparent to anybody that if I had gone out on the 17th I should have met the victorious Boer forces, after having beaten Buller's force back on the 15th.

14893. (Viscount Esher.) When you got those two telegrams what was your final impression—that he was to leave you in the lurch?—I would rather not say my impression unless you press me to do it.

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14894. What did you think you would then have to do?—I thought then that the time was approaching when it would be my duty to try to cut my way out.

14895. That was, in the end, what you determined to do if you were left?—It is on record. I did telegraph to him, and ask him to send it on to the highest authority, that my men were becoming non-effective from starvation and illness, and that I thought that the time had arrived when it was my duty to propose that he should attack in the first instance, and I should try to cut my way out to join him.

14896. Anyhow, the idea of making the best terms you could never entered your mind?—No. I said I would certainly not do it. I preferred to try to get some survivors through, and to give others the chance of going elsewhere than Pretoria.

Then the next is:—"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. Dated, Headquarters, Frere, No. 97, 17th December. 6th Division just arrived at the Cape; have telegraphed for it to come on at once. It will make me strong enough to try Potgieter's. How long can you hold out?"

"From General Sir George White to General Sir Redvers Buller. Clear line. No. 34P, 18th December. Your No. 97 of yesterday received and understood. Delighted to get it. I have provisions for men for six weeks, and have confidence in holding this place for that time. But bombardment may become more trying. I had 22 casualties this morning from one shell. Enteric and dysentery increasing very rapidly. I can get on well for three weeks, keeping even horses moderately fit, if you wish to wait for siege train. It is worth waiting a little to dominate and overwhelm enemy's guns. Bring every heavy gun, naval and other, you can get. Water will be a difficulty as regards occupying a position near Tugela River, from which you can maintain continuous attack. Could you arrange pipes, pumping station, or reservoirs?"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 35P, 18th December. Following from Lambton, R.N., to Officer Commanding Naval Brigade:—"At long ranges I consider common and lyddite shell much preferable to shrapnel for clearing entrenchments."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 98, 18th December. Your No. 32P of yesterday received. My No. 97 of yesterday gives situation. I am shelling Colenso and keeping all troops I can at Chieveley, but water is scarce. Boil all your water. We hear Boers are putting dead horses in Klip River. I will tell you immediately I know when Warren is coming."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 36P, 19th December. All our scouts report marked diminution in usual number of Boer horses round here to-day. This may mean movement in strength towards you."

"From General Sir Redvers Buller to General Sir George White. No. 119, 19th December. I was confident of taking Colenso, and think I ought to have done it had not my guns gone in to within 1,200 yards of Fort Wylie, where they were put out of action, and I only extricated two guns out of 12. I lost about 1,000, all told. Heard enemy lost 600 to 800, but I cannot say. Methuen defeated Boers at Belmont, at Graspan, and at Modder River. He again attacked them at Speyfontein, but failed to get home. He is now encamped at Modder River, in front of Cronje, who has about 15,000 men very strongly entrenched. The 5th Division is just arriving, and the 6th and 7th Divisions are embarking in England. Dutch in Cape Colony are giving a good deal of trouble. That, I think, is about all the news."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 112, 21st December. Your message, 19th December, received. I expect that reinforcements will be concentrated here by 5th January."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 131, 30th December, Frere. My intention is to start from here 6th January, by which time I hope the 5th Division will have arrived. My point of attack will be Lancer's Kop. It will take me about six days to get there from the date I start from here. I will inform you later of my exact date of departure from here, and will endeavour to keep you informed of my movements, but my telegraph line may be cut."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 38P, 1st January. Your No. 131, 30th December, received to-day. If you will trust me with further details of your plan, I hope to be able to assist you in the later stages of your advance on Ladysmith; but to do this effectually, I should require to know on which line or lines you intend to force passage of Tugela."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 1333, 2nd January. Your No. 38P, 1st January. See my No. 97, 17th December. I adhere to the plan therein referred to of crossing Tugela River at Potgieter's. I expect a stiff fight when crossing the river, possibly a fight at the place I camp, between river and Lancer's Kop, and another fight there. If you can recommend me any better point of attack than Lancer's Kop, please do so. As troops are not arriving up to time, I doubt if I can start until the 8th January. I calculate it will take me seven days to reach Lancer's Kop."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 39P, 2nd January. Your No. 133 of to-day. As you intend crossing Tugela River at Potgieter's, Lancer's Hill becomes an essential point on your line of advance. If you can keep me informed of your progress, I can help you by attacking Lancer's Hill from north, when you attack it from south-west. Communication by signalling from hill above Potgieter's should be easy. Do not hurry on date of starting on our account if recently arrived troops need rest, as I am quite confident of holding my own here."

"[Note.—On 6th January, about 7 a.m., a telegram was sent to General Buller, informing him that we were being attacked. It was not numbered, and no copy was kept.]"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 41P, 6th January, 9.30 a.m. Attack continues, and enemy been reinforced from south. All my reserves are in action. I think enemy must have weakened his force in front of you."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 42P, 6th January, 12.45 p.m. We now have definite information that considerable numbers of enemy left Colenso yesterday, intending to take Ladysmith before fighting you. Have beaten them off at present, but they are still round me in great numbers, especially to south, and I think renewed attack very probable."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 43P, 6th January, 3.15 p.m. Attack renewed. Very hard pressed."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 43P, 7th January. Yesterday morning, 2.45 a.m., an attack was commenced on my position, but chiefly against Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill. The enemy were in great strength, and pushed their attack with the greatest courage and persistency. Some of our entrenchments on Wagon Hill were three times taken by the enemy, and re-taken by us. The attack continued till 7.30 p.m. One point within our position was occupied by the enemy the whole day. In a very heavy storm of rain at dusk the enemy were turned out of this position at the point of the bayonet, in the most gallant manner, by the Devonshire Regiment, led by Major Park. Colonel Ian Hamilton commanded at Wagon Hill, and rendered invaluable service. The troops have had a very trying time, behaved excellently, and are elated at the service they have rendered to the Queen. The enemy were repulsed everywhere with heavy loss, which greatly exceeds our own. Details will be sent as soon as lists are completed."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 44P, 7th January. Our losses yesterday heavy. Officers killed, 14; wounded, 23. Men killed, about 100; wounded, about 230. Nominal list later. Most of the wounds were in the head. Troops here much played out, and a very large proportion of my officers have, up to date, been killed or wounded, or are sick. I would rather not call upon them to move out from Ladysmith to co-operate with you; but I am confident enemy have been very severely hit. Please do not allow our losses to be published in local papers, as they thus reach and encourage the enemy."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 136, 5th January. Your No. 39P, 2nd

January. I shall certainly try and communicate with you, and am taking limelight for that reason. I expect to start night of 9th-10th, and to have a fight to cross the river about the 15th. The enemy have entrenched themselves, but the position is not naturally as strong as at Colenso. Do you wish me to leave a signaller at Weenen when I start? It would be more convenient to remove him."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 45P, 8th January. Your No. 136, 5th January. Of course, you must decide; but uninterrupted communication would be double value to me while you are en route for here."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 144, 8th January. After stating that his No. 139, which we could not decipher, referred to operations of 6th January, and might now be cancelled, and after making one or two unimportant corrections in his No. 136, 5th January, goes on as follows:—"I start from here to-morrow, and expect it will be six or seven days from then before I shall be able to leave Potgieter's, but I may be quicker. I shall try to keep up signal communication with you, and I am taking a balloon, which I hope you will see."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 145, 8th January. Sorry to hear of your severe list of casualties. Congratulate all the men, and say we shall strain every nerve to be with them soon."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 148, 8th January. Your No. 45P. Signal station will be left at Weenen; but keep a good look-out for signals to westward on the 11th and afterwards."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 157, 8th January. There is an idea here that the enemy may attack you again shortly, and at night. We commence to move to-morrow, Tuesday night."

"From Her Majesty the Queen to General Sir George White. Warmly congratulate you and all under your command for your brilliant success. Greatly admire conduct of the Devonshire Regiment."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 46P, 10th January. Your reassuring telegram, No. 145, 8th January, much appreciated by troops. My sick list now amounts to 2,000, including 615 cases of typhoid."

"From General Sir G. White to Private Secretary to Her Majesty the Queen. 10th January. The garrison of Ladysmith are deeply grateful for the Queen's most gracious message, and beg to express their loyal duty."

"From General Sir G. White to Governor, Natal, 10th January. I thank you for your appreciative telegram. It has gratified the garrison of Ladysmith much, and they are rejoiced to think they have rendered good service to Natal, a province that has shown such devotion to Imperial interests, and given this garrison so splendid a contingent, with whom it is an honour to fight as comrades."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 156, 14th January. I find the enemy's position covering Potgieter's Drift so strong that I shall have to turn it, and I expect it will be four or five days from now before I shall be able to advance towards Ladysmith. I shall keep you constantly informed on my progress."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 47P, 15th January. Your No. 156 of yesterday just received. I can wait. Wish you best of luck."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 48P, 16th January, reference your No. 156, 14th January. If you have considerable doubt of being able to get through to Ladysmith, would you put case to Roberts, and ask more troops. If you are repulsed now, Ladysmith will be in a bad way. If you are undefeated and ready to attack on any withdrawal of enemy's strength from your front, I think I could maintain this place till 15th February; but the sick would suffer badly. My force is much played out. I have 2,400 in hospital, and many very weakly men at duty.

Sickness increasing daily. I have lost services of 230 officers in last three months, including killed, still non-effective from wounds, prisoners, and sick."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 159, of 17th January. Your No. 48P, 16th January. I crossed one bridge at Potgieter's to-day, and am bombarding their position. Warren, with three brigades and six batteries, has crossed by pontoon bridge at Trichard's Drift, and will move to the north to try and outflank Boer position. I somehow think we are going to be successful this time. We could not get reinforced in time to relieve you if we waited. Every man in this force is doing his level best to relieve you. It is quite pleasant to see how keen the men are. I hope to be knocking at Lancer's Hill in six days from now."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 0354, code, 19th January. Following message received from General Warren last night:—"Colonel Lord Dundonald, with about 1,200 mounted troops, came into action this afternoon with a force of Beers to the west of Acton Homes. At 7 p.m. I reinforced him with 300 1st Royal Dragoons. He has occupied the kopjes, after a fight, and is now holding the position. Field Cornet Heilbron, 20 Boers killed and wounded, 15 prisoners. Lieutenant Shaw, Imperial Light Horse, severely wounded; two privates, King's Royal Rifle Corps, killed; and one private, Imperial Light Horse, wounded."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 49, 19th January. Your No. 159 and No. 161. Congratulate you and ourselves on your successful progress, and have greatest confidence in seeing you soon."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 0352, code, 15th January. Have you formed an estimate of the enemy's losses on 6th January? If so, please inform me."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. 15th January. I returned bodies of 79 dead, killed within my position. Of course, this cannot include all dead, but I have no means of verifying their losses, and dislike making estimates based on uncertain details. Native reports place Boer loss at 500 to 600 killed and wounded."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. 19th January. A force of 1,500 to 2,000 Boers moved from Clydesdale towards Acton Homes, 5 p.m. to-day, by main road."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 162, 20th January. Thanks for telegram respecting observations, movements of enemy. Can you see when enemy relieves garrison of trenches east of Spion Kop? The trenches are nearly always full of men, but we cannot see enemy go in or come out of them. Warren is meeting with great difficulties regarding roads, and his progress is very slow. I am sending him three more days' supplies."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. 20th January. Your No. 162 of to-day. Relief of trenches east of Spion Kop not been seen from here. Will watch and report if relief observed."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 51P. 21st January. If you can let me know when you intend decisive attack on Boer position, I will demonstrate here to draw as many as possible away from you. Experience leads me to think I can draw away a considerable number."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 166, 21st January. Your No. 51P, 21st January. We are slowly fighting our way up the hill. I will let you know when help from you will be of most assistance. Reports received from all prisoners put the number of enemy in front of me at 10,000, and the number surrounding you at 5,000. I do not know if this correct."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 52P, 22nd January. Your No. 166, 21st January. I think 15,000 is too low an estimate of enemy's numbers round Ladysmith and facing Tugela. You are probably right about Ladysmith, but I believe there are more than 10,000 facing you, or in position to face you rapidly. Deserters report a movement on

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Saturday of detached force towards Drakensberg to try and turn the left flank."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 53P, 22nd January. Considerable activity in Boer camps to-day. Towards sunset about 500 Boers from here reinforced main Boer camp near Clydesdale. Shall open artillery fire at daybreak to call them back.

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 167, 23rd January. Warren holds the position he gained two days ago. In front of him, at about 1,400 yards, is the enemy's position west of Spion Kop. It is on higher ground than Warren's position, so it is impossible to see into it properly; it can only be approached over bare open slopes. The ridges, held by Warren, are so steep, that guns cannot be placed on them, but we are shelling the enemy's position with howitzer and field artillery placed on the lower features behind the infantry; enemy reply with Creusot and other artillery. In this duel the advantage rests with us, as we appear to be searching his trenches, and his artillery fire is not causing us much loss. An attempt will be made to-morrow to seize Spion Kop, the salient which forms the left of the enemy's position facing Trichard's Drift, and (it must be done) from the position facing Potgieter's, it has considerable command over all the enemy's entrenchments."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 54P. 24th January. Many thanks for efforts you are making. We await news of result with utmost anxiety."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 170, 25th January. Warren took Spion Kop the 24th, and held it all day, but suffered very heavily; General Woodgate, dangerously wounded, 200 killed, and 300 badly wounded, and his garrison abandoned it in great disorder at night. I am withdrawing to Potgieter's, and mean to have one fair square try to get with you, but my force is not strong enough, I fear. I shall send particulars to-morrow."

I should like to call your Lordship's attention to the next telegram, because it is in answer to your question; it is my telegram to Sir Redvers Buller of the 27th January. "No. 55P, 27th January. Your No. 170, of 25th, only received to-day. We must expect to lose heavily in this campaign, and be prepared to face it. If you try again and fail, Ladysmith is doomed. Is not 7th Division available to reinforce you? I could feed the men another month, but not all the horses, and without guns my force could do nothing outside. My medical supplies are nearly out" (I was very weak in these), "and the mortality is eight to ten daily already. I put it to you and the Government whether I ought not to abandon Ladysmith and try to join you. I could, I think, throw 7,000 men" (that, I ascertained afterwards, was too sanguine a view) "and 36 guns into the fight. If you would commence preparing an attack and draw off the enemy, say, in the afternoon of a day to be settled between us, I would attack that night and do my best to join you. The attack from here ought to have great effect, but I fear my men are weak, and, in some instances, morally played out. The fall of Ladysmith would have a terrible effect, especially in India." (I may say, in explanation of that "especially in India," that a great portion of our force came to us from India, and they had Indian establishments, and, in some instances, Indian soldiers as hospital orderlies, and so forth, and it struck me that the report of a late Commander-in-Chief in India having been taken prisoner to Pretoria would have had a specially prejudicial effect in India.) "I am deeply impressed with the gravity of the situation, and trust you will repeat this to the highest authorities. Deserters report Boers lost severely on 24th, and were quite disheartened by your artillery fire. If we stick to them we may effect a junction, but my proposal is a desperate one, and involves abandoning my sick and wounded, naval guns, and railway rolling stock. I could not keep the field more than two or three days. I would hold on to the last here if political considerations demand it, or if there is a prospect of sufficient reinforcement to relieve us." I may say that in reply to that, Lord Roberts ordered me to hold on, and said that he hoped that his operations through the Orange Free State would put such pressure on the Boers, and so far relieve Natal, that the situation would be more hopeful, and he hoped to attain this result by the end of February—a promise which he kept to the hour, as 28th February was the day I was relieved.

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 173, 28th January. We had awful luck on the 24th; I had got two naval guns and a mountain battery half-way up Spion Kop, when the troops came down. If we had had the luck, out of all the Colonels up there, to have found a really good fighting man, we should have been in Ladysmith in four days. As it is, we are no better off, and some regiments here have had a severe shake. On the other hand, the Boers themselves admit very heavy casualties, and that they are tired out. We have held them in their trenches at a distance of from 1,000 to 1,400 yards for a week, and our artillery fire has been very good. We have lost, say, 1,400. I cannot think their casualties less than 1,000. The question is, Can I get within a day's fight of you? At the present time they have the position at Potgieter's. I think I can certainly take that, but it will leave them on my left at the Acton Homes—Spion Kop position. They may not remain there, but if they do, I doubt if I can get forward to the Rooodepoort position, which is, I hear heavily entrenched. I propose, about Wednesday, to attack Potgieter's. If I get through, I shall be able to arrange with you for a simultaneous attack, you on Lancer's Hill, and me on Rooodepoort, and that, I think, offers the best chance of success. Believe me, I will leave nothing untried. Your No. 55P, received since above was written. I agree with you that breaking out is only a final desperate resort. I shall try to force this position, and then we shall see. Some old Boers, who were very civil to our doctors on Spion Kop, told them that there were 16,000 of them in front of us, and not more than 4,000 left at Ladysmith. I have no means of knowing how true this is, but deserters say that most of the men are here. Lord Roberts says he cannot reinforce me, but that if you will wait till the end of February, he will by then be in Bloemfontein, and will have relieved Kimberley, which will, he says, reduce the pressure on Ladysmith. I doubt Roberts's forecasts coming off, and think I had better play my hand alone, and as soon as I can. What do you think?"

May I direct attention to telegram No. 83, from Sir Redvers Buller to Sir George White, sending the terms of a telegram from Lord Roberts, the purport of which I have given, and which appears to me to be an extraordinary instance of prescience, for it was the last day of February that I was relieved:—

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 174, 28th January. Following telegram just received for you from Lord Roberts:—'Please communicate following to White: "I beg you will yourself accept and offer all those serving under command my warmest congratulations on heroic, splendid, defence you have made. It is a matter of the deepest regret to me that the relief of Ladysmith should be delayed, but I trust you will be able to hold out later than the date named in your recent message to Buller. I fear your sick and wounded must suffer, but you will realise how important it is that Ladysmith should not fall into the enemy's hands. I am doing all that is possible to hurry on my movement, and shall be greatly disappointed if by the end of February I have not been able to carry out such operations as will compel the enemy to materially reduce his strength in Natal."'"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 56 P, 28th January. Thanks for your No. 173 of to-day. It is most provoking about losing Spion Kop. I think it would be better if you stick to bombardment and slow progress by something like sap rather than commit yourself to another definite attack. Information, which I believe correct, says Boers are discouraged by superiority of your armament, and say they cannot stand it. Keep them, therefore, in their trenches, and bombard them as heavily as you can. I don't think they will stand it long. I trust to your preventing them from throwing their strength on me. I will hold on six weeks more by sacrificing many of my horses, and that period of bombardment, coupled with Roberts's advance, will make Orange Free State men, at all events, clear off. I believe your estimate of enemy's numbers here and before you may be correct, but his guns here are protected by wire entanglements and mines. Boers can, however, come here from Potgieters in 90 minutes. In this lies their great strength. You must not let them leave you and throw their strength on me."

"From General Sir G. White to General R. Buller. No. 57 P, 28th January. Your No. 174 of to-day. Please communicate following reply to Lord Roberts:—

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16 Feb. 1903.

"Many thanks from self and force for message and congratulation. By sacrificing rest of my horses I can hold out for six weeks, keeping my guns efficiently horsed and 1,000 men mounted on moderately efficient horses. I should like to publish your intention to advance via Orange Free State as early as you can permit me to do so. It will encourage my garrison, and will be certain to reach and discourage Orange Free State men."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 121, 31st January. Consul, Delagoa Bay, reports Boers intend to flood Ladysmith by damming Klip River; German engineer in charge. Native deserter says dam is being made one mile north of Nelthorpe Station. What effect would this have on you?"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 28 P, 31st January. Your No. 121 of to-day. Consider enterprise impossible, and could have no effect."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. Clear line. No. 60 P, 2nd February. Information here that another serious attack will be made on Ladysmith very soon. Kruger, Steyn, and Joubert have met, and have arranged this. If made I will signal to you, if possible, and at night, one rocket first, to call attention, and then, after interval of one minute, three rockets fired at fifteen seconds interval, all from Wagon Hill, will mean I am seriously attacked. Will you acknowledge by two rockets in rapid succession from Spearman's Kop?"

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 184, 2nd February. Your No. 60 P received and noted. I expect to be in position to try and force my way through on to the plain on Monday; at any rate, I expect to attack that morning. Unless I get to the plain I do not see how I can help you, but I shall do all I can. Do you think there is any chance of your being attacked before Monday, as, if so, I shall concentrate to-morrow my force, which is now scattered for want of water?"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 61 P, 2nd February. I have what I believe reliable information that Steyn, Joubert, and younger brother of latter have held meetings near here, and determined to attack Ladysmith again. Kruger expected daily, when plan will be settled. Majority of Boers are for fighting on here to the last. At conference a field cornet favoured peace. Steyn threatened to dismiss him, on which whole commando threatened to go home. Steyn told officers attending meeting that they had to fight it out here, as that was what they came to Ladysmith for. Boer losses, 20th to 24th, described as very great; probably 1,200. Effect of lyddite shell described as making great impression, not only killing Boers, but burying them, leaving a hand sticking out here or a leg there. Your 184 just received. Do not expect attack before Monday. Attack to-morrow not very likely, but if made shall hope to give good account of ourselves. Attack on Sunday most improbable."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 185, 2nd February. Your No. 60 P. We have no rockets, but your signals will be acknowledged by two fires which would be lighted on Spearman's Kop."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 188, 3rd February. Acknowledge receipt of this telegram. Bar accidents, I attack the position in front of me Monday morning, and hope to establish myself on the flats before nightfall. I shall try my best. Please note that the Boers removed the helmets and arms of our dead on Spion Kop. They may intend to try and deceive the sentries if they attack you."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 62 P, 4th February. Your No. 188 of yesterday received and noted. We are all most grateful for your efforts on our account, and wish you all success. Precautions taken against use of disguise by enemy."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 63 P, 4th February. One green warning rocket, then interval of one minute, followed by red, blue, red rockets at fifteen seconds interval."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. 4th February. Your No. 63 P of to-day. Received and noted."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 190, 7th February. The enemy is too strong for me

here, and though I could force the position, it would be at great loss. The Bulwana big gun is here, and a large force. My plan is to slip back to Chieveley, take Hlangwane, the Boer position south of the Tugela and east of Colenso, and the next night try and take Bulwana Hill from the south. Can you think of anything better? I find I cannot get my guns and trains through those mountains. I hope to be at Hlangwane on Saturday. Keep it dark."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 64 P, 8th February. Your No. 191 of yesterday. Gun opposite you was formerly on Telegraph Hill. Bulwana gun still in position here. Cannot offer suggestions, as do not know country or where you propose to cross Tugela. I could help at Bulwana. The closer to Ladysmith you can establish yourself, the better chance we shall have here."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 191, 8th February. My No. 190 of to-day. For 'Saturday' read 'Monday.'"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 66 P, 13th February. Considerable movement yesterday among Boer camps. All those north of Potgieter's moved, some towards Potgieter's Drift and some eastward. We anxiously await news from you."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 1,780 (received without date on 13th February). Field-Marshal desires me to communicate the following to you:—'Your telegram, 28th January. I have entered Orange Free State with a large force, specially strong in Cavalry, Artillery, and Mounted Infantry. Inform your troops of this, and tell them from me I hope the result of next few days may lead to pressure on Ladysmith being materially lessened.'"

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 67 P, 14th February. Two civil residents, H. J. Ladd and J. R. Gorton, have escaped from hospital camp I was allowed by Joubert to form for protection of sick and non-combatants out of fire. In doing this I consider they have made use of camp in a manner that violates guarantee I gave to Joubert, and that he would be justified in cancelling the immunity he has most considerably allowed to civilians, women, children, and sick. He has already threatened to do this, and I ask that Ladd and Gorton, who are reported to have arrived at Mooi River, may be arrested and handed over as prisoners to the nearest Boer officer."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 68P, 15th February. Following movements of enemy observed to-day:—About 50 wagons and 600 Boers from Roodepoort to Surprise Hill; 55 wagons and about 400 Boers from Dewdrop to Onder brook."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 69P, 15th February. Reference my No. 60, 2nd February, and No. 63P, 4th February. Rocket station changed from Wagon Hill to Caesar's Camp, east end."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 70P, 16th February. Considerable move northward took place yesterday afternoon and evening. Not less than 2,000 men, with large proportion of wagons, moving north up valley of Klip River towards Candyleugh (see page 33 of Report on Communications in Natal). Boers still working hard at dam in Klip River. When moving off, Boers set fire to several farms in Dewdrop Valley."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 0415, code, 16th February. Your No. 67, 14th February. Have given instructions for the two men you mention to be arrested if they can be found."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 202, 16th February. Your No. 66P, 13th February. I am engaged in trying to turn the enemy out of the position he holds south of Tugela River and east of Colenso. It can best be described as Monte Christo Farm, and consists of west slopes of Cingolo Mountain and east slopes of Hlangwane Hill."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. Clear line. No. 203, 16th February. I hear that 300 Germans have joined the Boers round Ladysmith, and that you will be attacked before 26th February, and that I shall be attacked at the same time."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 71P, 16th February. Your No. 203 of to-

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16 Feb. 1903

day. I think another attack here quite possible. Have strengthened defences, and will try to give good account of ourselves, but men are on very short rations, and are consequently very weak. We are eating our horses. Have no grain left for animals, and grass is very scarce."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 72P, 19th February, 10 a.m. Sandbach's message to Hunter received. I congratulate you on your important success. We have observed 160 wagons coming from Tugela direction and moving north. Let me know when you intend attacking position north of Tugela, and whether you will come via Bulwana or Colenso road, and I will try and co-operate."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 73P, 21st February. We have observed reinforcements for enemy disembarking at Modder Spruit Station, and about 750 mounted men have been seen during last two days moving south via Bulwana."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 207, 21st February. I am now engaged in pushing my way through by Pieter's. I think there is only a rearguard in front of me. The large Boer laager under Bulwana was removed last night. I hope to be with you to-morrow night. You might help by working north and stopping some of the enemy getting away. A large camp has been moved to-day from the hill between the station and Cæsar's Camp."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 74P, 21st February. Your No. 207 of to-day. We can detect no signs of enemy retreating; all indications point the other way."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 208, 22nd February. I find I was premature in fixing actual date of my entry into Ladysmith, as I am meeting with more opposition than I expected, but I am progressing."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 75P, 22nd February. Reliable native scout reports all Free State Boers gone. Transvaal Boers chiefly collected at Woodhouse's Farm, two miles west of Pieter's. Three guns on Table Hill, two miles west of Woodhouse's. Effect of your guns described as very great."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 76P, 22nd February. Your No. 208 of to-day. I know you are beating the enemy, stick to them. I carried out a small operation this morning; but my men are so weak from insufficient and inferior food that they are unfit for the field, horses more so."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. (Without number or date.) Received 22nd February. Can only hold Monte Christo temporarily. Shall endeavour to open communication with you further on."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 77, 26th February. I have mounted a 4-7-inch gun and a naval 12-pounder on Cæsar's Camp. Table Hill is within range of the latter, and both Table Hill and Grobelaar's Kloof of the former. Can I help your operations by using them? I have only 80 rounds for 4-7-inch."

"From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White. No. 211, 27th February. Your 77P, 26th February. I think you will be able to help me, but I am not close enough to you yet. I shall communicate with you later on."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 78P, 28th February. I am now issuing only $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bread stuff daily. It is of very inferior mealie meal. At this rate, I can hold on till 1st April; not longer. Report to Roberts if you think necessary. I have 21,000 mouths to feed, counting children half rations."

"From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller. No. 79P, 28th February. Following Boer movements observed between dawn and noon to-day:—From direction of Pieter's to behind Bulwana, five guns, 20 wagons, 300 men; from Onderbrook to Roodeport, and on to north-west, 5 guns, 140 wagons, 350 men."

14896*. (Sir John Jackson.) What is your opinion on General Buller's telegram of 28th January: "We had

awful luck on the 24th; I had got two naval guns and a mountain battery halfway up Spion Kop, when the troops came down. If we had had the luck out of all the Colonels up there to have found a really good fighting man, we should have been in Ladysmith in four days"?—You will have an opportunity of asking Sir Redvers Buller himself what he meant by that; I do not know.

14897. You would rather not offer an opinion?—I could not give any opinion, because it would be simply an interpretation of another man's mind; as a rule, you can get the best evidence from the man himself. In one of the messages which I dispatched on the 6th January, 1900, I find it recorded "Attack continues, and enemy been reinforced from south. All my reserves are in action. I think enemy must have weakened his force in front of you." We afterwards knew that he did—in fact, we saw the men galloping up from the south.

14897*. (Viscount Esher.) What number of men do you think you had then in front of you?—That is a very hard question, and I have dealt with it to a certain degree in my written statement. I have tried to show, at the very end, that the men who were actually facing him on the Tugela could be attacking me in Ladysmith in an hour and a half at the pace they moved, and on that occasion, on the 6th January, undoubtedly very large numbers of the men, who had been the previous day on the Tugela, joined in the attack on me. I always accepted anything he said regarding relative numbers in front of him and me, but there was nothing more difficult than to find the number of men occupying any Boer position.

14898. Supposing it was said that at that particular time "I miscalculated the retentive power of Sir George White's force. I thought he would hold at least 10,000 off me. I doubt if he keeps 2,000." What do you say to that statement?—I do not agree in that at all, and I did not know there was such a telegram in existence.

14899. It is not a telegram I am reading from, but I wanted to know your opinion of that statement?—I think it is a gross exaggeration.

14900. You think your retaining power was much larger?—Yes, I do. I do not know that I have anything else to say. All these telegrams are on record, and they really tell the story of my operations. There is no point in the telegrams which I think needs any further explanation from me.

14901. (Sir Frederick Darley.) I see, on the 8th February you again state, when it was suggested that they were coming by Bulwana, "I could help at Bulwana"?—Yes. There is an important point as to which perhaps a question could be put to me with regard to the pursuit, and that is part of it which you have just mentioned.

14902. You say, "The closer to Ladysmith you can establish yourself, the better chance we shall have here"?—Yes. When I saw that the enemy were in flight, I kept giving Sir Redvers Buller information as to what was going on within my ken all round, and when I saw the troops were actually fleeing before him I organised a pursuing column; I sent round to the officers commanding my regiments to know how many men could do a six miles march, and perhaps have to fight at the end of it, and the return I got was something extraordinarily meagre—I think somewhere about 100 to 120 being the biggest return I got from any regiment. I ordered them to go out, and I sent wagons with them to carry them. I said, "As long as they go through the form of marching every now and then turning their guns against the enemy, a force demoralised as his now is will abandon his material and will break up, and I shall be playing the game." I remembered using that expression. When Sir Redvers Buller came into Ladysmith he found some portion of his force, which had preceded him, some part of the Royal Dragoons who were getting a feed for the horses, which I was able then to give them, as I was practically relieved with a view to these squadrons going out to help my pursuing column, which had been detailed under orders of General Knox. When Sir Redvers Buller came in he asked me: "What are those men?" I told him what they were, and he discouraged the pursuit. As far as I recollect, he said that he did not think that it was judicious to pursue running Boers.

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16 Feb. 1903.

14903. (*Chairman.*) Then were your men recalled?—When I got that order, my Lord, I sent out and recalled my column; Sir Redvers Buller was in command.

14904. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) How far had they gone?—They had gone to Modder Spruit, I think. It is in my despatch of the 23rd March.

14905. Had you been able to send provisions with them?—I had no intention of their staying out very long; I forget how they were equipped with regard to that, but I think I sent provisions with them. This is an extract from my despatch of 23rd March:—“On the 1st March, I sent Colonel W. G. Knox with the 1st Battalion Liverpool Regiment, 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment, 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders, 5th Dragoon Guards, and the 53rd and 67th Batteries Royal Field Artillery to move out along the Newcastle Road, and to harass as much as possible the enemy, whom we could see retiring before the successful advance of Sir Redvers Buller's force. Colonel Knox carried Long Hill and Pepworth Hill, and opened fire with his guns on Modder Spruit Railway Station and the large Boer camp there, which the enemy at once evacuated. Both men and horses were too weak for rapid or prolonged operations; but several of the enemy's camps were captured, and the force returned after having very successfully carried out their object to as great a distance as their weakness permitted them to pursue. Our casualties were two officers and six non-commissioned officers and men wounded.” That is a summary which was written at the time; it is a long time ago, and I could not quite recall all the incidents of it. I have given you the circumstances under which they were recalled.

14906. And they returned under orders from you?—They returned under orders from me in consequence of Sir Redvers Buller's expression of disapproval of the pursuit.

14907. You called them regiments; but they were merely skeleton regiments?—They were skeleton regiments.

14908. Do you remember a telegram from Sir Redvers Buller dated 21st February, in which he said to you: “I am now engaged in pushing my way through by Pieters. I think there is only a rearguard in front of me. The large Boer laager, under Balwana, was removed last night. I hope to be with you to-morrow night. You might help by working north and stopping some of the enemy getting away”?—Yes, I remember that.

14909. And no doubt you took that as a sort of encouragement to pursue?—What was the date of that?

14910. It was dated 21st February?—I clearly recollect warning him that he was wrong; I recollect that from watching every indication I was sure that he was wrong, and that he would not get through. My telegram was to this effect: “Your No. 207 of to-day. We can detect no signs of enemy retreating” (this was on the 21st) “all indications point the other way.” My points of observation, which were very carefully organised under my very best staff officers, showed that there were as many men going down south as there were moving off at that time. He, thinking that he had nothing but a rearguard before him, I rather think went back to Colenso after that.

14911. He says: “I find I was premature in fixing actual date of my entry into Ladysmith, as I am meeting with more opposition than I expected, but I am progressing”?—I think, after that, he went back to Colenso. You will see by that, Sir Henry, that the reason of the delay was owing to my having taken a more correct view of the position than he had—that he had many more before him.

14912. You telegraphed again on the 22nd February: “Reliable native scout reports all Free State Boers gone. Transvaal Boers chiefly collected at Woodhouse's Farm, two miles west of Pieters. Three guns on Table Hill, two miles west of Woodhouse's. Effect of your guns described as very great.” Then you, on the same date, said: “Your No. 208 of to-day. I know you are beating the enemy; stick to them. I carried out a small operation this morning; but my men are so weak from insufficient and inferior food that they are unfit for the field; horses more so”?—Quite so; really, the operation I tried was to get towards Bulwana, for I was most anxious to take that gun that had killed so

many of my people before they could take it away; but every officer I consulted said: “The men cannot crawl half-way up Bulwana, much less get to the top and fight on the top of it.”

14913. Then Sir Redvers Buller on the 27th, which was six days afterwards, said: “I think you will be able to help me, but I am not close enough to you yet. I shall communicate with you later on”?—That was the day before Dundonald rode in.

14914. On the 28th you telegraphed to him: “I am now issuing only $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bread stuff daily. It is of very inferior mealie meal. At this rate I can hold on till 1st April; not longer. Report to Roberts if you think necessary. I have 21,000 mouths to feed, counting children half-rations,” but apparently before he had relieved you, you had sent out troops to pursue the enemy?—On the 1st of March I sent them out, and I was really relieved on the 28th February, when Dundonald came over a hill, and some of the enemy were actually in rear of him; the place over which he came, close under Caesar's Camp, was not the exact line of retreat of the Boers.

14915. Then Buller came in the next day?—Buller came in in the middle of the day.

14916. Had you, before he arrived, sent your troops away?—Yes, I was in full pursuit before he came in.

14917. Then did he push on any troops when your troops were coming back?—No, he recalled them.

14918. He recalled your troops?—Yes. He spoke to the officer commanding that detachment of the Royals, and I do not know what he said to him. He said very little to me, except what I have told you.

14919. (*Chairman.*) The Royals did not go out?—I do not think they did; I am not quite sure of that, my Lord.

14920. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) But you are quite certain that no other body of troops from his force went out in pursuit?—Yes; I am perfectly certain. In answer to Lord Esher's previous question, I have a statement here, showing that there were 10,000 Transvaalers and 9,000 Free Staters in front of Ladysmith.

14921. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did you form in your own mind any idea as to which way Sir Redvers Buller was likely to come to your relief?—Simply as a question of my own idea; naturally, an event of such very great importance was fully talked over by us, and I remember that I and one or two of my most confidential Staff officers agreed that the probability was that he would come by the place called Blunt's Farm. There was a position which the Boers held on the right bank of the Tugela, the only place where they kept on the right bank, and as he was coming on we expected that he would clear that right bank, that southern bank, first.

14922. That is what he did ultimately?—That is what he did ultimately, somewhere near Hlangwane.

14923. When was it that it occurred to you that he would clear that bank? Was it before Colenso?—I could not absolutely say that; it was simply as a matter of conversation that I did it, and I did not advise Sir Redvers on any point of that sort.

14924. I quite understand that; and it did occur to so many people at the time, and it has occurred to so many people since?—The way I argued was this: he has got a force of the enemy on the right bank, and he will not cross the river and leave those behind him. There is also the reasonable presumption that a force left like that on one side of the river must be more or less detached, and there must be some strong reason for leaving it. When he took it he found the reason; it turned a good deal of Colenso.

14925. But all those considerations occurred to you and those officers with whom you were privately discussing it in Ladysmith?—Yes. I did not know anything about the turning.

14926. But, in point of fact, that particular operation was the fourth of his series of attempts?—Yes. We only went on the fact that our spies told us that the Boers were on the right bank, and we said: “Oh! he will smash those first, at all events, and clear the bank he is going to leave behind him.” I hope that in the recording of that you will take it that that is simply a question of conversation between us inside.

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16 Feb. 1903.

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14927. Did you have the selection of your Staff before you left England?—I got the officers I asked for personally.

14928. Your personal Staff?—Yes. I asked for certain officers. I asked for Sir Ian Hamilton, then Colonel Hamilton. I asked for Colonel Duff, my military secretary; and I named my own aides-de-camp. I do not think I asked personally for anybody else.

14929. Did the Commander-in-Chief discuss with you before you left England the officers he intended to appoint on your Staff—not your personal Staff?—No, I do not think he did. I think if anybody had done that it would probably have been Sir Redvers Buller. I do not recollect being refused anybody or having myself named anybody else, except those I have mentioned to you.

16 Feb. 1903.

14930. (Sir John Hopkins.) This is an extract from one of your despatches, which I think it interesting to have on record:—"The Naval Brigade of H.M.S. Powerful, under Captain the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, rivalled the best of our troops in gallantry and endurance; their long-range guns, although hampered by the most serious want of ammunition, have played a most important part in the defence, and have been most successful in keeping the enemy from bringing his guns to the ranges at which they would have been most efficient. . . . Captain the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, R.N., commanding the Naval Brigade, reached Ladysmith in the nick of time, when it became evident that I was not strong enough to meet the enemy in the open field. He brought with him his two 4.7 and four 12-pounder guns, which proved to be the only ordnance in my possession capable of equalling in range the enemy's heavy guns. Although the ammunition available was very limited, Captain Lambton so economised it that it lasted out to the end of the siege. and under his directions the naval guns succeeded in keeping at a distance the enemy's siege guns, a service which was of the utmost importance. Captain Lambton, personally, has been the life of the garrison throughout the siege." I think I may ask, on that, Sir George, and on the evidence you have personally given, whether your attention at any time was called to any inaccurate shooting on the part of the 4.7 guns?—No.

14931. Or the 12-pounders?—I have said, with regard to the 12-pounders, that they were guns of shorter range, and they were sometimes outranged. It is a shorter and a much less powerful gun, and I have seen the shot fall very much short.

14932. But you are speaking of the naval 12-pounders?—Yes.

14933. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You sat on the Army Board, the Commander-in-Chief's Confidential Committee?—Yes.

14934. And that committee only used to begin sitting in a time of crisis or emergency. We have it in evidence that once before it sat, in 1898?—Yes; I think I mentioned something of that sort.

14935. In times of emergency, when war is in sight, or war is going on, the Army Board is found very useful as a committee?—I think most useful.

14936. Would it not be equally desirable that that Army Board should be used in times of peace also, to get together in one body the military opinion of the War Office, which could then be impressed upon the Secretary of State as the whole military opinion of the War Office?—I think you have struck absolutely at one of the greatest wants in our military administration. I think that under other conditions, when I have been in a responsible military position, political negotiations could scarcely have outrun military preparations to the extent that they did before the late war.

14937. And, just as the Army should be prepared in time of peace for war, so the Army Board might in time of peace carry on the functions that it is found necessary it should carry on in time of war?—I think so: and I would also advocate that when a crisis comes, as it did, the views of the soldier who is principally responsible should be heard by the members of the Cabinet themselves. I do not for one moment suppose that such a thing is practicable under our Constitution as having the Commander-in-Chief as a member of the Cabinet, nor do I much know what their procedure is, but it would appear to me to be of the greatest advantage for the Cabinet to be face to face with the most im-

portant witness they can call in the country. I borrow my ideas from the position which I had the honour to occupy as Commander-in-Chief in India under his Lordship, your Chairman. I sat in Council as a member of the Government of India and heard what was going on politically, and I have no hesitation in saying that if I had thought the political ultimatum would have come before military preparation, I should have received the greatest attention from His Excellency the Viceroy and other members of the Government of India with regard to some method of temporising for a bit, until I was more in a position to strike when they wanted me.

14938. There is one other question I wish to ask. Did you see the Director of Military Intelligence before you sailed?—I really forget. There was no interview of mine with the Director of Military Intelligence of sufficient importance to impress itself deeply on my memory.

14939. The Intelligence Department, as they were then—the Intelligence and Mobilisation, as they are now—have the preparation of schemes of defence, have they not, under the Order in Council?—Yes. Do you mean the late Order in Council?

14940. They had under the Order in Council of 1895. Does not that rather point to the fact that the Intelligence Department had not a sufficient standing in the War Office, that they had not sufficient weight, that the brain of the Army was put in a subordinate position, and never actually came into contact with the General who was being sent out to take command in the field?—I had a very intelligent representative of the Intelligence Department with me, who brought with him every reference that he thought would be useful to me.

14941. That might be; but at the same time, that might not always be the case. What I suggest is that, as the Intelligence Department of the Army is charged with the preparation of offensive and defensive schemes, it seems of the highest importance that the head of that Department should be an officer of such standing and weight in the counsels of the War Office, and more or less in an independent position there, that it would enable him to discuss with authority all such matters with the Generals going out to take charge of campaigns?—Well, I can see advantages and disadvantages in that. To begin with, I think it is a little bit too much to say that the Intelligence Department holds the brains of the Army, and I think the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General should be quite as capable men as the man at the head of the Intelligence.

14942. I mean the thinking part, the brain in the singular, which means something quite different?—I say I am perfectly certain it is a false move to have any co-ordinate authority with the Commander-in-Chief. I can quite imagine in a case of that sort the Intelligence officer at the head of the Intelligence being likely to have a scheme of his own that he would give more force to than the Commander-in-Chief.

14943. And in some cases, perhaps, with advantage?—Yes; but then there are other cases in which it would be a disadvantage.

14944. We may not always have a Commander-in-Chief of the ability of Lord Wolseley and Lord Roberts?—We have the British Army to choose from. You might make the man at the head of the Intelligence Department Commander-in-Chief.

14945. I put the question in this way: As one department of the Army is told off—whether it is called Intelligence, or Intelligence, and Mobilisation, or General Staff, or any other name, I care not—and is told off specially?—I quite see what you are tending towards, but I cannot give an altogether unqualified assent to what you wish to convey. I think that it would be a terrible millstone to tie round the neck of a General officer to go out loaded with advice from a department which was organised and recognised as his military advisers on certain points of strategy. Let me instance the case in point of Natal: There were certain schemes which I know now, at all events, were laid down, and I think that probably the Director-General of Intelligence would have laid undue stress upon them, which would have been very hard, and would have handicapped the General going out if he found conditions so far altered.

14946. You quite understand I am not suggesting that the hands of the General in the field should be fettered in any way whatever: it is simply schemes put

before him, that he may discuss them?—I think that might be done, but I think you would incline to put the head of the Intelligence Department too high.

14947. I put him in the position that Von Moltke was in?—Von Moltke was the Chief of the Staff of the Emperor.

14948. And the discipline of the Army was under a different department entirely; that is the Commander-in-Chief's Department?—But in the German Army the Emperor occupies a position as head of the Army which prevents anything like co-ordinate authority.

14949. I was proceeding rather on the lines of the Hartington Commission, and I asked you these questions because you have served in these departments in the War Office?—I was not long in the War Office.

14950. How long were you in the War Office?—About a year.

14951. (*Viscount Esher.*) Who was Adjutant-General when you left England?—Sir Evelyn Wood.

14952. I suppose you had interviews with him, had you not?—I had interviews with Sir Evelyn Wood; I do not think I had any official interview with Sir Evelyn Wood with a view to anything concerning Natal.

14953. I suppose you talked over things?—I remember talking over with him Sir Redvers Buller as our chief.

14954. You did not see Sir John Ardagh?—I do not remember ever seeing Sir John Ardagh.

14955. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You point

out the great advantage the Boers as mounted infantry had over you with your infantry. Do you know, or have you any idea, how it was that in the early part of the war the Colonial Governments were discouraged from sending mounted men to South Africa?—I have no information on the point, my Lord.

14956. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Your force was mainly composed of the troops from India and the troops that had been some time in the Cape on foreign service?—Yes.

14957. And therefore, I presume, you consider they were a particularly seasoned body of troops to have under your orders; they were not raw troops?—No; they were good troops.

14958. And there was not an undue proportion of recruits at all?—No, by no means.

14959. Something has been said about raw troops, and so on, at the Cape; that would not apply to them?—No.

14960. And we must suppose that no troops that you were ever likely to have under your orders would have been better able to sustain privation such as you sustained without breaking down?—I agree.

14961. Therefore we may assume that however seasoned the troops might be, under the circumstances your garrison underwent in Ladysmith, they would in the same way have broken down, and been unfit for active movement?—I think so.

14962. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point you would like to mention, Sir George?—I do not think so.

General Sir George S. White, V.C., G.C.E., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., and Colonel E. A. Altham, C.M.G.

16 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-SIXTH DAY.

Tuesday, 17th February, 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable The Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Honourable Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

General The Rt. Hon. Sir REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., called and examined.

(Colonel the Hon. Sir F. W. STOFFORD, K.C.M.G., C.B., Military Secretary to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa, (Sir Redvers Buller) was also in attendance.)

(*General Reference may be made to the Selected Telegrams and Despatches and the Siege Correspondence in Appendices pages 617 and 631, post.*)

14963. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to prepare for us a summary of evidence as to your operations, and, if you have no objection, we will take that as the answer to the first question in your evidence, and then proceed to ask any questions which we may have, or to hear any comments you may desire to submit with regard to any part of it as we go through it; will that suit you?—Quite so.

PREPARATION FOR WAR—INTERVIEW WITH LORD LANSDOWNE, JUNE.

In June, 1899, I was summoned from Aldershot by Lord Lansdowne, who told me that, in the event of the war in South Africa, I had been selected to hold the command-in-chief. After submitting to him what seemed to me a preferable arrangement, I accepted the command, and we proceeded to discuss the question of the military policy to be pursued. I maintained that the only practicable route was that through the Orange Free State. He declined even to discuss

this. Ultimately, we agreed that one Army Corps, a Cavalry Division, and seven battalions for the lines of communication would be a sufficient force, if the object of the Government were merely to attack the Transvaal; but I added that to leave the Orange Free State out of account was, to my mind, impossible. After leaving Lord Lansdowne, I saw the Commander-in-Chief at the War Office, gave him a summary of my remarks, and received from him a promise of every assistance that he could afford. I begged both Lord Lansdowne and Lord Wolseley to recollect that I was not in the same position as Lord Wolseley when he organised the Egyptian Expedition of 1882, for he was then the Adjutant-General, and had the whole of the War Office at his back, whereas I was fully employed with my work at Aldershot.

INTERVIEW WITH LORD LANSDOWNE, JULY.—MINUTE 6TH JULY.

I heard no more of warlike preparations till the 3rd

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

of July, when I was summoned by telegram from Devonshire to London. There Lord Lansdowne informed me that he had under consideration a proposal to send out to South Africa one Division of infantry and one Brigade of cavalry. I asked whether these troops were to be sent, and with what object. I found there was no definite object, but that it was considered desirable to send some troops to some part of South Africa. After discussing the matter with him at some length, I went to the War Office to see Lord Wolseley; but, finding that he had left the office, I sent him a memorandum, now dated 6th July 1899, summarising the views which I had expressed to Lord Lansdowne. Herein I summed up my conclusions in the following words:

"My view is that any operations against Pretoria should be commenced in the following sequence:

1. "Strengthen the Cape Colony and Natal garrisons to the extent that local authority now think sufficient to protect these colonies."

2. "Make up your mind as to the route, and definitely as to the attitude to be adopted towards the Orange Free State."

3. "Commence the formation of magazines on the intended line of route, and the mobilization of the active force."

4. "Send out this fighting force."

The proposal to send out these 10,000 men came to nothing. I pressed hard at this time, and afterwards, that our Colonies might be garrisoned in accordance with a proper scheme of defence. I urged this again and again, but without success.

INTERVAL OF APPARENT INACTION.

From that date to the 15th August affairs went on but slowly at the War Office. No Council of War was held; no plan of campaign was adopted; no regular military preparations were undertaken. In the middle of August I heard that all preparations for war in South Africa, entailing expenditure had been stopped, and that the Secretary of State for War had gone to Ireland. Mr. Balfour, during his absence, came to the War Office and had an interview with Mr. Wyndham and Lord Wolseley. I also heard that it was believed that an Ultimatum was to be sent to the Transvaal on the 11th September.

MINUTES TO LORD SALISBURY, 5TH SEPTEMBER.

The condition of affairs seemed to me to be alarming, for the intelligence given in the newspapers made it impossible to believe that war could be avoided. Not knowing what else to do, I approached the private secretary to Lord Salisbury. He came down next day to Aldershot, when I presented my views to him in such a light that he thought it his duty to lay them before Lord Salisbury on the following morning. I drew up a short unofficial memorandum, dated the 3rd September, arguing to the conclusion that the time had come for the diplomatic authorities to consult the military authorities. On the 5th, I heard that Lord Salisbury desired my views on the military situation. These I set forth in a memorandum addressed to the Commander-in-Chief of 5th September, 1899.

As a result of this memorandum, the Cabinet decided to send to India for a force of 5,500 men, which was the only organised body of troops that we could put in the field at the moment, without dislocating the whole of our mobilization arrangements. On learning this, I at once wrote to the Secretary of State for War, pointing out that a Commander would be wanted in Natal when those reinforcements should arrive, and adding that, from the military point of view, it would be wise to make provision at once for a further force in Natal. He replied by return of post, saying that he did not see how, in the face of the decision of the Cabinet, the War Office could be expected to do more at that moment. Matters again drifted, and, apparently, the Government received news that the military situation was becoming less acute, for, on the 14th September, on learning that the Officer Commanding at Cape Town had made contracts for 1000 mules more than were immediately required, the War Office directed that the contract for the excess number should be cancelled, and compensation paid to the contractor.

MINUTE OF 24TH SEPTEMBER, REGARDING ROUTE TO BE ADOPTED.

From the first moment of my appointment in the

middle of June, I had on every possible occasion urged upon the Secretary of State for War that it was mere self-deception to imagine that we could undertake an expedition against the Transvaal alone, leaving the Orange Free State out of account. On the 23rd September, Lord Lansdowne asked me to place upon paper my reasons for attaching so much importance to the adoption of the route through the Orange Free State for invasion of the Transvaal. Accordingly I sent him a memorandum on the subject, dated 24th September. Herein I set forth, among other matters, that, owing to the configuration of the Natal frontier, an advance upon Pretoria by Natal would mean a flank march of 200 miles across the front of a doubtful friend, and, possibly, a concealed enemy. I added that the Orange Free State was open country, containing a good quantity of supplies, and that an advance through it would give us every chance of disposing of the Orange Free State first and settling with the Transvaal alone afterwards.

DETERMINATION TO START IN ADVANCE OF TROOPS.

The Cabinet met on the 29th September; and I was afterwards told by Lord Lansdowne that at this meeting the Government had decided to adopt the route by the Orange Free State, and to proceed with all military preparations excepting the mobilization of the men. On the 30th therefore I wrote to Lord Lansdowne that further delay in the provision of troops would be to incur a very dangerous risk, and pressed for the immediate despatch of the reinforcements by the best ships that could be obtained. "I think," I said, "that if they delay the despatch of troops the Government will be incurring a very grave responsibility." In reply Lord Lansdowne professed himself unable to call out the Reserves, or in other words to mobilise, before the 7th of October. I reckoned from this date that the earliest embarkation of troops would take place about the 22nd October, and that the Army Corps would be assembled at Cape Colony by 22nd December. I therefore urged that I should start for South Africa by the first steamer on the 7th October; but eventually the 14th was fixed as the date of my departure, and on the 9th I was gazetted Commander-in-Chief of the expedition. Before sailing I received two telegrams. One from Sir George White, of 3rd October, deprecated any weakening of the force in Natal and further hinted that a strong cavalry force sent through Van Reenan's Pass could threaten both the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In reply the Commander-in-Chief informed him, at my request, that any advance of cavalry through Van Reenan's Pass until it should be strongly held by our infantry would be unwise, adding that any misfortune to our arms now would be peculiarly unfortunate, and that the Glencoe position was not a very safe one with the force of infantry at that time in Natal. I had from the very first protested as strongly as possible against the occupation of Glencoe. Another telegram of 4th October, from the General Officer Commanding at Cape Town, reported that he had stationed a half battalion at each of the following places: Kimberley, Orange River, De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Molteno. On the 9th October the two Republics presented an ultimatum, and on the 11th invaded British territory.

GENERAL CONSIDERATION AFFECTING PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

On the 14th October I sailed with my staff from Southampton; and at this point I think I may most conveniently set forth the broad principles upon which I proposed to base my conduct of the war. In the first place, it was evident that the war would be of the kind which is described by General Jomini as a national war. In such wars it may be remarked, he predicts in a striking passage the failure of the invader as inevitable. Secondly it would be a war against a civilised enemy, in an uncivilised country—in a country, that is to say, where civilised man had so far done little to subdue Nature to himself, and could undo that little with small difficulty. Thirdly, we had to deal with young communities, planted in an enormous territory. The characteristics of such communities are always the same. The population is widely scattered. The man who makes his home in the wilderness claims to do that which is right in his own eyes; and though the law may be obeyed, it cannot be enforced. Redress of injury is sought, not in legal process, but in retaliation. There is no highly organised machinery of administration, and the influence and authority of the central Government are of narrow range and of trifling weight. Moreover, time

Note.—With regard to the minutes mentioned on this page, general reference may be made to Appendix D. Report Vol., and Lord Lansdowne's evidence, Question 21202, &c.

has not yet glorified the seat of Government with a halo of sentiment. To every man his own home is the capital. Hence there is no commanding centre by the occupation of which the whole country or even a whole district can be brought into subjection; no vital spot at which a single blow can be struck that will paralyse every member of the body. There are living organisms which can be divided into a multitude of fragments without destroying the individual life of each fragment. As a whole, the organism has ceased to be, but as a multitude of parts its vitality is unimpaired; and if its life is to be wholly extinguished, every fragment must be separately destroyed. With such organisms these communities have much in common. This lesson is written large in our past military history. The experience of the American War of Independence shows that the mere occupation of provincial capitals in such a country is of little furtherance to the work of conquest. General Howe's capture of New York and its outworks, after several successful actions and severe loss inflicted on the enemy, gained him no territory outside the line of his outposts; his capture of Philadelphia effected little more; General Clinton's capture of Charlestown, together with the whole of its garrison, little more. Experience of the same war goes also to show that the neutrality of the inhabitants in such circumstances can only be secured by protecting them against the intimidation of their countrymen. New Jersey abounded in oaths and professions of loyalty, when General Howe pursued Washington through the province, and while his line of posts stood safe on the Delaware; but the whole population turned against the British when that line was broken by a sudden attack of Washington. So, too, the very men who had been armed by Lord Cornwallis for the protection of South Carolina, turned against him directly that he moved his troops to meet the advance of an American army from North Carolina.

In the face of such lessons, it was plain to me that the war could only be carried to a successful conclusion by the actual conquest of every armed man in the field; and this task promised to be doubly difficult owing to the extreme mobility of the enemy. It seemed to me, therefore, that the best chance of success, until our troops should have been trained to a novel style of warfare, was to allow the Boers, if possible, to take up some tactical position, and strive to crush them by sheer weight of numbers. But in any case, I was convinced that my true objective was the enemy's force in the field, wherever it might be, and that any purely strategical movement undertaken, except in obedience to this guiding principle, would be a mere flourish in the air.

One advantage we did indeed possess, namely, that the Boers were divided into two distinct and independent States, which in the past had not lived together on the most friendly terms. This division it seemed to me politic to widen to the utmost; and to this end I designed (see Memorandum of 24th September) to crush the Orange Free State completely before dealing with the Transvaal. I was the more powerfully impelled towards this course by the example of Lord Cornwallis's campaign in the Carolinas; when, though he did indeed fight his way successfully from Charlestown into Virginia, he merely squandered his troops in unprofitable victories, and accomplished less than nothing. In fact, he was like a man who tries to arrest the flow of a river by walking through it. Such a man may, indeed, stem its force where he stands, but let him move where he will, the waters always close before and behind and around him.

There existed another internal division within the Transvaal itself. A line drawn (roughly speaking) north and south through Pretoria marks a line of cleavage between the inhabitants. To the east of that line the people were pastoralists by occupation and followers of Joubert in politics. To the west of that line they were agriculturists by occupation and followers of Kruger in politics. Thus there was between the two a conflict of interests and a conflict of political opinion; and the gulf between them was widened by the fact that the eastern inhabitants, being far superior in wealth, enlightenment, and education, regarded those of the west with no little contempt. Of this division also I hoped to take advantage.

On the 17th October I arrived at Madeira, where I received telegrams from Sir George White and General Walker to the effect that the forces of the two Republics were converging towards Dundee and Ladysmith. General Forestier-Walker also reported from Cape Town that Mafeking and Kimberley were isolated, and that he was taking steps to strengthen the garrison at Orange

River Bridge. While approving General Walker's dispositions, I urged him not to risk much at Naauwpoort or Molteno until he felt himself to be in sufficient strength.

ARRIVAL AT CAPE TOWN.—THE SITUATION.

At 9.15 on the evening of the 30th October, I arrived at Cape Town. I then learned that the Boers had utilised to the utmost the advantages given to them by their greater readiness for war. The small garrisons of Mafeking and Kimberley were beleaguered, though not apparently surrounded. All the bridges over the Orange River, except that known as Orange River Bridge on the Western Railway, were in the hands of the enemy. Further, the Boers had already occupied the northern border of Cape Colony with some 3,000 men, while reports from the Dutch districts in Cape Colony pointed to considerable disaffection to British rule. In Natal Sir George White had had several encounters with the enemy, but, though he had on one or two occasions obtained a small advantage, it was evident that he had failed to check their advance. He reported that General Hunter, my Chief of the Staff, whom I had told to join me, was indispensable to him. I was fain to consent, though the loss of his services to me at the moment was very serious.

On the morning of the 31st October, I received three telegrams from Sir George White. The first, dated the 28th October, told me that Natal required the earliest reinforcements possible. The second and third, dated the 30th, reported to me the action fought upon that day, and its unsatisfactory issue. I landed, and met the Governor and the Admiral. The Governor pressed me to make the defence of the Cape Peninsula my first care. I lost no time, however, in ordering a brigade-division of artillery, which had just arrived, to strengthen the defences of Orange River Bridge and De Aar. I begged the Admiral to take immediate steps for the protection of Durban, and to prepare it for defence by landing guns and men from the fleet, as I had not at the moment a single soldier that I could send there.

In the afternoon I saw Mr. Schreiner, the Prime Minister, who undertook to use his influence with President Steyn, to prevent an invasion of the Colony by a force of the Orange Free State. I need hardly say that his efforts were fruitless. In the course of the next few days Mr. Schreiner, at my request, sounded the magistrates of the Dutch districts as to the effect of calling out the local Volunteers. The answer in every case was to the purport that this step would only enlist recruits for the ranks of the enemy. I also pressed Sir Alfred Milner to proclaim martial law; and, since he felt unable to do so, I arranged with the police that the principal Boer agents and spies should be "shadowed." I made every arrangement to arrest them simultaneously, place them on board a transport in the harbour, and send them to Lourenço Marques the captain of the ship being ordered to make the voyage last at least a month. The time for the arrests was fixed, and the transport was lying at anchor with steam up, when at the last moment Sir Alfred Milner decided that the project had better be abandoned.

Meanwhile the only military operations possible with the force at my disposal were to secure Orange River Bridge, and to cover the English-speaking districts south and east of Queenstown during the distribution of arms to every loyal subject in them. I withdrew the two small posts at Naauwpoort and Stormberg as being dangerously exposed and too far advanced to be of value for defence.

On the 1st November, while still imperfectly informed as to Sir George White's situation, I telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief that in the circumstances I thought I ought to strike straight at Bloemfontein, as the best chance of relieving the pressure on Kimberley and Ladysmith. A few hours later I received a further telegram from Sir George White, saying that he could not withdraw from Ladysmith, and that he had sent a single battalion to guard the bridge at Colenso, as the best step that he could take for the protection of Natal. This was followed by a series of telegrams from Mr. Rhodes and others at Kimberley, all crying out loudly for relief, and one of them hinting at surrender if relief were withheld.

The military situation on the 1st November was as follows:—On the side of Cape Colony the enemy had invested Mafeking and Kimberley. They had occupied Colesberg and Norvals Pont bridges. They were in force at Bethulie, had crossed the bridge with about 3,000 men, had destroyed the line, and were marching

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on Colesberg; 3,000 Orange Free State Boers were reported to be on the Basuto border. To meet the invasion I had $3\frac{1}{2}$ battalions of infantry, one regiment of cavalry, and three batteries of artillery, which were distributed as follows:—

Kimberley:—Four companies Loyal North Lancashire.

Orange River Bridge:—9th Lancers, 62nd and half 75th Batteries Royal Field Artillery, four companies Loyal North Lancashire, four companies Royal Munster Fusiliers.

De Aar:—18th and half 75th Batteries Royal Field Artillery, 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.

Queenstown:—Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.

Stellenbosch:—Two companies Royal Munster.

Excluding Army Service Corps and Departmental Corps, there were, therefore, in Cape Colony, of Regulars:—

One regiment cavalry, three batteries Royal Field Artillery, and three battalions and six companies infantry, extended along 340 miles of frontier.

On the side of Natal 12,000 men, with two months supplies, were concentrated at Ladysmith, but unable to withdraw from it. For the protection of Natal I had one mounted battery, one battalion at Colenso, and one at Durban. No reinforcements could arrive from England for a fortnight.

By the 4th November I had formed a sufficiently clear idea of the situation to make my plans and report to the War Office.

On the 8th November, General French arrived from Natal, bearing a letter to me from Sir George White. I had hoped that General White would have been able to send all the cavalry out of Ladysmith, but, though I gave way on this point to his representations, I insisted that General French should be sent out even though the cavalry remained. After perusal of this letter, and several conversations with General French, I was more than ever satisfied that Sir George White's force was powerless to protect Natal, and I began to think that it would be essential for me to go there myself. As I had foreseen (*see my memorandum 24th September*), the Boers had advanced upon Natal in force—had, in fact, made it the principal objective of their operations. The whole of the Transvaal army that could be collected at the time, together with the best of the forces of the Orange Free State, had been directed upon it. Already the entire area of the Colony north of the Tugela (excepting the few square miles held by the Ladysmith garrison), had passed into their hands, and had been practically annexed to their dominion. Computing their forces at lowest at 20,000 men, I calculated that not less than one half, 10,000 men, could be spared for the conquest of Natal south of the Tugela. To meet these I had, including local levies, but 2,200 men, and these sadly deficient in mounted men and artillery. Nothing more could be done than to concentrate them at Estcourt, for the position at Colenso would never have been tenable; and I instructed the Commander not to risk prolonged defence either of the place or of Pietermaritzburg, but to make sure, at all sacrifice, of Durban, and to destroy the railway as he retired.

The Government of Natal now of their own motion prepared to evacuate Maritzburg by removing the records, and so forth; and it seemed most probable that the enemy's advance would only be checked by the sea. My private information led me to believe that if they did reach the sea they would receive aid from some European Power, and that they counted upon such aid. In any case, unless they were met and repelled by our forces, they would enjoy undisputed possession of the Garden Colony, the most English province of South Africa, for at least two months; for, even supposing that an advance upon Bloemfontein would cause them to withdraw, I could not hope to move in force from the frontier of Cape Colony before 22nd December, and while I was certain of the gravest political disadvantage from allowing Natal to pass into the hands of the Boers, I was extremely sceptical as to any strategical profit that might be gained from it. In fact, from the moment when I knew that the main army of the Transvaal had moved into Natal I felt convinced that something more than an advance on Bloemfontein would be needed to compel it to retire. A new theatre of operations, 1,000 miles distant from that contemplated by the autho-

rities at home, had been opened by the Boer invasion of South Natal, and there was no escaping from the fact. I therefore decided upon every ground that the deliverance of South Natal must be my first object, combined if possible with the rescue of Sir George White's force for active operations. I should have preferred to have devoted every possible man of my forces to Natal, for in Natal lay my true objective—the principal force of the enemy. Further, since the bulk of the Transvaal Army in that quarter consisted of Easterners of Joubert's party, and under his command, it was possible that a severe blow struck at them might dishearten them and set them at variance with Kruger's party.

But at the same time I felt it impossible to ignore Kimberley. That town represented to the native the symbol of British power and property in South Africa, and I feared the effect of its fall upon the native mind in general and upon the Basutos in particular. Moreover, though I felt the fullest confidence in the military commandant, Colonel Kekewich, I did not trust the other powers within the city.

PLAN OF OPERATIONS.

Very reluctantly, therefore, I decided to divide my forces. By the 10th November I had definitely determined upon my plans. These were to send Lord Methuen with one full division to advance along the western railway to Kimberley, throw into it a few naval guns of long range, which the Admiral had kindly placed at my disposal, together with their crews and a reinforcement of a battalion and a half. This done, he was to return immediately to the Orange River, bringing with him such of the natives and non-combatants as Colonel Kekewich might wish to send out of the town. I considered that Kimberley, thus strengthened, would be perfectly safe against any attack, and would be, so to speak, off my hands until the time should come for the general advance. My information was that Cronje was in the neighbourhood of Mafeking, and that the largest force by which Lord Methuen was likely to be opposed did not exceed 4,000 men. I gave him a supply-column sufficient to carry five days' supplies. Five days' supplies can always be made to last for seven, and men can always carry one extra day's rations. Hence I hoped that on arrival at the Modder Lord Methuen would be able to leave the railway and approach Kimberley by whatever route might seem to him most advantageous. A sufficient force of mounted men I could not give him, for I had none to give.

So much for the Western Railway and for Kimberley. As to the Midland Railway, the hostility of the Dutch districts of Graaf Reinet and Cradock was such that I abandoned the idea of using it for the time, and withdrew from it most of the rolling stock. But to hinder the advance of the Boers then at Colesberg upon these districts I placed General French in command at Naauwpoort, with orders further to train the Cavalry Division, as it should arrive, in the work required of it. He was not to attempt an engagement, but to teach his men to manoeuvre, and by harassing tactics to worry the Boers, if possible, out of Colesberg. The Eastern Railway I held as far north as Queenstown, where I placed General Gatacre in command to cover East London and the English settlers in King Williamstown and the adjacent districts. His instructions were to run no risks, to raise as many Volunteers as he could, and to worry and obstruct the enemy as much as possible. On Lord Methuen's return from Kimberley it was my design that he should clear the northern districts of Cape Colony by working from Orange River eastward, and seize the bridges for the ultimate advance. I arranged accordingly for the accumulation of supplies for him at Orange River, De Aar, Port Elizabeth, and East London, so that he should open new lines of supply as he moved eastward. The work of clearing accomplished, he was to concentrate at Bethulie for an advance on Bloemfontein.

For the work in Natal I appointed General Clery with three brigades.

It will be observed that these operations, if successful, would have restored the situation to that which existed before the opening of the war, and upon which the whole plan of the campaign, as formulated in England, had been based. Had the two colonies been garrisoned according to a systematic scheme of defence, as I recommended in July, 1899, no such operations would have been necessary. I need hardly add that if the enemy had chosen to press their advantages, and to advance boldly both in Natal and Cape Colony during the fortnight that followed the 30th October, it would have been extremely difficult for me to have prevented them, from

sheer lack of troops. As it was, I could only hold the all-important crossing at Orange River Bridge, and make a show of protection on the Eastern Railway by leaving my bases in Cape Colony unguarded.

GENERAL SITUATION 22ND. NOVEMBER—DEPARTURE FOR DURBAN.

On the 9th November the first troops arrived from England, and by the 20th a sufficient number had disembarked to ward off the peril that had hitherto hung over us. On that day Lord Methuen was almost ready to proceed on his march upon Kimberley; Naauwpoort had been occupied just in time on the 18th; and General French was at De Aar organising a flying column to operate against the Boer commando at Colesburg. Queenstown was held by General Gatacre with a battalion and a half, besides Volunteers. In Natal, where General Clery had assumed command, General Hildyard with his whole brigade had reached Estcourt, and Lyttelton's and Barton's brigades had either arrived at Durban or were on their way thither from Cape Town. One and all of these forces were sadly deficient in mounted men, but that I could not help. On the 22nd, after leaving an appreciation of the situation with General Forestier-Walker for his guidance, I embarked for Natal, where the Generals had from the first urgently requested my presence.

The situation in Natal was, indeed, far from comfortable. The Boers had passed south of the Tugela as early as the 1st November, and had now about 3,000 men in a strong position about 15 miles west of Estcourt, some 800 at Weenen, who were threatening the railway between Weston and Estcourt, and about 1,000 on the Blaaukrantz River north of Frere. On the 21st General Clery had reported that Estcourt was seriously threatened, and that he was apprehensive that the railway might be cut behind him. Our want of mounted men made it impossible to deal with so mobile an enemy as the Boers, and it was not until one party encamped on General Hildyard's communications at Highlands that it was possible to strike at them. He seized his opportunity with great promptitude, and attacked them on the night of the 22nd-23rd. Tactically the attack was not wholly successful, but General Hildyard gained his object, for the enemy at once evacuated the position and retreated in two bodies through Weenen and Ulundi to the North of the Tugela.

ARRIVAL AT DURBAN, 25TH NOVEMBER—PREPARATIONS AND PLANS.

I was met by this welcome news when I landed at Durban at 7 p.m. November 25th, and on the 26th I reported it in a letter of that date. My original intention had been to send the Colonial troops (which from the moment of my arrival in South Africa I had been raising in Natal and Cape Colony) through Zululand to occupy a position near Helpmakaar, while I attacked on the line of the Tugela, and I had hoped by this operation to relieve Ladysmith without difficulty. I was encouraged in this design by the result of General Hildyard's action, which showed that a force of Boers, even though commanded by their Commandant-General in person, would not, even after a tactical success, hold their positions with our troops on both sides of them.

On arriving at Maritzburg I found this plan would be impossible. First, the number of Colonials raised was less than I expected. Next, owing to the effects of the rinderpest, it was practically impossible to obtain sufficient ox-wagons for such a supply column as the advance through Zululand would have required. As it was, I was obliged in the Dutch districts to use my powers of impressment under martial law to obtain the wagons absolutely necessary even for a direct advance along the railway. In Natal the entire staff equipment of an army had to be created. The whole of the local staff, except the Ordnance officer, was with Sir George White in Ladysmith. My own staff had been dispersed for urgent duties in Cape Colony. It seemed, from such scanty information as I could get, that the garrison of Ladysmith could be maintained on full rations till the end of the year, and for an uncertain time longer in a state of increasing starvation.

On the 30th November Sir George White caught my flashing signals, and, having deciphered a fragment of a message from me sent me his message numbered P 20. This I received on the 4th December. I interpreted it to signify that he was unable to take the field, and could make no plans. I therefore inferred that it was inadvisable for me to communicate my plans to him, but noted that he specially recommended me to advance either

through Colenso or through Springfield. On the 7th December I succeeded in opening heliographic communication with Ladysmith, and I repeated my former telegram announcing the formation of the relieving force, but elicited no satisfactory answer.

On the 1st December I had written to General Clery that I inclined more and more to the project of crossing the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift, but that we must first worry the Boers by bombardment and by (very possible form of) annoyance. But already a new element of danger had shown itself in the organisation of a Boer force, of uncertain strength, to attack Tugela Ferry from Helpmakaar. By the 4th December we had arranged for base hospitals, collected sufficient transport, established an intelligence department, formed a corps of guides, and compiled and printed a map. On that day I left Maritzburg for Frere (letter of December 2nd to War Office).

SITUATION IN CAPE COLONY.

I now revert to Cape Colony, where during my stay at Maritzburg the situation had defined itself more clearly, and revealed increasing complications.

The western districts were passing under Boer control.

Barkly East was reported to be in open rebellion. Methuen, after two successes at Belmont and Enslin, had fought at Modder River an action by which he seemed to have been staggered. He had been wounded, but not severely. Reinforcements were reaching him, but he was not pushing on. Cronje appeared to have got to the south of Kimberley from Mafeking, but I thought that Methuen exaggerated the numbers opposed to him. He asked for howitzers, but none had arrived.

On the 1st December General Forestier-Walker reported that the Burghersdorp commando had occupied Steynsburg, and were creeping south, and that Sir Alfred Milner was apprehensive of their occupying the Dutch districts. I replied by ordering French on the west and Gatacre on the east, each of them to close inward upon Middleburg and Henning Station respectively, so as to threaten the enemy upon both flanks.

On the 2nd December the enemy occupied Dordrecht, which naturally made Gatacre, who was then at Putter's Kraal, apprehensive for his right flank.

On the 5th Methuen reported 8,000 to 10,000 men in front of him.

On the 7th General Forestier-Walker reported that Methuen's communications had been interfered with, and that the security of Gatacre's right was more closely threatened.

On the 8th he reported that the enemy on Gatacre's front and flank was increasing, but that French was holding his own and something more, and that Methuen had been reinforced and his communications restored.

On the 9th I telegraphed to General Forestier-Walker that I wished the bulk of the 5th Division, when it arrived, to land at Port Elizabeth, and proceed thence to Rosmead; but that one brigade and one battery should land at East London and proceed thence to such point as General Gatacre should direct.

On the 10th General Gatacre failed in an attempt to surprise Stormberg, and fell back, with some loss, to Bushman's Hoek. I therefore changed my orders with regard to the 5th Division. On the same day I reported to the Secretary of State my views as to the arrival of a 6th Division. I also received from General Forestier-Walker a message to the effect that Mr. Rhodes had signified, through the High Commissioner, his objections to my design for clearing non-combatants out of Kimberley. I replied that it was a question of keeping the flag flying in South Africa, and not of showing favour to any set of capitalists.

On the 12th Lord Methuen fought his unsuccessful action at Magersfontein.

On the 13th there came disquieting news that the disaffection in the eastern border of Cape Colony was spreading to the native territories. If the natives became seriously restless, it was certain that the overland line of telegraph between Cape Colony and Natal would be intercepted.

DELAGOA BAY.

Such, briefly, was the course of events in Cape Colony while I was preparing for my advance in Natal. I must premise, before entering upon the narrative of my operations, that I had, on the 3rd of November, urged upon the Secretary of State that the blockade of Delagoa Bay would be of essential service to me. I now pressed this suggestion again upon him on the

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17 Feb. 1903.

General The
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17 Feb. 1903.

1st, and yet again on the 8th December, adding that the advantage would be cheaply bought, whatever the cost of pecuniary compensation to Portugal. The ends which I reckoned to attain by the blockade were these. The isolation of the Transvaal and the hopelessness of foreign intervention would be brought home to that State; its supplies of war material and of foodstuffs would be cut off; uneasiness and distrust would certainly ensue, and all the more, if I should succeed in inflicting a sharp blow on the fighting men of the Eastern Transvaal who lay before me; and thus, by the time that I had disposed of the Orange Free State, the Transvaal's powers of resistance, both moral and physical, would have been so much impaired as to promise some hope of ending the war without a fight to extermination. Reverting now to Natal, I had definitely decided to move to the relief of Sir George White by way of Potgieter's Drift. On the 7th I established proper heliographic communication with him, and told him that I expected to start with that object on the 12th, and that I should take five days. I repeated this message on the 9th, and, in reply to an inquiry from him on the 10th, I gave him, on the 11th, a forecast of my movements in detail, but warned him that I might meet with unexpected delay. On the 10th, Waschbank bridge, on the line of the Boers' railway communications, was successfully blown up by my directions. On the 12th, I moved General Barton's Brigade two miles beyond Chieveley, together with some Naval guns, in the hope that the latter might be able to shell the Colenso position. On the same day, I wrote to the Secretary of State that I had determined to leave this brigade in position before Colenso, and march, on the night of the 13th, with the remainder of my force, upon Potgieter's Drift, some twenty-five miles distant.

ACTION OF MAGERSFONTEIN—CHANGE OF PLANS.

Later on the same day, I received the intelligence of Lord Methuen's failure at Magersfontein. I at once telegraphed that he must either attack Cronje or fall back to Orange River, since it would be better to lose Kimberley than to hazard the isolation of his force. I also telegraphed to General Forestier-Walker that, if Lord Methuen did retire, I regarded the first phase of the campaign as closed, and that both Methuen and Gatacre must take up tactical posts and prepare movable columns to operate around them. "Through no fault of ours," I said, "the enemy had the initiative, and has used it well. We have staying power, and must now use that." The fact was that on landing I found a desperate situation. I endeavoured to retrieve it by desperate measures. If these measures failed, we must fall back upon our staying power.

Lord Methuen's misfortune, however, following, as it did, upon that of General Gatacre, sensibly affected my position. With an enemy disheartened by failure, I thought myself warranted, in the peculiar circumstances, in risking a flank march of fifty miles with an enormous wagon train, even though it might involve the uncovering of my communications. With an enemy elated by success, this was no longer justifiable. I, therefore, determined to try to force the direct road to Ladysmith, and reported as much by telegram to the Secretary of State on the 13th. In a letter to the Secretary of State of the same day, I added that, whether I succeeded or failed, the time had come, both in Natal and Cape Colony, to stand on the defensive until the winter, and to organise and train mobile troops. "From my point of view," I wrote—and I would respectfully call the attention of the Commission to the date on which these words were written—"it will be better to lose Ladysmith altogether than to throw open Natal to the enemy."

Holding such views, whether rightly or wrongly, I felt that my first duty was to keep Southern Natal clear of the enemy, and that, consequently, I must keep at least 10,000 men, or one-half of the force at my disposal, in Natal, in a fit state to defend the Colony. Necessarily, my powers were circumscribed by this condition; but I conceived that, with the active co-operation of Sir George White, I was still strong enough to extricate his force from its position at Ladysmith. His sick and wounded were safe, his men were inured to war, and, when once he started, his only care would be to force his way to the river, 16 miles down hill. My troops, on the other hand, were without experience of war; I had the whole care of protecting Natal upon my shoulders, and I should have to fight the whole way from the Tugela to Ladysmith uphill, and that a hill which offered

extraordinary natural advantages to the defence. I decided, therefore, to effect a lodgment, if possible, on the other side of the Tugela, and, if I succeeded in doing this, to direct Hunter to take command of the Ladysmith garrison, and march along the watershed to Onderbroek, while I myself marched simultaneously upon the same point. From my knowledge of the Boers, I felt assured that, if attacked at one and the same time by Hunter from the north and by myself from the south, they would never maintain their position. But until I had secured my lodgment on the other side of the river, I did not feel justified in calling upon the Ladysmith garrison to move. The risk to them would, I felt, be too great.

Careful reconnaissance had convinced me (and my judgment was borne out in my final advance) that a little to the west of the Colenso position, and on the north bank of the Tugela, there was a space large enough for me to bivouac my force in shelter from any fire from the north and west. This space I resolved to seize for my lodgment. For actual attack on the Colenso position Hlangwane Hill offered the best advantage, but the utilisation of Hlangwane involved bush-fighting and a previous occupation of Monte Christo, or, in other words, an extension of my front along a line of five miles, and also involved a departure from the only roads along which Sir George White expected to be able to render me any assistance. I did not think that my men, raw as they were, were ready for bush-fighting, nor that I had troops sufficient for so extended and so isolated a movement. But the moment that I had effected my lodgment, my design was to attack and occupy the west side of the Hlangwane, so as to shelter my chosen position from fire from that side. This done, I should have summoned Hunter to me, and we should have attacked the Boers simultaneously, as I have already explained.

On the 14th I received a telegram from the Secretary of State that General Warren had been directed, upon landing, to take command of Lord Methuen's force, and that it was considered advisable for both Lord Methuen and General Gatacre to be employed on the lines of communication in future. I was not consulted as to this order, and it was directly at variance with an opinion I had given on the 6th. I could only construe it as an order for General Warren's division, as well as its commander, to join Lord Methuen's force, and I altered my instructions to that division accordingly, though I demurred to the supersession of Lord Methuen. On the same day I received a telegram from Lord Methuen to the effect that he would require more than a complete division to make a successful attack, and that he therefore elected to retire. But he evidently was confident of his ability to hold his own and maintain his communications; and I readily consented to General Forestier-Walker's suggestion, received on the same day, that he should stand his ground and be reinforced by the 10th Brigade as soon as it arrived. On this same day I received welcome news of a successful little action fought by French's force, and in congratulating him and his officers, I urged him above all to worry the Boers.

On that evening I assembled my commanders, and in the presence of them all explained to each his part in the dispositions for the morrow. Each commander with his troops was to occupy a specified place, and to await the result of a general bombardment before leaving it.

EVENTS OF 15TH DECEMBER.

On the morning of the 15th December the troops moved into their appointed positions. My intention was that they should remain there, out of fire and at ease, while from Gun Hill I ascertained by practice the accurate range of all the points from which opposition could be offered to our advance. As the guns were getting into position I noticed that the 5th Brigade were advancing beyond the position that I had allotted to them, and sent at once to stop them. My messenger was delayed by bad ground, and the brigade, continuing to advance, came under fire. Very shortly afterwards they received from me an order by a second messenger to withdraw at once out of range. This they complied with; but as they were doing so I saw a very considerable body of Boers moving to a position from whence I thought they intended to make a flank attack upon the now retreating 5th Brigade. I therefore directed General Lyttelton, who was in reserve, to move to his left, and cover the withdrawal of the 5th Brigade, supporting him by Colonel Parsons's brigade division.

While this was passing I had observed that Colonel

Long, with Hunt's brigade division and the Naval 12-pounder guns, had also advanced beyond their allotted position. He had come into action, and was firing so rapidly as to satisfy me at once that he was too close to the enemy. I immediately dispatched an officer, whom I directed to ascertain if the batteries were suffering from the enemy's fire, and if so, to order them to withdraw immediately. He went, returned, and told me that the batteries were all right. Very shortly afterwards they ceased firing. Surmising that something must be wrong, I at once galloped off to my right, meeting as I went two officers who had been with Colonel Long. Each of them informed me that the guns had been abandoned, having fired away all their ammunition—one of them said, "Very nearly all"—and lost every officer and man of the detachments killed or wounded. Colonel Long himself was described as dangerously wounded.

I at once went to General Hildyard, and told him that the guns had got into trouble, and that I was going to try and extricate them, that I thought it would be impossible for me to attack at all that day, and that for the present I certainly could not. I directed him to advance two of his battalions, and open as much fire as he could from a position which I pointed out on the left of the guns, but charged him on no account to commit his men to an engagement. Proceeding to a point behind the guns, I made an endeavour to withdraw them, sending out four limbers for that purpose. Of these two were successful, and withdrew two guns; the horses and men of the other two limbers were shot down. I then moved to my right, and saw Colonel Lord Dundonald and General Barton. Dundonald's men were engaged with the Boers, who were attacking from Hlangwane. General Barton had only two battalions left in hand, having at Colonel Long's request supported him with one battalion and a half, while the remaining half battalion was in charge of the parked transport and baggage. Returning to my former place behind the guns, I withdrew all the wagons, and made another but unsuccessful attempt to withdraw some guns. I consulted on the spot with General Clerly as to the possibility of devising some means to save the guns without a sacrifice of lives absolutely disproportionate to their value. As we neither of us could conceive of any means by which they could be extricated, I, with his concurrence, decided that they must be abandoned. I have only to add that, in my own belief, their withdrawal on that day or night was a physical impossibility, and that it was equally impossible to prevent their withdrawal by the enemy; and if required, I shall be glad to give my reasons in full detail. I then ordered the retirement of the whole force to their bivouac, which was effected without the least trouble.

CONSIDERATIONS AS TO FUTURE POLICY.

On retiring to camp the following situation presented itself to me:—The Boers had displayed considerable strength on all the surrounding hills. I was evidently not strong enough to get into Ladysmith by the Colenso route unless I received help from General White. I was satisfied that another division added to Methuen's force would accomplish the relief of Kimberley, and the same addition to my own force the relief of Ladysmith. But this meant a reinforcement in all of two divisions, and I had but one to hand. The question was whether I could make one division do the work of two, and in that case in which of the two services it should be first employed. I should have preferred to have relieved Kimberley first, assuming that Ladysmith could have held out until my return, had I not feared that my departure from Natal might encourage the Boers to make a more resolute attack upon Ladysmith than the garrison could resist. I knew that the Boers were afraid of me—I will not pause to discuss whether I deserved the compliment, but I knew it—and I should have failed in my duty if I had neglected to take the fact into account. This consideration determined me to give priority to Ladysmith. But, on the other hand, the Government had already ordered the 5th Division to Modder River. I could only assume that this order had been given in deference to the representations of the High Commissioner. He, not I, had been the adviser of the Government. I therefore embodied in the following telegram to the Secretary of State the opinions which I had already expressed on the 13th in my letter to him and in my telegram to General Forestier-Walker:—"No. 87, cipher, 15th December. My failure to-day raises a serious question. I do not think I am now strong enough to relieve White. Colenso is a fortress which I think if not taken on a rush could only be taken by

a siege. There is no water within eight miles of the point of attack, and in this weather that exhausts infantry. The place is fully entrenched. I do not think either a Boer or a gun was seen by us all day, yet the fire brought to bear was very heavy. Our infantry was quite ready to fight, but were absolutely exhausted by the intense heat. My view is that I ought to let Ladysmith go, and occupy good positions for the defence of South Natal, and let time help us. But that is a step on which I ought to consult you. I consider that we were in face of 20,000 men to-day. They had the advantage, both in arms and in position. They admit they suffered severely, but my men have not seen a dead Boer, and that dispirits them. My losses have not been very heavy. I could have made them much heavier, but the result would have been the same. The moment I failed to get in on the run I was beat. I now feel that I cannot say I can't relieve Ladysmith with my available force, and the best thing I can suggest is that I should occupy defensive positions and fight it out in a country better suited to our tactics.—BULLER."

I hoped hereby to elicit from the Government a definite opinion as to the course which they judged it expedient for me to pursue. They had committed themselves to a preference for the relief of Kimberley; on what ground I could only conjecture. I therefore laid before them my opinion, from a military standpoint, as to the measures best fitted to meet the situation as it stood in consequence of their interposition. It was for them to decide how far military should be modified by political considerations, or the reverse.

On this same day (16th), I received information from Cape Colony, which pointed to the fact that the enemy were pressing their attack upon Gatacre.

EVENTS OF THE 16th to 18th DECEMBER.

My proceedings of the three following days, 16th to 18th December, I shall ask permission to enumerate in order as they occurred.

16th December.—First, I sent the following heliogram, No. 88, to Sir George White, informing him of my failure on the previous day, and that it would be impossible for me to undertake further operations for his relief for a month. I further suggested that if he could not hold out for so long, he might fire away his ammunition and make the best terms he could.

To Sir George White. No. 88 Cipher, 16th December. "I tried Colenso yesterday, but failed; the enemy is too strong for my force, except with siege operations, and those will take one full month to prepare. Can you last so long? If not, how many days can you give me in which to take up defensive positions? After which I suggest your firing away as much ammunition as you can, and making best terms you can. I can remain here if you have alternative suggestion, but, unaided, I cannot break in. I find my infantry cannot fight more than ten miles from camp, and then only if water can be got, and it is scarce here—BULLER."

I was not wholly without hope that, with the situation thus crudely laid before him, Sir George White would contrive to form plans for assisting in his own relief, which, heretofore, he had declared to be impossible. It will presently be seen that one month exceeded the period for which he could keep his men on full rations or his horses in even moderate condition. It will presently be seen also that I lost no time in informing him, as soon as I ascertained it, that I could reduce the one month mentioned in the telegram to three weeks.

Next, I sent a telegram, protesting against the super-session of Methuen and Gatacre.

Next I received a telegram from the Secretary of State, informing me that the embarkation of the 6th Division and the mobilisation of a 7th had begun.

This I answered at once by asking for both Divisions, also for 8,000 irregulars, equipped as mounted infantry; also for Maxim-Nordenfolt guns, and for mobile guns with a range of 8,000 yards.

Next I telegraphed to Methuen, suggesting that he should lay a few miles of railway to his right flank, so as to make good his lack of mobility by an extension of his front.

Next I received from General Forestier-Walker the report of the arrival of the first ships of the Fifth Division, and an account of the positions of Generals French and Gatacre.

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Next, I ordered the following message to be sent to Sir George White, amending my former heliogram by the question, "How many days can you hold out?" and adding instructions for the destruction of his cipher in any event. No. 92 Cipher, 16th December: "My message, No. 88 Cipher. Groups 31 to 43 were correctly sent, but in place of them, and first number of 44 group, read as follows:—'How many days can you hold out?' Also add to the end of message: 'Whatever happens, recollect to burn your cipher and decipher and code books, and any deciphered messages'—BULLER." I should explain that I had information that the Boers had got hold of certain code or cipher telegrams of ours, in which the decoding or deciphering words had been interlineated. This message was sent down at night for transmission on the following morning.

I may add that I spent every leisure moment of this day in the saddle, searching in vain for a site for a healthy camp with a sufficient supply of water. During the night I superintended the movement of the force into new positions.

17 December.—I sent a heliogram to Sir George White the first thing in the morning, saying that want of water prevented me from remaining in force near Colenso, but that I thought I could attack it again in three weeks instead of in a month, the time fixed in my message of the previous day. The reason for this alteration was that I now reckoned that I ought to obtain the guns necessary for a second attack within three weeks.

It is well-known that, by an error in ciphering, the sense of my last telegram of the 16th to Sir George White was slightly altered; but in view of the fact that this first telegram of the 17th was sent at the same time, and followed immediately upon it, the error could not, and, in fact, did not, lead to any mistake.

Next, I received two telegrams from the Secretary of State. The first gave a very decided opinion in favour of the relief of Ladysmith, and authorised me to use the Fifth Division for this purpose.

From Proemial, London. 16th December, No. 53 Cipher: "Her Majesty's Government (? consider) abandonment, and, consequently (? loss) of White's force, as a national disaster of the greatest magnitude. We should urge you to devise another attempt to relieve it, not necessarily by way of Colenso, making use, if you think well, of additional troops now arriving in South Africa."

The second was a private telegram, for which I thanked him, adding: "Do not consider me in any way. When Milner pressed me not to go to Natal, I told him that the relief of White was a forlorn hope, and that the failure, if any, ought to rest on my shoulders."

I then at once telegraphed to Cape Town for the Fifth Division, ordered General Clery to reconnoitre the route to Springfield, and sent a heliogram to Sir George White that I had summoned the Fifth Division, and should attempt the route by Potgieter's Drift.

Directly afterwards I received a heliogram from Sir George White, in answer to mine of the 16th, No. 88. To me its chief significance was that he could give no assistance towards his own relief, and that he relied upon me to keep the pressure of the enemy from him.

From Sir George White, 16th of December, 1899: "Your No. 88 of to-day received and understood. My suggestion is that you take up strongest available position that will enable you to keep touch of the enemy and harass him constantly with artillery fire, and in other ways as much as possible. I can make food last for much longer than a month, and will not think of making terms until I am forced to. You may have hit enemy harder than you think. All our native spies report that your artillery fire made considerable impression on enemy. Have your losses been very heavy? If you lose touch of enemy, it will immensely increase his opportunities of crushing me, and have worst effect elsewhere. While you are in touch with him and communication with me, he has both of our forces to reckon with. Make every effort to get reinforcements as early as possible, including India, and enlist every man in both Colonies who will serve and can ride. Things may look brighter. The loss of 12,000 men here would be a heavy blow to England. We must not think of it. I fear I could not cut my way to you. Enteric fever is increasing alarmingly here. There are now 180 cases, all within last month. Answer fully;

I am keeping everything secret for the present till I know your plans."

I replied that I was shelling Colenso, and would keep as large a force as possible before it.

Reports from Cape Town showed the Boers in front of French to be displaying increased activity; and, as Boer sympathisers were spreading reports that we were short of troops, I allowed two battalions of the Fifth Division, which had been sent to De Aar, to remain there instead of joining me in Natal.

On the 18th, I thanked the Secretary of State for his permission to use the Fifth Division for the relief of Ladysmith. My words were: "Much obliged by your No. 53, exactly what I wanted. I was in doubt as to weight I should attach to financial considerations at Kimberley."

On the same day, I received two heliograms from Sir George White, the second of which informed me that he had provisions for six weeks, and could get on well (by which I understood him to mean on full or slightly reduced rations) for three weeks, keeping even his horses moderately fit. This would make his provisions last on full allowance till the 8th January, and on reduced allowance for three additional weeks, that is to say, till the 29th January. Though this tallied pretty accurately with my own estimate, it did not agree with Sir George White's former report of the 30th November, wherein he reported that he had provisions for 70 days, that is to say, to the 8th of February.

On the same day, the Secretary of State telegraphed to me that Lord Roberts had been appointed to the chief command in South Africa, and that my own command was restricted to Natal. In a letter, dated the 20th, I replied that I had long felt convinced that it was impossible for any one man to direct active military operations in two places 1,000 miles apart.

At this time there were signs that the enemy was plotting mischief in Zululand, and the Natal Government became anxious as to the loyalty of the Pondos and East Griquas, who were being tampered with by emissaries from the Free State. I therefore arranged with the Prime Minister to raise a force of Colonists, who, under officers of their own election, should be employed in Zululand and on the Pondoland border. The Boers did move into Zululand, but their advance was checked; and this Colonial corps was shortly afterwards disbanded, it being admitted on all hands that a corps of Colonists independent of Imperial officers was not successful.

POLICY PROJECTED FOR CAPE COLONY.

During these days disaffection was spreading in the Dutch districts, and the High Commissioner was evidently growing more and more nervous over the situation in Cape Colony. On the 23rd of December he became very anxious as to Methuen's situation, and urged upon me that no disadvantage ensuing upon his retreat could compare with the disaster that might follow upon his isolation. I replied that I attached greater importance to Kimberley than to Ladysmith; that Kimberley was safe so long as Methuen stood fast, but would probably fall if he retired; and that, consequently, I would not allow him to retire. I added that the true policy was to leave Methuen in position, commence a railway to Jacobsdaal, and after the relief of Kimberley continue the advance on Bloemfontein from Jacobsdaal.

On the 24th December I received a telegram from Lord Roberts. He anticipated that I should turn the enemy's position on the Tugela with comparative ease, and desired that when I relieved Ladysmith I should evacuate the place and hold the line of the Tugela. Methuen, likewise, if he relieved Kimberley, was to fall back upon Orange River, with the view of the concentration in Cape Colony of the whole available force, preliminary to an advance upon Bloemfontein, according to the original plan of campaign.

This telegram crossed a telegram of mine to the Secretary of State, wherein I had developed the plan already foreshadowed in the message above quoted to the High Commissioner. Herein I recommended that a branch line should be constructed from north of Honey Nest Kloof to Jacobsdaal, Methuen covering the construction from the rail head at Modder River. At Jacobsdaal he would cut Cronje's communications, probably frighten him out of Spytfontein, and also seriously menace Bloemfontein itself. On the arrival of the Sixth Division the line should be continued from Jacobsdaal, as a base, to

See
Q 14881.

Bloemfontein. Such a line would be cheap to build and of great strategical value, since it would react upon Cape Colony and the disloyal Dutch even more quickly than a direct attack upon Burgersdorp. I added, however, that since Lord Roberts, and not I, was in command the plan should be subject to his approval.

This was, of course, practically a new plan of campaign, with which I designed to meet the new situation which had developed itself during the past two months. The first germ of it appears in my telegram to Methuen of the 16th December. I intended to expand it as follows: A line drawn from Orange River Station along the railway to Jacobsdal or Kimberley, from thence eastward on my proposed railway to Bloemfontein, from thence southward along the railway to Bethulie and Norval's Pont, and thence westward along the Orange River to Orange River Station, would enclose a quadrilateral, roughly speaking, 100 miles square. This area I designed to subjugate completely, and to convert the whole into a large base of operations, with a strongly-held and fully-supplied post at each angle, from which, as from subsidiary bases, mobile columns could operate in any direction. I conceived that this, the southern portion of the Free State, could have been reduced with little difficulty, the northern frontier of Cape Colony practically covered, and the western provinces threatened. Meanwhile, a force from Natal should advance through Van Reenen's Pass to Harrismith, and, having established a subsidiary base, should be in a position to deal with any trouble to the south, north, and west. In fact, I thought that I saw in this plan all the advantages which the Austrians enjoyed from the celebrated quadrilateral in Italy. It would, moreover, have been invaluable in the event of a guerilla war; and this, as I had on the 10th November warned the Government, was not improbable.

By the 24th December Gatacre's dispositions began apparently to take effect, and he seemed to be gradually forcing back the disloyal Dutch and the enemy before him.

On the 25th the High Commissioner, on hearing that I was moving three squadrons of the South African Light Horse to Natal, again urged upon me the danger of Cape Colony and the weakness of Methuen's communications. I could only reply that I did not share his views; and I instructed General Forestier-Walker that he must not yield to the influence of the High Commissioner, for that we must hold on to Modder River.

On the 27th I received a telegram from Lord Roberts at Gibraltar, in acknowledgment of mine of 23rd December, No. 115. He signified no opinion as to the plan therein broached, but he expressed apprehension that the construction of the proposed railway would interfere with the working of the present line, and asked me to consult Colonel Girouard before coming to any decision. I did so, and Colonel Girouard answered that he could construct the line at the probable rate of one mile a day without interference with the supply-traffic. The proposal, however, was not adopted.

On the same day I was able to report that 6,700 Colonials were in the field in Natal, and 6,900 in the field at the Cape, and that Natal could probably furnish 700 and the Cape 4,000 more.

On the 28th December I wrote, in compliance with a request in Lord Roberts's telegram of the 23rd, a letter to be delivered to him on his arrival in Cape Town. I pointed out that there was no question of turning the Boer position in front of me, and that it must be forced; if I succeeded in forcing it, I should certainly be able to spare him a full division. I referred him to my instructions to General Forestier-Walker of the 20th November and my telegrams No. 114 and No. 119. I advocated an advance from Modder River by way of Jacobsdal to Bloemfontein as easier and quicker than up the main railway. On the same day I directed General Marshall, Commander Royal Artillery, and a Royal Engineer officer to proceed to the Modder to consider whether Cronje's position could be affected by use of the siege train, which was then being landed.

On the same day I received from Lord Roberts at Madeira a telegram, in which he said that he thought the *status quo*, if it could be maintained, was not undesirable until the Sixth Division should have arrived. Acting on the spirit of this message, I instructed Forestier-Walker to concentrate in Cape Colony all troops as they arrived.

On the 31st I instructed Methuen that Boers would not attack troops in position which had artillery, and that by distributing his guns he should be strong enough

to act defensively at all points and to keep the enemy tied to his position. This message was sent in the expectation that he might be required to extend his position so as cover the construction of the new railway.

By the 2nd January, 1900, the situation in front of French was improving, the Boers having retired to Colesberg, from which he hoped, by manoeuvring to oust them. I consented to reinforce him, but instructed him to manoeuvre only, and not to risk a general attack.

On the 3rd January, as the best means of indicating my mind, I sent to Cape Town the following information, as more or less trustworthy, for Lord Roberts's use, viz.:—

"Cronje has 8,000 to 9,000 men on Scholtzer's Nek; he hopes the British will attack, as his position is very strong.

"An advance on Bloemfontein up right bank of Riet River, by Kaalspruit, would draw off main Boer forces towards Bloemfontein. President Orange Free State is stated in district to have said he could not cope with such a movement.

"There is open, level country between east and west lines Modder River Station—Kaalspruit and Graspan. Best line of advance up right bank of Riet River.

"Bloemfontein undefended, except by two forts, the guns of which have been removed to Kimberley.

"There is a large magazine east of forts connected by railway with main line, from which large stores of ammunition would be sent back to Pretoria by rail if British succeeded in approaching Bloemfontein.

"There are 5,000 Boers from Naauwpoort to Stormberg, under Grobelaar, divided into commandoes of about 1,500; 2,000 of these are Transvaal Boers.

"Colonial Dutch have since Stormberg fight joined Boers there in large numbers, and are supplied with ammunition by Orange Free State."

About this time a scheme was started for a rising of the British prisoners of Pretoria. I discouraged it as much as possible, saying that it was probably a trap; if we were within reach of Pretoria it might be useful, but at the moment it would be dangerous and foolish.

On the 6th January the Boers attacked Wagon Hill and Caesar's Camp, Ladysmith. The attack being unsupported, was unsuccessful, though the enemy obtained a footing temporarily in some of our defences; and had it not been for a very heavy thunderstorm not a man of the attacking party would have escaped. I sent every available man to make a demonstration at Colenso, in order to keep as many of the enemy occupied as possible; but their trenches were fully manned. From this day forward I entertained no further hope of assistance from the Ladysmith garrison. (White's 44P.)

MOVEMENT TO SPRINGFIELD, NATAL.

The 5th Division had arrived at Estcourt early in January, and on the 2nd I sent a heliogram to Sir George White that I adhered to my plan for crossing the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift, and hoped to start on the 8th. I visited Sir Charles Warren at Estcourt, and discussed the plan with him. He moved on the 7th; but heavy rain on the 6th and 7th brought all the rivers up to flood level, and delayed his march.

On the 9th he arrived at Frere, and on that day I reported (No. 149) that I had received from two distinct sources a statement of the number which the State Secretary had relied on putting into the field, and that there were probably 120,000 men then in the field against us, of whom about 46,000 were then in Natal and on its borders. In reply (No. 81), the Secretary of State said that my numbers must be incorrect, but that he recognised the difficulty of the situation. Subsequent history has shown that my numbers were more nearly correct than was supposed.

On the 10th the column moved from Frere on Springfield. I issued a memorandum urging, among other things, upon the men that, if surprised by a sudden volley they should not turn from it, but rush at it.

By the 11th we had seized the south bank of the Tugela at Potgieter's. The only road by which I could advance north of the river from that drift led into a re-entering angle of the enemy's defences. After a careful reconnaissance I discovered a far better crossing by Trichard's Drift, five miles to westward.

Having thoroughly discussed my plans with Sir Charles Warren, and ascertained his entire concurrence with them, I reported them to the Secretary of State, No. 154, and to Lord Roberts, who had just arrived at Cape Town. In reply, Lord Roberts, in his No. 5, said, "Now that you have gone so far to help.

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17 Feb. 1903.

See Q. 14896

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V.C., G.C.F.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1900.*

White, I hope he will be able to help you by making a strong sortie as soon as Warren is engaged with the enemy." I replied, No. 157: "White has told me to expect very little help from him, so I think it probable I shall be unaided from Ladysmith in carrying out operations for its relief." He replied, 16th January No. 6: "Am concerned to hear you can expect very little help from White, as that is the sole chance of Ladysmith being relieved; surely he must make an effort to co-operate with Warren as he approaches Ladysmith."

On the same day Sir George White requested me (48P, 16th January), if I had any doubt of being able to get through to Ladysmith, to put the case to Roberts and ask for more troops. He reported that his force was much played out, that he had 2,400 sick, and that if I were repulsed Ladysmith would be in a bad way. On the 17th, in my No. 58, I repeated Sir George White's telegram to Lord Roberts, saying that the relief of Ladysmith from my then position was doubtful, but that I questioned if I could do better with a larger force, as the difficulty of supply where I was was enormous, and that Warren agreed with me that it was better to go on as I was, and to risk it.

EVENTS OF 17th TO 27th JANUARY, 1900.*

Accordingly, on this same day (17th January) General Warren crossed at Trichard's Drift by a pontoon bridge and the drift. He met with very slight opposition, but remained during that day and the 18th passing over his baggage. I reconnoitred the position in front of Potgieter's in force, so as to be prepared with a point of attack as soon as Warren's advance should have made any impression upon the right of that position. On the 19th Lord Dundonald, with Warren's cavalry, moving northward, had taken the right flank of the Boer position, whereas General Warren had advanced to the westward and was crossing Venters Spruit. I was dissatisfied with Warren's operations, which seemed to me aimless and irresolute. Dundonald's movement was a decided success, and should have been supported by artillery, while Warren's infantry should have attacked the salient, which Dundonald's success had left exposed.

On that evening I debated with myself whether or not I should relieve Warren of his command; but the question was less simple than it appears at first sight. Had he been sent out to me on the same footing as any other officer I should not have hesitated—or, rather, I should never have entrusted him with this command at all. But he had been sent out to me as my appointed second in command, and with orders from the Government that he should supersede Methuen; and though I had successfully combated this order as to Methuen, another equally precise had been substituted for it, namely, that wherever employed, General Warren should hold the position to which his rank entitled him. It is true that I disapproved of his first two days' work in the first command that he had ever held under me, but I did not think that this was sufficient justification for his removal, in the face of the direct instructions which I had received from the Secretary of State for War.

On the 20th I went over and saw Warren. He had that day attacked the salient and taken it, but instead of supporting Lord Dundonald, he had induced him to fall back from the position which he had occupied on the 19th. Again the same difficult question confronted me. General Warren was evidently not carrying out the orders which he had received from me, and in which he had signified his full concurrence. I saw, for my own part, that the advantages for which I had hoped from his crossing had been let slip, and that my own plan of operations had been hopelessly wrecked. It was open to me to take over his command myself, but in that case I should not be able to direct the most important and the most critical part of the whole movement, namely, the flank attack from Potgieter's. This, if it were to be successful with the few troops at my disposal, must be watched for and timed to the minute. It was possible that Warren might work more kindly for a plan of his own than he had worked for mine. His force was in good position, and might yet be successful. In any event, whether successful or not, the troops would spend some little time under fire in fairly close contact with the enemy, and would thus gain comparatively cheaply that battle training in which I knew them most deficient. I concluded to leave Warren to pursue his work, merely suggesting to him certain changes in the posting of his troops for the greater security of his position. I then returned to my former station to watch for my chance.

On the 21st and 22nd I sent General Warren reinforcements for which he had asked, and urged him to attack. On the 23rd I walked round General Warren's firing line. I afterwards pointed out to him that his troops were getting stale, and that his positions were insecure, and told him that unless he could attack he must withdraw. He represented the disadvantages of an attack, but proposed the occupation of Spion Kop. This, he said, he had intended to effect on the previous night without reference to me; but General Coke, to whom he had given the order, had refused to occupy the hill, because he had never reconnoitred the approach. I did not like the proposal, saying that I always dreaded mountains, but after considerable discussion I agreed to his suggestion. Spion Kop was occupied by his troops that night.

The next morning opened unfortunately for us, as the mountain at daybreak was clouded by a dense fog, rendering it impossible to place the troops effectively on the summit, which they had gained with practically no loss. As the mist drifted away they were exposed to a severe fire. General Woodgate was put out of action by a wound, and considerable disorder ensued. On the previous evening General Warren had placed General Talbot Coke in command of the right attack, including Spion Kop. A telegram for reinforcements from the top of the hill reached General Warren. Thereupon he appealed, not to me, but to the nearest Brigadier, who at once made arrangements which committed beyond recall all the mounted men, as well as two out of four battalions, which I had kept in hand. In these circumstances I had not sufficient troops to make a counter-attack, and could do nothing but wait till nightfall. Had the troops held Spion Kop during the night the operation might, I think, possibly have proved successful. The officer who was placed in command at the top of the hill made several efforts to communicate his situation to General Warren, but received no reply. General Coke went up the hill, but made no dispositions to improve the defence, and returned to consult with General Warren. General Warren had meanwhile changed his camp, and could not be found till late. Finally, when instructions were at length sent up the hill, the garrison had quitted it. I left my camp before daylight on the 25th. As I approached Warren's headquarters a messenger met me with the intelligence that the hill had been evacuated. I at once resumed command, and proceeded to withdraw the troops, which I did during the following night, without loss.

I was not altogether dissatisfied with the results, as a whole, of Spion Kop. My men had gained immensely in knowledge of war and in confidence in themselves and their officers. They had fought well, and I was certain that they had inflicted on the enemy not only an immense loss in moral, but actually a greater loss than they had themselves sustained in men. Events proved my opinion to be correct. None of the commandoes with which we were engaged at Spion Kop came again into action against us (so far as I could learn) for at least a year.

On the 25th January, No. 169, I reported to Lord Roberts and General White my withdrawal across the Tugela, and said I meant to have one more try at Ladysmith. Lord Roberts, on the 26th, in his No. 26, expressed his regret that Spion Kop had been abandoned, adding: "Unless you feel fairly confident of being able to relieve Ladysmith from Potgieter's Drift, would it not be better to postpone the attempt until I am in Orange Free State? I am hopeful to move about 5th February, and my force on north of Orange River should cause enemy to lessen their hold in Natal." On the following day he again telegraphed, saying that by the 28th February he expected to be near Bloemfontein, having relieved Kimberley, and that his threatening Bloemfontein would relieve the hostile pressure in Natal.

The War Office at this time proposed that White should attempt to cut his way out of Ladysmith and join me. In reply, No. 171, I informed both War Office and Lord Roberts that I thought White could not break out—that he had eaten his horses or starved them. I added: "It wants two set battles to relieve White. I could always make a certainty of the first, but the necessity for the second stops me. If, for example, I succeed here, and then fail at Roodepoort, I shall be left with, perhaps, 3,000 wounded, a demoralised force, short of water, and sixteen miles from anywhere."

On the 27th Sir George White informed me that if I tried again and failed, Ladysmith was doomed. He could feed the men for another month, but not the

* See also as to these events a statement put in by Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, *Appendix, page 642, post*

horses, and without guns his force could do nothing. He asked if I did not think he ought to abandon Ladysmith, and try to join me, though he did not conceal that his numbers were reduced to 7,000 men, and they weak and morally played out. On the same day the War Office withdrew their suggestion that White should break out.

FRESH ATTEMPT.—MOVEMENT TO VAAL KRANTZ.—
CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD ROBERTS.

On the 28th, Lord Roberts telegraphed again, No. 35, asking exactly what my plans for my next attempt to relieve Ladysmith, and the date on which I should commence the operations, adding: "Unless you consider that you have a reasonable prospect of success, it would, I think, be infinitely better for many reasons for you to remain on the defensive behind the Tugela until the operations I am about to undertake have produced the effect which I hope for." On the same day, General White telegraphed: "The Boers can come here (Ladysmith) from Potgieter's in ninety minutes; in this lies their great strength; you must not let them leave you and throw their strength on me."

The following was my appreciation of the situation at the moment:—

It appeared to me that Lord Roberts intended to abandon the original design of advancing on Bloemfontein by Bethulie, and to adopt my plan of an advance through Jacobsdaal. Thereby, the relief of Kimberley would be automatically accomplished; for I was satisfied that Cronje would never stand his ground at Spytfontein when once Jacobsdaal was occupied by our forces. In this case the larger the number of the enemy that could be retained about Ladysmith and Colenso, the greater the chances of Lord Roberts' success; and it was reasonable to suppose that, as long as my forces remained upon the Tugela, even in the state of quiescence suggested by Lord Roberts, the enemy would not withdraw a man from that quarter. I quite appreciated the soundness of Lord Roberts' policy herein, and I fully recognised that, for the ultimate purposes of the war, my operations were of less importance than his, and should certainly be subordinate to them.

But, on the other hand, I could not accept Lord Roberts' calculation of time, for I reckoned the 7th of March to be the earliest day on which he could possibly reach Bloemfontein. Nor could I believe that his arrival at Bloemfontein would produce the slightest effect upon the Transvaal army, which was waiting hungrily for the fall of Ladysmith, though it might draw away some of their comrades of the Free State. I felt perfectly confident in my own mind that the only chance for the salvation of Ladysmith lay in my "pegging away" (as I put it), until I should either wear the enemy out, or bring on an engagement in which I could defeat them. At the same time, it was difficult for me, after two failures, to press such views upon Lord Roberts. He knew nothing of the country; he evidently did not understand the nature of the difficulties by which I was beset; and, assuming the correctness of his theory as to the reaction of his operations upon the enemy in Natal, he might reasonably think that further offensive movements on my part would but waste, to no purpose, the lives of my men.

None the less, I considered it my duty to say what I thought. I, therefore, on the 28th of January, replied, No. 178, to Lord Roberts, gave particulars of my next attempt, and added: "Delay is objectionable; I feel fairly confident of success this time; one can never safely attempt to prophesy, but, so far as my exertions can, humanly speaking, conduce to the desired end, I think I can promise you that I shall in no case compromise my force." I thought, after much consideration, that it was but right and fair to make the above promise, though I felt from the first how it handicapped me.

At this time Lord Roberts telegraphed, on behalf of the War Office, asking whether there was any position in Natal that could be made virtually impregnable by a force of 10,000 men, and suggesting that the line of the Tugela might be such a position. In reply, No. 180, I said that 16,000 men would be wanted, besides a strong force of artillery, but that I could not advocate the policy indicated by the question. On the 31st January, No. 182, I informed Lord Roberts that, owing to difficulties of weather, I had postponed my attack. He replied, No. 49 C, that my postponement suited him, as he himself was delayed, and the longer the enemy was kept in Natal the less difficult his task would be. This showed me that Lord Roberts counted

on my retaining the enemy in Natal during his advance.

On the 4th February, I received from Lord Roberts, by special messenger, the letter dated 27th January, which he referred to in his evidence. After complaining of his difficulties with transport, he said: "You will now know from my telegram of to-day that if you are not confident of forcing your way to Ladysmith, it would, in my opinion, be better you should abandon the attempt until I am in the Orange Free State." I replied on the same day, discussing my own difficulties with transport, but saying that they were surmountable. I added: "Ladysmith is in a bad way; White keeps a stiff upper lip, but some of those under him are despondent; he calculates that he has now 7,000 effectives; his men are dying about eight to ten per day, and when he last gave me a statement he had 2,400 in hospital; they are eating their horses, and have very little else. He expects to be attacked in force this week, and, though he affects to be confident, I doubt if he really is. He has begged me to keep the enemy off him as much as I can, and I can only do this by pegging away. I am going to have a try and get through the mountains here to-morrow. The men are keen, and most of the officers, when I was explaining my plans last night, seemed to think that we ought to succeed. I hope we may. If I get through I get on to the plain; it is about four miles broad and ten miles long; the enemy will be in possession of the hills on each side, and holding a strong position at the end, and I shall have great difficulty about water. Such is the position. I do not think a move into the Free State will much affect our position here. So far as I can make out, the Transvaalers will not go into the Free State, and they are our main opponents. You ask me how you can help me. The only help you could give me would be another Division, and that I know you cannot spare." I now resume the narrative of my operations.

EVENTS OF 6TH TO 8TH FEBRUARY.

Every attempt which I had made to force the Boers' positions during my operations for the relief of Ladysmith had been confronted by one great and commanding difficulty. We could never be sure that, after taking from the enemy the position immediately before us, we should find there a secondary artillery-position to aid us in forcing the enemy's second line of defence, which we knew, though we could not see it, must lie behind. The position west of Spion Kop would have been very easy of capture could we, after taking the crest lines of the hills, have found further artillery positions. This we could not do, and our infantry were consequently contained in the positions which they had first captured.

The position which I now decided to attack offered a hill, Vaal Krantz, which (so far as was ascertainable by reconnaissance) seemed likely, when captured, to afford a most eligible secondary artillery position. I had ascended a hill (Swart Kop) immediately opposite to it on the south side of the Tugela, and had been assured by an English farmer (Mr. Harding), who passed under Vaal Krantz every time he went into Ladysmith, that I should find that hill to be an exact duplicate of Swart Kop.

Before attacking Vaal Krantz the two best artillery officers with me had drawn up a scheme for the placing of our guns, with a particular eye to the command of those positions from which the enemy might bring enfilade or raking fire to bear upon us. But in a mountainous country an advance often discloses positions which more distant reconnaissance could not possibly have appreciated. Thus, during the fighting at Vaal Krantz the enemy, contrary to our expectation, was able to enfilade us with one gun so placed as to be defiladed from our fire and hidden from our sight. Vaal Krantz was attacked and carried on the 5th February. That evening I made preparations for further advance and for occupying the hill with artillery. The position itself had been captured by General Lyttelton's Brigade, and, in consultation with him, I learned that I had been deceived as to the configuration of Vaal Krantz, and that, though I had been able without much difficulty to get guns on to its counterpart, Swart Kop, on the south side of the river, it would be impossible to get guns on to Vaal Krantz. To make a further advance I should, therefore, have had to use my infantry alone without the support of the artillery.

Having regard to my promise that I would not compromise my force, I thought it my duty to consult Lord Roberts, and early on the 6th I sent the following

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telegram:—"After fighting all day yesterday, though with but small loss, I have pierced the enemy's line, and hold a hill which divides their position, and will, if I can advance, give me access to the Ladysmith plain, when I should be 10 miles from White, with but one place for an enemy to stand between us. But to get my artillery and supplies on to the plain, I must drive back the enemy either on my right or on my left. It is an operation which will cost from 2,000 to 3,000 men, and I am not confident, though hopeful, I can do it. The question is how would such a loss affect your plans, and do you think the chance of the relief of Ladysmith worth the risk? It is the only possible way to relieve White; if I give up this chance I know no other."

Lord Roberts replied, C 73, that Ladysmith must be relieved at any cost. "Tell your troops," he said, "that the honour of the Empire is in their hands, and that I have no possible doubt of their being successful." I confess that I was puzzled by this telegram. In all his communications to me Lord Roberts had, from the first, advocated the *status quo* as a general principle. Only eight days before the date of this telegram he had telegraphed that, unless I saw a reasonable prospect of success, he thought it better for me to remain on the defensive until the effect of his advance should have been seen. Only seven days before he had shown me that he had counted upon me to retain the enemy's force in Natal. Only on the previous day I had received from him a letter saying that if I were not confident of forcing my way to Ladysmith it would be better for me to abandon the attempt until he was in the Orange Free State. I was, therefore, at a loss to account for this sudden exhortation to sacrifice two or three thousand men in a venture wherein, as I had told him, I was not confident of success.

On the 6th I proceeded with my preparations for attack, but about the middle of the day I learned from General Hildyard (who had relieved General Lyttelton) that, owing to the great difficulties of the ground, he also was doubtful of success. The enemy were able to place guns in positions where my fire could not molest them, and from whence they could render useless any pontoon bridges that I might lay for facilitating my advance. In these circumstances I assembled all my Generals in Council of War, placed the facts of the case and Lord Roberts' telegram before them, and asked them whether they advocated persistence in an attack from our present position. With one exception, they advised a withdrawal, Sir Charles Warren recommending withdrawal only on the condition that I knew of some other point where I could attack. I answered that I thought we should stand a better chance now if we attacked Hlangwane and tried to cross the Tugela from that position, afterwards attacking Bulwana, and that I believed this to be preferable to any attack from our present position. I added that in December I had carefully studied that line of advance, that it would involve fighting in bush and in very difficult ground, but that the men had advanced so extraordinarily in their training for war, that I now judged it safe to entrust them with the enterprise. The Council, one and all, expressed themselves as ignorant of the line of approach which I indicated, but as perfectly satisfied to trust my opinion; and they thought that, so long as we should fight somewhere, there was hardly a place which might not offer better promise of success than that wherein we now found ourselves engaged.

On the 7th February I sent the following telegram, No. 189, to the Secretary of State and to Lord Roberts: "I found the Boer positions on my right and left so superior to mine, and I was so outclassed by their big guns, which I could not silence, that I have decided that it would be useless waste of life to try and force a passage which, when forced, would not leave me a free road to Ladysmith. I propose to try by a forced march to get back east of Colenso, and to seize the Boer position south of the Tugela River, whence I mean to make a desperate effort to take Bulwana Hill, the garrison of which has been much weakened, at least so my information says. My view is that I have a forlorn hope chance at both places, but if I get through here I am not at Ladysmith by a long way, while if I get through there I relieve the place."

NECESSITY FOR CONTINUING ACTIVE OPERATIONS.— CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD ROBERTS.

On the 9th I reached Chieveley. I then sent to Lord Roberts the following telegram, No. 193: "The operations of the past three weeks have borne in upon me the fact that I had seriously miscalculated the

retentive power of the Ladysmith garrison. I now find the enemy practically neglect that, and turn their whole force upon me; I am not, consequently, strong enough to relieve Ladysmith. If you can send me reinforcements, and if White can hold out till they arrive, I think it might be done; but with a single column I believe it to be almost an impossibility. I shall continue attacking, as it keeps the enemy off Ladysmith, but I think the prospects of success are very small." I followed this on the same day by No. 195, also to Lord Roberts: "It is right that you should know that in my opinion the fate of Ladysmith is only a question of days, unless I am very considerably reinforced. Wherever I go the enemy can anticipate me in superior force. I turned yesterday from Vaal Krantz and am moving towards Colenso. The enemy have left Vaal Krantz, and are now at Colenso; they do in six hours and seven miles what takes me three days and twenty-six miles. When I said I would try and save Ladysmith, the Fifth Division had arrived at the Cape, and the Sixth and Seventh were likely shortly to be at my disposal; but two days after you were appointed, and directed that all troops arriving after that date were to be kept at the Cape."

"I understand from you that you expect to occupy Bloemfontein by the end of February, and so relieve the pressure on Ladysmith. I hope the forecast will prove correct, but I cannot help feeling that to leave Ladysmith as it is for such a chance is a great risk, and it is right I should say so."

"As for myself, I am doing all I can, and certainly have reason to think that I retain the confidence of this force, who know my difficulties, but if it is thought anyone else can do better I would far rather be sacrificed than run the risk of losing Ladysmith."

Lord Roberts, on the 10th, in his No. 141, replied to my Nos. 193 and 195. He summarised the telegrams which had passed between us, and drew his conclusion as follows:—"It will be seen that from date of my assuming chief command until yesterday I have had no reason to suppose that you considered reinforcements necessary for the relief of Ladysmith. To send you large reinforcements now would entail abandonment of plan of operations." He then went on to say:—"I must therefore request that, while maintaining bold front, you will act strictly on the defensive until I have time to see whether operations I am undertaking will produce effect I hope for. The repeated loss of men on Tugela River without satisfactory results is that which our small Army cannot afford."

On the 12th February I replied in my No. 198. I said that but for the omission of his answer of the 16th of January to my telegram on the 15th (which latter he had quoted), his resumé was quite correct. I continued thus:—"Pray do not think I wish to lay my troubles on you. I quite admit that I miscalculated the retentive power of Sir George White's force. I thought he would hold at least 10,000 off me. I doubt if he keeps 2,000, and I underrated the difficulties of the country. I don't know your plan or where your troops are, and the last thing I wish to do is to involve your plans in confusion. I merely state the fact that I think Ladysmith is in danger, and that I find myself too weak to relieve it. But as you value the safety of Ladysmith, do not tell me to remain on the defensive. To do that means to leave the whole Boer force free to attack Ladysmith. Sir George White has repeatedly telegraphed: 'I trust to you preventing them throwing their strength on me.' And again: 'The closer to Ladysmith you can establish yourself, the better chance we shall have.' I feel sure this is the right policy, and I hope you will not say I am to rest supine and leave Ladysmith alone. During the late operations I am confident the Boer force has been reduced by two men to every one I have lost, and for three weeks our operations have practically caused the cessation of the bombardment of Ladysmith. As I have said, I will do all I can, and you may rely that I will not compromise my force."

This telegram crossed one of the 11th, No. 93, from Lord Roberts, in which he said:—"I should like to have the view of your second in command on this question, which is one of such urgent importance to our position in South Africa that it is very necessary I should know whether Sir Charles Warren shares your views. Show him all your and my telegrams on this subject, also White's telegram of 28th January to me, in which he stated he could hold out until the middle of March. I wish, also, to know why, as stated in your telegram No. 169 of 25th January, you considered it necessary to take command of operations which resulted in withdrawal from Spion Kop."

Sir Charles Warren being absent, I replied at once, No. 199, to the second issue raised in this message:—"Warren comes in to-morrow, and shall send you his opinion after having read all the telegrams. My report of operations west of Spion Kop was posted to you 30th January, and should reach you before this, so I will only say that I was not in command of the operations which resulted in withdrawal from Spion Kop. During these operations I had gradually, at Warren's request, reinforced him until he practically had with him my entire force, except the, as I thought, too weak garrison of Spearman's. After he reported the abandonment of Spion Kop I decided that we had lost our chance, and took command. His whole division was there; one of his brigades had no commander, and I thought, in the circumstances, his presence with his division was essential."

Warren came in that evening. I gave him all the telegrams, including my No. 199, and he wrote a long telegram, which I sent to Lord Roberts in my No. 200. One sentence of the telegram summarises it. Warren said, addressing me: "The matter involves an immense number of considerations and innumerable details, on which I may or may not share your views; but on the main and important subjects I think that my views closely coincide with yours."

MOVEMENT TO HUSSAR HILL.—EVENTS OF 14TH TO 28TH FEBRUARY.

On the 14th I moved to Hussar Hill, and commenced the occupation of positions for attack on Cingolo, Monte Christo and Hlangwane Mountains. During the 13th and 15th Sir George White reported continual and increasing concentrations of the enemy in front of me. On the 15th Lord Roberts replied, No. 156, to my telegrams, Nos. 199 and 200, that he had no wish that I should adhere to a passive defence, and left it to me to do whatever I thought best, relying on my assurance that I would not compromise my force.

On the 12th February Lord Roberts informed me that he had entered the Orange Free State with a large force.

On the same day I reconnoitred the approaches to Hlangwane. I found, as I thought, not more than 1,500 men, with two or three guns in the position, but the ground was fearfully rugged, covered for the most part with dense bush, and would evidently be very difficult to approach.

On the 13th the day was so intensely hot that I did not allow the infantry to move.

On the 14th we occupied Hussar Hill, and on the 15th I threw my right forward to turn the enemy's left. But the heat was so great and so trying to the men in the waterless bush that I halted the troops when the movement was about half completed, and ordered them to bivouac where they stood.

The 16th being again a blazing hot day, we did not leave our positions. Intelligence came that Lord Roberts had occupied Jacobsdaal and that French had entered Kimberley. Sir George White also reported (70 P) that the enemy had begun to retire northward with wagons, and that not fewer than 2,000 men were moving towards Cundycleugh, having first set fire to several farms in Dewdrop Valley. This was great news, and I felt certain that we were going to be successful. On the same day (No. 71) he reported: "I think another attack here quite possible. Have strengthened defences, and will try to give good account of ourselves; but men are on very short allowance, and are consequently very weak. We are eating our horses. We have no grain left for animals, and grass is very scarce."

On the 17th I occupied Cingolo Hill, and threw my mounted men well to the right, sweeping the country between the Blaauwkrantz and Tugela Rivers. On the 17th I reported to Lord Roberts (No. 205) that I had been engaged all this week in trying to force my way nearer to Ladysmith, that my losses were very small, but that I expected a heavier engagement on the morrow.

On the 18th I assaulted and took Monte Christo and manœuvred the enemy out of the Hlangwane position.

On the 19th Lord Roberts informed me (No. 170) that the moment was favourable for an attempt to relieve White, as Cronjé was almost surrounded by his troops. He added some information as to the withdrawal of Lucas Meyer, with 3,000 men, from Ladysmith to help Cronjé. This did not accord with my own intelligence. On this day we cleared the Boers from the south bank of the Tugela, and I advanced my left from Chieveley

to Colenso. General White reported more wagons trekking north.

On the 20th I ascended Monte Christo, and made careful reconnaissance for a route for my further advance. It was clear that I must occupy Colenso, and, attacking from there, take a hill on the north bank of the Tugela between Onderbrook and Langewacht Spruits before any further advance in the direction of Bulwana Hill would be possible. It also appeared to me that certainly one-half, if not the whole, of the enemy's main fortified position on the north side of the Tugela was vulnerable only to attack from the south-west, or, in other words, from Colenso; for the nature of the ground about the bank of the river forbade any attempt to force its passage from the south.

During the night of the 20th-21st the whole of the immense Boer laagers between us and Ladysmith, as well as those visible from Monte Christo to the north of Ladysmith, were broken up and removed.

On the 21st I threw a bridge across the Tugela west of Hlangwane, and occupied the position which I had intended to have taken on the 15th December, if I had delivered my attack on that day. I was pleased to find that my reconnaissance made at that time proved to be accurate. Though the Boers had guns on the hills all round us, we were perfectly safe in that position, and I was able to establish there a supply dépôt and hospital. I also ordered a force which I had stationed at Greytown to advance by Tugela Drift (which is the first practicable road that crosses the Tugela east of Colenso) upon Helpmakaar.

On this day Lord Roberts informed me that "lots of special trains" were running from Natal with strong reinforcements to offer determined opposition to his advance. This information was in part confirmed on this same day by intelligence of my own (which I at once reported to Lord Roberts, No. 206) to the effect that the Bethlehem, Heilbron, and Senekal commandoes had returned by train from Spion Kop to the Orange Free State in the previous week. These were the men who had borne the brunt of the fighting at Spion Kop, and I had reason to believe that they had no eagerness for more. When I moved from Spearman's I had left a considerable force at Springfield, partly to cover my left from any possible raid by way of Hungerspoort, but chiefly to retain as many Boers as possible in the Spion Kop and Brakfontein position. I was now able to withdraw my detachments from Springfield, but I did not lack employment for them, for my information from Sir George White did not agree with that of Lord Roberts. On the same day he (Sir George White) reported first (73 P) that reinforcements for the enemy had been seen disembarking at Modder River Station, and that others had been observed moving south by way of Bulwana; and secondly (74 P), "We can detect no sign of enemy retreating; all indications point the other way."

On the 22nd I attacked and took the hills between Onderbrook and Langewacht Spruits, but the high mountains on my immediate left front and the fire from thence prevented the occupation from being so complete as I had hoped. We maintained, however, the positions that we had captured, though the enemy were so close to our defences that we could only supply or relieve our firing line during the night. On this day, Sir George White reported, No. 75, "All Orange Free State Boers gone; South African Republic Boers collected two miles west of Pieters." This exactly coincided with my information.

On the 23rd I pushed a brigade forward to seize the position east of Langewacht Spruit. The advance was very difficult. The troops had to creep up along the railway, which in two places was swept by the fire of Boer pom-poms invisible to us; but between their courage and a liberal use of sandbags they managed to get along. Their advance was, however, very slow, and it was late before even two battalions of the five that I intended to employ were concentrated in the position from whence the assault was to be made. Not liking to lose the day, the General in command directed these two battalions to assault the position. They failed to take the whole of it, but they took and held enough ground to render possible an attempt to cross the Tugela to the east. General White reported, No. 76: "I know you are beating the enemy. Stick to them. I carried out a small operation this morning, but my men are so weak from insufficient and inferior food that they are unfit for the field; horses more so." Bethune, who commanded the force at Greytown, reported that he had begun his advance from Tugela Drift on the 22nd. Late on this day

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General White reported movements of the enemy towards Bulwana, towards Onderbrook, towards Potgieter's, and of 1,500 men east towards Helpmakaar.

After nightfall the enemy vigorously attacked all our positions. There was heavy firing, with some bayonet fighting, all the night, and much firing the following day (24th), but in the evening we held everything that we had won, and had, perhaps, gained something in addition. I reconnoitred the Tugela carefully from Colenso to Manxa Nest, selected a point for another crossing, commenced the formation of a road to reach it, chose gun-positions for all the artillery for the main assault, and began the movement of troops necessary to that end. The river was high, and having only one pontoon bridge, I was obliged to withdraw from Colenso the troops and guns required before transferring the bridge to its new position.

On the 25th, being Sunday, at the instance of the enemy an armistice till sunset was agreed upon, in order to collect the dead and wounded of the last two days' fighting, who had been lying out between the lines. We had just heard that Cronje was surrounded, and I caused this news to be communicated as publicly and as often as possible to all the Boers with whom we conversed. As one man they absolutely refused to credit the possibility of Cronje's surrender, retorting that Cronje had captured hundreds of wagons containing the whole of our supplies, that Lord Roberts had ordered a retirement, and that he would probably retire. We refused to believe their story as absolutely as they to believe ours. During the day the road to the bridge was made, and movements of troops towards our right flank steadily continued. The enemy, having no particular reason for keeping quiet, stretched their legs after the irksome enforced concealment of the last six days. Hundreds of Boers appeared like magic, as it were, from the ground. This was of immense advantage to us, since we were able to locate every sangar and entrenchment that bore upon the line of our intended attack. These were all noted and named, and their exact range from our different gun positions was calculated.

I received a telegram from Lord Roberts, No. 175, saying that as soon as I relieved Ladysmith he hoped I would be able to send him a Division of Infantry; one would afford him material assistance. In reply, No. 210, I said, "I will send every man I can spare as soon as I can get to Ladysmith. I think I shall get there, but the enemy has called up his outlying detachments to replace those sent to the Orange Free State, and is making stubborn resistance, while the country is extraordinarily difficult. We have been fighting continuously for 72 hours, have been repulsed in one attack, and have repulsed three made on us. To-day I am making a new road to get our artillery forward, and if I succeed we shall be in a distinctly more favourable position. The strain on the troops is very great, but they are equal to everything, and I think they feel as I do, that though it is hard work we ought to succeed this time."

On the night of the 26th-27th the pontoon bridge between Hlangwane and Colenso was taken up and relaid between the cataract. During the 26th a slow fire was kept up all day, in which the gunners obtained the exact ranges to the different sangars from their positions. All gun positions were connected by telegraph and signallers.

On the 27th we assaulted the Boer position with complete success. From my station on the south of the river I sent an order to General Lyttelton, who commanded the left of my line on the other side, to advance the moment that the assault was successful. Unfortunately, the order miscarried, and he maintained his position, keeping up a tremendous fire on the retreating enemy as they crossed his front. It was late in the afternoon before I could attempt to push forward our cavalry and artillery; and the moment that I crossed the river to direct their advance I found that the fire proceeding from our left was so severe that it was impossible for them to move through it. The rearguard of the retreating enemy was also firing heavily. The troops bivouacked in the positions which they had won.

At daylight on the 28th we began to improve the road, and the cavalry, and horse, and field artillery commenced their passage of the river. The operation was not a rapid one, the north bank being so steep that it required two or three teams and a hundred men on the drag-ropes to get the guns and wagons up. By eleven o'clock the cavalry were advancing. In the early morning I received the following message from Sir George White (No. 78):—"I am now issuing only

half pound of breadstuff daily; it is a very inferior meal. At this rate I can hold out till 1st April, not longer. Report to Roberts if you think necessary. I have 21,000 mouths to feed, counting children half rations." I replied at once: "I have 74 wagons of supplies for you, the arrival of which I can promise very shortly." And immediately afterwards I telegraphed, "I beat the enemy thoroughly yesterday, and am sending my cavalry as fast as my bad road will admit of, to ascertain where they have gone to. I believe the enemy to be in full retreat." On the same day General White reported (No. 79):—"Following Boer movements observed between dawn and noon to-day:—From direction of Pieters to behind Bulwana 5 guns and 20 wagons, 300 men. From Onderbrook to Roopepoort and on the north-west, 5 guns, 120 wagons, 500 men."

I had no doubt from what I saw, and from General White's information, that the enemy were in full retreat, and retreating Boers are very difficult to catch, especially when they have 24 hours' start of you. I divided my mounted men into two bodies, the Irregulars to go north and west, the Regulars to go north and east; and with the Regulars I sent the only horse artillery guns that I had. I thought it was possible they might come up about Modder River with such of the enemy's guns as had been left in action to the last, and seeing that all the laagers had been moved clear away on the 20th, I considered that if they failed to catch the enemy at Acton Homes, on the Cundycleugh Road, or at Modder River, pursuit would be useless. Parthian tactics are those which long experience in native wars has made almost a second nature to the Boers. All that I know worth knowing about rearguards I learned from the Boers whom I commanded in 1879; and I was, and am still, deeply impressed with the belief that unless there is some paramount object to be gained, an attempt to force a Boer rearguard is merely a waste of men. Moreover, in the face of White's telegram, the reprovisioning of Ladysmith became a matter of supreme importance. The river was high. The drifts were impassable. I had only one bridge, a pontoon-bridge, leaky, crazy, and worn out. The roads were execrable. Every gun and every vehicle, other than a provision-wagon, brought over that bridge meant nearly three-quarters of an hour's delay in the reprovisioning of Ladysmith. The left division of the cavalry reached Ladysmith during the night, and reported that the whole of my left front was clear of the enemy. The right division crossed the Klip River, and were checked under the south-east corner of Bulwana by a very strongly posted rearguard of the enemy, who disclosed three guns and considerable rifle power. The country was covered with bush and much intersected with dongas. This rearguard stopped Burn Murdoch, who commanded the cavalry on the right; but watching the action, I felt certain that the Boers would retire at dark. I was satisfied, too, that if I supported him with infantry I should lose many men and gain nothing, because any pursuit to be effective ought to have been by the west and not by the east side of Bulwana. About midday General Lyttelton's Division came into line from the Colenso position.

OCCUPATION OF LADYSMITH.

On the 1st March I intended to advance to attack Bulwana; but some of Burn-Murdoch's scouts, who had got up the mountain in the night, reported at daybreak that it was evacuated, and that no enemy was visible on our right. Heavy rain had fallen in the night. I ordered an advance on Nelthorpe, where was the drift over the Klip River, though at the time it was impassable. Colonel Rawlinson and a correspondent had ridden into our camp from Ladysmith during the night and I at once rode back with them into that town. On meeting General White I learnt that he had sent a force out to the Newcastle Road, where he said there was a large Boer laager and Boers in force. Calling up Major Williams, 13th Hussars, whose squadron formed the left of the right pursuing brigade, I told him to proceed at once with it to the place where General White's troops were said to be in action, to get round and beyond them if possible, and to send to me in Ladysmith as soon as possible a report as to whether any enemy worth pursuing were within reach or in sight. Before I left Ladysmith that afternoon I received a report from Lord Dundonald that he was pressing forward to Van Reenen's Pass with no enemy in front of him. He sent in two ambulances which he had taken beyond Dewdrop. I received reports also from Major Williams that there was no one but a very small rearguard among

the mills on the Cundycleugh Road in front, and from General Burn-Murdoch that all was clear to Modder River. I then returned to Nelthorpe.

Passing through Ladysmith, on my way I met Colonel Stoneman, and asked him for how much longer he could really have kept the garrison. He replied: "The garrison, sir, could have lived for three weeks longer, but the natives and sick in hospital would have been starved to death a fortnight earlier." On my return to my camp I was glad to be able to telegraph to England that 73 wagons, the first nine of which contained hospital supplies, were then entering Ladysmith.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD ROBERTS AS TO FUTURE POLICY.

Early on the 2nd March I ascended Bulwana Hill. It was an extraordinary good day for seeing. Van Reenen's Pass was perfectly clear with the exception of some wagons at the extreme top, and there was not a soul to be seen in the direction of Sunday River on the enemy's line of retreat to Dundee and Newcastle. I moved my camp that evening to Ladysmith, and on the morning of the 3rd sent the following telegram (No. 214) to Lord Roberts:—"I find that the defeat of the Boers is more complete than I had dared to anticipate. This whole district is completely clear of them, and except at the top of Van Reenen's Pass, where several wagons are visible, I can find no trace of them. Their last train left Modder Spruit about one o'clock yesterday (Note.—This telegram was written on the 2nd), and they then blew up the bridge. They packed their wagons six days ago, and moved them north of Ladysmith, so I had no chance of intercepting them, but they have left vast quantities of ammunition of all sorts, entrenching tools, camp and individual necessities. They have got away all their guns but two. My troops want a week's rest, boots and clothes. The Ladysmith garrison wants a fortnight's food and exercise. I do not think there is any chance of the enemy making a stand this side of Laing's Nek. Most authorities here consider that it will be impossible for the enemy to collect more than one-half of the force that is now dispersed from here. Will you advise me what course you wish pursued? My own view would be that we should send three brigades to occupy Northern Natal, to restore order and repair the railway, and with two divisions attack the three passes, Tintwa, Van Reenen's, and Bezeidenhout, and pass through one of them the division you wish sent to your side; or, in the alternative of your not wanting a division, that the force here should reoccupy Northern Natal and the Wakkerstroom-Vryheid district of the Transvaal. The latter is the alternative I incline to as likely to be most objectionable to the enemy."

Lord Roberts replied on the same day (No. 315): "I do not think it would be wise now to embark on extensive operations in Natal, which is evidently extremely suitable for the enemy's tactics and very difficult for our troops. To force Passes of Drakensberg would be undoubtedly a very hazardous operation, and would probably enable Boers with small force to hold up very much larger number of our men for some considerable time. Force in Natal three months ago consisted of four divisions of infantry and two brigades of cavalry. It is probably now not of greater strength than three divisions infantry and one brigade cavalry, besides local mounted troops. Two of these divisions with brigade of cavalry should, I imagine, suffice for protection of such portion of Natal as would insure safety of railway towards Van Reenen's Pass, on the understanding that the Natal Field Force is to act strictly on the defensive until such time as operations of this column have caused enemy to withdraw altogether from or considerably reduce their numbers in Drakensberg Passes. Remaining division should be despatched at once to East London—this portion of Cape Colony has from the first been left dangerously weak. It is most desirable that it should be strengthened sufficiently to drive enemy beyond Orange River, for until this is done and railway communication opened to the position I propose to take up on the line a little to south of Bloemfontein, my force will be in a somewhat risky situation, cut off from its base, and with main Boer army collected in its immediate front. Be good enough therefore to despatch one of your divisions with least possible delay to East London. I should like it to be accompanied by its brigade of artillery if this will leave you with sufficient proportion of guns, but if you consider you cannot spare any guns, you can keep brigade of artillery. Any mounted troops you can send will be

most acceptable. There are very few with Gatacre at present."

On the 3rd March my troops moved through Ladysmith, and took up positions beyond, the Ladysmith garrison lining the streets. I was shocked to see how attenuated the men were, and I perceived that they were very much weaker than I had been led to expect. I ordered a medical inspection. The past fortnight's fighting and the relief of Ladysmith had added to my hospital population some 3,500 sick and wounded. Fortunately we had prepared hospital ships, and to a considerable extent evacuated our hospitals in anticipation, but the strain was very great: for well as the Intombi Hospital had been kept it was evident that immediate removal from that foul ground was the only hope of life for most of its starved and fever-stricken inhabitants.

On the 4th I was able to send the following report to Lord Roberts (No. 0436): "All the enemy who left by Van Reenen's Pass have now crossed into the Free State, principally men of the Harrismith and Kroonstad commandoes, and some of the Rustenburg one. These last had lost their way. Prinsloo is in command on the Berg (Drakensberg), and some at any rate of the passes have been put into a state of defence. My scouts are on the Berg, and the whole of Natal between Ladysmith and the Orange Free State boundary at Van Reenen's, and to the south of that line, is reported clear of the enemy. My scouts that have gone towards Dundee and Helpmakaar have not yet reported. None of the Transvaalers are now south of the Biggarsberg. Their commanders are scattered and mixed, and the men have told natives that as all their commanders and field cornets have galloped off, they do not know where they are going. All that are left are a few ambulances with sick and wounded, from which the mules have been taken to draw baggage wagons. One commando is on its way to Cundycleugh, and small parties of the enemy are reported to have retreated by all the Drakensberg passes. We cannot hear of any formed body anywhere, and it is not anticipated they will hold any position on the Biggarsberg."

On the 5th March (No. 217) I acknowledged Lord Roberts' telegram (315), saying: "I note your wishes. I will send at once the Fifth Division and 14th Hussars, as both units have detachments at the Cape. I wish to keep the artillery and Royal Engineers of the division. Of the Ladysmith force the infantry will not be fit for some time; their cavalry and infantry will require, I think, six weeks—they say three months—before they can move." I continued, "The Boers are in full retreat, and it is highly desirable to reoccupy Dundee, and if possible Newcastle, and repair the line. I am now through the mountains, and can get round the Biggarsberg through a fairly open country. I hold Wessel's Nek and Acton Homes, and expect to hear to-day my scouts have occupied the Pass of Glencoe. I propose to move forward as soon as I have got boots for the men to reoccupy Dundee. This is the best defensive measure I can take."

Lord Roberts replied on the 6th (No. 349) directing me to send the Fifth Division and 14th Hussars to East London. As the Boer force seemed to be broken up he approved of my occupying Dundee, and, if possible, Newcastle, but forbade any attempt on the Drakensberg.

On the 7th we heard that Joubert had come in person and stopped the flight of the Transvaalers. It was really Kruger. I telegraphed on that day (No. 219) to Lord Roberts: "Position now definitely ascertained. Large commando under Prinsloo at top of Van Reenen's Pass entrenching and mounting guns on the line One Tree the Tintwa, other passes not yet defended. Joubert turned retreating Transvaalers back from Ingagane. Now at least four commandoes, probably 7,000 in all, entrenching and mounting guns; small commando on Hill—Hlatikulu—Glencoe; Dundee and Helpmakaar are also occupied. My cavalry are at Besters, on Sunday River, and at Meran, and 500 men are advancing from Greytown on Pomeroy. In my opinion Drakensberg Passes easier to attack than Biggarsberg. To take Harrismith would help my operations in the west, and would probably cause enemy to evacuate Biggarsberg. I shall not though be able to attack either Berg, for three weeks, till Ladysmith garrison are fit for the field."

By the 9th I began to feel the pressure of the returning enemy, and I telegraphed to Lord Roberts, whose troops had by this time occupied Burgersdorp, that I thought the Fifth Division would be of more value to him if left with me than if sent to East London. I said: "I fear that if I remain sedentary the Boers will commence raiding, and I think I ought to repair the line to Elandslaagte, and strike at Dundee through Stith. The

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

-17 Feb. 1903.

would turn enemy's position, and probably save the railway line to Newcastle."

On the 10th Lord Roberts (No. 403) authorised me to delay the departure of the Fifth Division, adding, "There is no objection to active operation in Natal, but no attempt should be made to force the Drakensberg until I am able to act on this side of the passes." He added on the 11th (No. 421) that the Boer forces in Natal were evidently stronger than I thought after the relief of Ladysmith, and that he had heard that Kruger and Joubert were still hopeful of obtaining a seaport (?) in that direction. I at once recalled the Fifth Division, some of whom were already on board ship. On the 12th Lord Roberts (No. 432) again warned me against any operations in the Drakensberg, adding that it was doubtful whether he could leave Bloemfontein for three weeks or a month.

On the 13th I telegraphed (No. 221) to Lord Roberts that I intended to complete the railway to Elandslaagte and to force the enemy to evacuate Helpmakaar and the Glencoe defile, my great object being to drive the enemy back from the railway, to which they were doing immense damage. I told him that he might rely on me that no operations of mine should risk danger to Southern Natal.

On the 19th March (No. 223) I reported that the enemy in front of me had considerably increased, that the Ladysmith garrison were still unfit for the field, and that I regretted the loss of the 14th Hussars, which on the 17th had again been ordered away to Cape Colony.

On the 23rd March, Lord Roberts (No. 613) telegraphed that he did not think I had more than from 8,000 to 10,000 Boers in front of me, as Joubert was collecting all the forces that he could near Kroonstad to check his advance, that he had great difficulties, and was short of supplies, remounts, and clothing. He added, "I shall be surprised if the passes are not practically clear, as we are near Kroonstad."

On the 24th I replied (No. 226), "Could I be of any use to help you with supply? In five days from the start I would get up Oliver's Hoek, in four days more I should have turned Van Reenen's, and if my information as to the state of the railway is correct, in eight days more it should be opened to Harrismith, say, 17 days, or perhaps three weeks from the start. When the line is opened I ought to be able to put up daily 400 tons, say, two days supply for 70,000 men, and 10,000 into Harrismith." I added that I thought 14,000 Transvaalers had been in my front, but there were indications that they were thinking of moving.

On the 24th March Lord Roberts asked me if I had sufficient transport to move two divisions of infantry, with a proportion of artillery, and 1,000 cavalry, into the Free State, if called upon. I replied on the 25th (No. 227), saying that before answering as to "sufficient transport" I must ask him how many days' supply I should have to take with me, in what direction I was to move, and whether I was to continue to supply myself from Natal, or could draw from some advanced post in the Orange Free State.

A telegram (No. 654) from Lord Roberts crossed my No. 227, and in reply to my No. 226 approved my proposition of opening a supply dépôt at Harrismith. In reply (No. 229) I said that I would try what I could do, but that I could not start for a week, being compelled to wait for remounts, because Warren, who was to hold Natal, was dissatisfied, and perhaps rightly, with the number of mounted men that I proposed to leave with him. The crux of the situation at this moment was an uncertainty as to the actual date on which the Volunteers and Irregulars, who had gone south to refit, would rejoin me.

This telegram again crossed a message from Lord Roberts (No. 669). He said that any force coming from Natal would have to make its own arrangements for its supplies as far as Kroonstad should it go west, or to the Vaal River if it went north. He added that looking to the difficulty of supplies, I was to send only one division over the passes, since Natal must be occupied, and the lines of railway leading to the Transvaal repaired and guarded. I replied on the 27th (No. 230), showing why I thought his proposal was impracticable. At that moment Lord Roberts could hardly hold his own at any distance outside Bloemfontein, and I thought that it would be a most hazardous operation for me to march a single division, insufficiently equipped with mounted men, and encumbered with a large supply train, for 100 miles through the enemy's country; while to follow it with a supply column would be certainly impossible. In reply (No. 692) Lord Roberts withdrew his proposition, being apparently under the impression that it was through my fault that he had made it. I regret that

my suggestions herein should have been misunderstood. I had at the moment no idea of Lord Robert's intentions; but I took it for granted that his first care would be to clear his flanks and communications. To assist him in this I offered to provision Harrismith. So much I could have done with safety, and, as I hoped, to the furtherance of the general scheme of operations; but until Lord Roberts was in a position to advance from Bloemfontein it would have been dangerous for me to have undertaken more.

When I proposed to him to send the division for which he asked me through the passes, I assumed that it would join hands with the right of Lord Roberts' line. But to send a division, isolated and unsupported into the middle of the Free State would have been, in my view, to court disaster.

On the 31st March (No. 234) I telegraphed to Lord Roberts proposing to start on the 6th April. I told him that I expected to clear the country south of Newcastle in ten days from the start, and that as soon as I had accomplished this I should be able to attack the Drakensberg Passes with two divisions.

On the 1st April (C 789) Lord Roberts approved of this plan. On the 2nd April (C 798), he withdrew this approval, ordered me to give up my intention of advancing towards Newcastle, and directed me to advance from Natal with all speed on Harrismith for the enemy's position at Ladybrand must be shaken at any cost.

I replied on the 2nd (No. 235) that I would do as he directed, and move on the 6th or 7th, but that I did not like the operation, and that it would be better, and take very little more time, for me to swing round by Newcastle, and so clear my front before attacking the passes. (The situation had materially changed since I sent No. 219 on the 17th March.) On the 3rd April Lord Roberts discussed the military aspects of my position in his 821; and on the 4th in my 236, I replied that I adhered to my opinion, but was ready to follow his instructions, and I asked for a definite expression of opinion as to what course I was to pursue.

In reply, on the 4th April, Lord Roberts said the situation had changed, that he desired I would send Hunter's Division and the Imperial Light Horse to East London with least possible delay, and that I was to act purely on the defensive for some time to come.

I replied on the 5th (238) that I would send the troops at once, except the field hospital, which should follow as soon as I could possibly clear it.

On the 7th April, at the instance of General Hunter, I sent to Lord Roberts (No. 240), saying that in seven days from the start I could clear the Biggarsberg; and in 14 days from the start ought to be in possession of the Drakensberg.

The division and the Imperial Light Horse were sent off at once, and, drawn on I think by their removal, the enemy attacked my right flank in considerable force.

ADVANCE ON NEWCASTLE.

During the three following weeks I remained on the defensive, in compliance with my instructions. On the 2nd May Lord Roberts telegraphed (No. 1,419) that he was advancing, and that he wished me to occupy the enemy's attention in the Biggarsberg. I replied (No. 252) that I would start on the 7th, which I did, but I turned northward on the 8th, and on the 9th halted to await an expected attack from the enemy. They came in some force, but did not attack. On the 10th we had concentrated at Sunday River; on the 11th we reached Waschbank; on the 12th Vermaak's Kraal. On the 13th, with the assistance of a force which joined us from Greytown, we assaulted and took the Helpmakaar position, and drove the enemy's force to Dundee. We halted there on the 15th, and moved on the 16th to Glencoe, on the 17th to Dannhauser, and on the 18th to Newcastle. We were just coming up with the flying enemy at Laing's Nek, when we were stopped by some commandoes which had been hurriedly brought up by train from the west.

My advance on Newcastle was made in echelon from the right. Simultaneously with the advance of the main column through Helpmakaar, Dundee, and Dannhauser to Newcastle, General Hildyard pushed up the railway and pass of Glencoe, while General Lyttelton, with the reorganised garrison of Ladysmith, moved up on Hildyard's left, along the old Ladysmith-Newcastle road, through the passes of Biggarsberg. On arrival at Dundee, on the 14th, I received Lord Roberts' telegram (O 18) of the 11th May, informing me that the Drakensberg Passes must in his opinion be very weakly held; while there could not be any large force in the Biggarsberg, and directing me to push on to

the Transvaal. In reply, I informed him that I ought to reach Newcastle by the 19th at latest.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD ROBERTS AS TO FUTURE POLICY.

Acknowledging this, he telegraphed (1915) on the 15th May, saying that he imagined that an advance by Laing's Nek would be out of the question, and asking me if I could force my way through the passes west of Newcastle, and march through Vrede on Standerton. I replied on the 16th that my movements after Newcastle must depend upon the time that would be needed to repair the railway to that place. I asked him for how many days he would require me to supply myself after I left my railhead before I drew from his magazines. I added that, as my only route into the Free State was by Botha's Pass, I thought it would be a much simpler operation to move by that pass and turn Laing's Nek than to advance on Vrede.

Lord Roberts replied on the 17th by a telegram (No. 1,660), with which I could not agree. I replied on the 18th that I thought it would be far easier for me to force Laing's Nek than to send a detached force by Botha's Pass, and that I hoped in any event to be in a position threatening Standerton by the 30th. On the 20th I informed Lord Roberts that this would be impossible on account of the great damage done to the railway.

On the 23rd May Lord Roberts directed me to defer any attack on Laing's Nek until he reached Johannesburg. At this time it seemed to me that Lord Roberts was entirely misinformed as to the nature of the country in which I was operating, and had no idea of the difficulties of the Drakensberg Passes.

On the 25th May we heard of the relief of Mafeking.

On the 26th Lord Roberts informed me that it was quite unnecessary that I should run any undue risk, and that he was arranging to occupy all the principal places in the north-east Orange Free State, including Vrede.

On the 28th, as there was no hurry for an advance, I moved two columns, under General Hildyard and General Lyttelton, across the Buffalo in the direction of Utrecht. My object was to clear my right flank, drive back the few scattered Boers, who were threatening the Natal border, ascertain the feelings of the inhabitants of Utrecht, and mislead the defenders of Laing's Nek. These columns met with no opposition, and during their absence I occupied the old Mount Prospect position with General Clery's division.

On the 30th May, hearing from Lord Roberts that he had occupied Elandsfontein, thus cutting the Pretoria and Laing's Nek railway, I sent a message to the Boer commandant at Laing's Nek. I suggested to him that as Lord Roberts was now at Johannesburg, and the occupation of Pretoria was only a matter of days, while his own railway communication with that town was permanently interrupted, it would be better for him to quit Laing's Nek and cease to prolong a useless combat. When passing Dundee I had detached a column to Zululand, with orders to hold an indaba of natives, and inform them that the Boers had been driven out of Natal. The commander performed his duty satisfactorily, but while trying a short cut on his way back was ambushed, and lost the greater portion of one squadron.

On the 30th May Lord Roberts instructed me to push on to Ermelo and Belfast as soon as I had obtained possession of Laing's Nek. On the 2nd June I was invited by Chris Botha, the Boer commandant, to meet him under Laing's Nek to discuss the possibility of peace. He wished for terms, but finding that Lord Roberts insisted on unconditional surrender, he declined to negotiate further.

PASSING OF THE DRAKENSBERG—ADVANCE ON STANDERTON.

On the 4th June I reported that I should be ready on the 6th to try to take Laing's Nek. Lord Roberts replied on the 5th that it was scarcely necessary to take it, as he was in possession of Pretoria, but that I might see what sort of opposition I was likely to meet with. On the 6th I moved, captured Botha's Pass on the 8th, Gansvlei on the 10th, and forced Alleman's Nek after a smart action on the 11th, cutting the Laing's Nek-Standerton road about four miles north-west of Volksrust.

On the 12th I received a telegram (No. 2019) from Lord Roberts, dated the 10th, saying that he now learnt that Laing's Nek was to be held in strength. He suggested, that as his communications were cut, I should

leave Laing's Nek in the possession of the enemy, and move towards Standerton. In a second telegram of the same date he said that his communications were occupied by the enemy and asked me what I could do. In reply, I informed him that Laing's Nek was in my possession, and that the enemy who had occupied it had fled out of touch. I added that I proposed to move forward as soon as I could get my supplies up the pass. On the 14th June the Landrost formally surrendered to General Lyttelton the town and district of Wakkers-trom, and on that day I informed Lord Roberts that I expected to be at Standerton on the 23rd. I actually occupied it on the 22nd June.

14964. It was in June, I understand, that you first were selected to hold the Command-in-Chief in South Africa?—About the middle of June. I was told I should treat the appointment confidentially, but I was told if there was a war I should be Commander-in-Chief.

14965. So that there was at any rate an apprehension that a war might take place at that time?—Yes.

14966. Did you form an opinion that a war was likely?—I said that in my opinion the war was inevitable, but on the question of bringing it on, that I doubted that the Boers would bring it on unless we did.

14967. We have had a good deal of evidence to the effect that although there was that general apprehension of war, no distinct preparations were made at that time?—I know nothing about the preparations for war, except by hearsay. I was commanding at Aldershot at the time, and had a good deal to do, and was very little in London, and whenever I came to London I saw the Commander-in-Chief, and I gathered from him that preparations for war were not being made on the scale that he thought necessary.

14968. All that had been done, as far as you were concerned, was the agreement you mentioned that your force if it was sent out should be an Army Corps and Cavalry Division, and so on?—I was told that it was the intention of the Government to send that force, and I accepted it.

14969. You accepted it as sufficient?—Well, I did not actually accept it as sufficient; I accepted it as a basis on which we should mobilise. At that time I was perfectly ignorant of whether I was going to fight with that force the Transvaal alone or the Transvaal and Orange Free State, and the only information I got from the Secretary of State was that the Orange Free State was out of account.

14970. But in July you heard of a different project?—Yes.

14971. And to that proposal to send out a division of infantry, you had some objections, I think?—I did object to it very strongly. I objected to sending out any portion of what was intended to be our fighting force before we had a plan of campaign, and before we had, at any rate, come to a decision as to in what portion of the very large country, South Africa, the fighting force was really intended to be employed.

14972. Was not the object of sending out the 10,000 men then proposed simply to strengthen the existing garrisons in Cape Colony and Natal?—No, it was not; it was a definite force.

14973. But you were aware of the state of the garrisons in the Colonies at the time?—Yes, I was, and I pressed that those garrisons should be completed on a scale which could be made, as I put it, a safe ground for the fighting force to be based on, but that was not done.

14974. You were aware that there were local schemes of defence for the Colonies?—I cannot say that I was. I imagined that there were such schemes, and I knew there had been the year before a question of preparing a large scheme of defence for both Colonies, and that to a certain degree it was in the hands, I understood, of Sir William Butler at the time, but I certainly was not aware of any perfected scheme of defence.

14975. Did you ever see the schemes of defence?—Never to my knowledge; originally I saw General Good-enough's, and did not approve of it at all, but it was to be changed, and I left office as Adjutant-General and I did not after 1897 see any schemes of defence.

14976. They were not brought to your notice when you went to South Africa?—Oh, no.

14977. The circumstances had so much altered?—The circumstances had entirely changed then.

14978. Of course those local schemes of defence were drawn up, as the Regulations provide, simply for the

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

See Q. 21121.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

existing garrisons?—Yes, for the existing garrisons. The garrison was changing the whole of that year, and they were to a certain degree increasing it. I know Lord Wolseley was continually urging to increase the garrisons, and they were being increased.

14979. What I was alluding to was that you did not consider the garrisons as they had been placed in the Colonies sufficient?—I did not, and I go further than that; the conditions we were obliged to look at at the moment were the conditions of an actual war with, possibly, the Free State, but certainly the Transvaal, and no scheme of defence, according to my belief, had ever been prepared for those conditions, and therefore practically there was no scheme of defence.

14980. Did you form any idea in your own mind what would have been an adequate garrison—independently of an expeditionary force—for the two Colonies for the purposes of defence?—I did. My own idea at the time—I only mentioned it in conversation, and very vaguely, to Lord Wolseley—was that I thought about 15,000 men in Natal, just in front of Estcourt, somewhere about Frere, behind the Tugela, in fact, would have been sufficient to have protected Natal. The apex of the triangle which Natal forms is mostly a Dutch district, and that I should have given up and massed the troops in position where they would be mutually supporting, covering the ground south of the Tugela, and, with regard to Cape Colony, I had several conversations with Lord Wolseley, who was rather anxious to fortify the bridges over the Orange River, but personally I was very much against that. I did not wish to push any troops forward into places where they could be surrounded by the enemy on the outbreak of war, and I would rather keep as many troops as possible in hand further back in the Colony, but I never thought there would be any serious invasion of the Cape Colony until there had been a great success of the enemy in Natal. That was my idea always.

14981. You thought they would attack, if they did attack, in Natal?—Yes.

14982. You gave us the number of 15,000 for Natal; had you any number in your mind for Cape Colony?—No; the question of Cape Colony really was much more a political than a military one, and I thought the General Officer at the time would probably have done very much what I did the moment I got out there—that is, held the western and eastern lines, and left the midland line to the Dutch.

14983. Could he have done that with the normal garrison?—Well, it was done with the normal garrison in the three very critical weeks; he could have done it, I think. I should not have increased the garrison in Cape Colony, and for political reasons I think it would have been better not to do anything to irritate the Dutch in Cape Colony.

14984. Then that 15,000 men in Natal includes the normal garrison; that is, the total you wanted?—Yes.

14985. Was not that very much an increase of about 10,000 men in South Africa?—Yes, I have not the actual figures in my head, but I think it would have been rather more. I think we had about 9,000 men in Natal in June; that is my impression.

14986. I mean there was not so very much difference then with regard to the number of men between your proposals and the proposals which the Government were discussing in July, 1899?—No, but then you come to my Minute of the 6th July. My first objection was the main objection. I did not like the idea of commencing operations in South Africa by sending out four Generals and a force of 10,000 men. It was a complete force that it was proposed to send out. If they had been merely going to send 10,000 men to reinforce the garrison of South Africa, I should have jumped at it, but this was a force to be sent out as a complete consolidated fighting force—one division of infantry and one brigade of cavalry—and I thought they would simply be lost; I thought the Boers would surround them, and that it would be rather like putting a bait out. That was my opinion, and I was against it. I was never asked any question as to sending out 10,000 men to reinforce the garrisons.

14987. I have got here the numbers: there were 4,462 in Cape Colony and 5,827 in Natal, or a total of 10,289 effectives of all ranks in June?—Somewhere about 10,000, perhaps more.

14988. So that as regards numbers, you and the Government were pretty well agreed, but, as you explain, the purpose of the force was different?—The employment of those numbers would have been totally different. The proposal to send 10,000 men was not to send the 10,000

men to Natal; again, if it had been there I should have jumped at it, but it was to send it to Cape Colony.

14989. But I think you say in your paper that you were not able to find out where exactly the Government were to send it?—No, I was not able to find out where, but I did gather that the idea was that it would be somewhere about the bridges.

14900. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did not the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, know?—This proposal was submitted to me by Lord Lansdowne. I had not seen the Commander-in-Chief at the time. I was visiting in Devonshire when summoned, and I had no opportunity of conversation with the Commander-in-Chief before I saw Lord Lansdowne.

14991. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to say about the position in July?—No; I have put in the narrative the summary of what I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, and it was really a summary of my observations to Lord Lansdowne. He wrote a minute on that paper which I have never seen to this day. I do not know what he said or whether he agreed with me or not. I gathered he more or less agreed.

14992. Who wrote the minute—the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes. I sent him my minute of the 6th July as being merely a reproduction of what I had said to Lord Lansdowne, and I understood he wrote a minute on it, but I have never seen that minute.

14993. You heard nothing more for some time after that, but you became anxious as to the situation?—Yes, mobilisation requires a preliminary expenditure at the moment, and I gathered that that expenditure was not being carried out, so that we were not ready to mobilise.

14994. We had a good deal of evidence about the position at that time, and that is the case; there were certain preparations which the military authorities considered necessary, and which were not taken because of the absence of money; that appears from the evidence, and that is your position about it?—Yes, that was all I knew.

14995. You thought that, considering your position as being designated for commanding the force in the field, it was your duty to put your views forward, and you did so in the beginning of September?—Yes, I thought I was going to find myself in a hornet's nest, and that I ought to do what I could to protect myself.

14996. You put it forward in a memorandum which you addressed to the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes.

14997. Would you say shortly what your view of the position was at that time?—My view was that we were moving, I thought, rather rapidly towards war, and that our preparations were not keeping up with the situation.

14998. And you had an apprehension that if the negotiations, or any failure of negotiations, led to war, that absence of preparation would be of very serious consequence?—Yes, I was impressed with the fact that it was not my duty as a soldier to take any measures to make peace impossible or even difficult, but there were ordinary measures of preparation that could have been done privately and could not really have affected any peace negotiations, and those were not being taken, and, in my opinion, we had not enough time to spare to make it wise to delay them.

14999. Did you base that upon considerations of how long it would take to reinforce the forces in South Africa?—I based that upon considerations of the difference of time that it would take between the moment at which we could put our force in the field and the moment at which the enemy could put their force in the field.

15000. Did you work that out in figures?—I came to the conclusion that practically whatever we did they would have six weeks' start of us. I thought that the negotiations were tending rapidly towards war, and that we were not ready for war. I thought that we ought at once to decide as to the line of policy which would be adopted if we were forced into war, and that we ought to begin a regular and effective preparation, with a view of carrying out that policy at the very moment we found it was impossible to avoid war, and I thought that to do that we ought to protect our Colonies, and to have a force in our Colonies that would be sufficient to deter the enemy from invading them before we were ready.

15001. And, therefore, you advocated measures to be taken to delay any outbreak?—Yes, I advocated

that the diplomatic proceedings should be conducted with a view to gaining time, and that the military preparations should be hurried.

15002. I suppose there is another way of putting that matter, that you would be of opinion that if there had been any means of forecasting the future earlier, and as soon as it became evident that there was a danger of war, the preparations ought then to have commenced?—Yes, to put it quite plainly, I thought the future was not being forecast—that we were drifting.

15003. In the memorandum, of which you have spoken, to the Commander-in-Chief, you elaborated that?—I elaborated that theory in the memorandum which I addressed to the Commander-in-Chief on the 5th September, and in which I said I knew he had represented those facts more fully, and, probably, better than I could, but I merely wanted to support the recommendations I knew he had put forward.

15004. Have you anything else to say about the position at the beginning of September?—Not beyond that my recommendations did not meet with the result that I had hoped they would; I still considered we were not in the beginning of September making sufficient preparation.

15005. Towards the end of September the Secretary of State asked you for your reasons with regard to the route, did he not?—Yes, he knew that from June up to that date I had always tried to impress upon him that, in my opinion, we could not leave the Orange Free State out of account, and that they would in the end be found to side with the Transvaal. I had always told him my experience in 1881, when they were a very harassing friend, at any rate, and he asked me on that date to put my views on paper, and I did so.

15006. You put in the memorandum dated 24th September which you have, and naturally the only way to let us understand the question is that you should read it to us?—Yes. "Now that money has been granted to make purchases in anticipation of the despatch of an expeditionary force to South Africa, it is essential that the base should be selected from which that force is to start. Durban, the base for an advance through Natal, is some 730 miles from Cape Town, the principal base of an advance through the Orange Free State. From Durban to Pretoria is, say, 500 miles. The average distance of Pretoria from the three ports in Cape Colony is, say, 1,000 miles. From the Natal frontier to Pretoria is 200 miles, and from the Cape frontier to Pretoria is 400 miles. It is probable that the railway authorities in Natal will do all they can to help an expedition. It is doubtful if in Cape Colony we should be at all certain of the same willing assistance, if, indeed, we can count on not being obstructed. So far, then, everything points to the Natal route being the best, and so it undoubtedly would be, were it not for two great drawbacks—the port of Durban and the position of the Orange Free State. I have not been able to obtain any reliable information as to the facilities Durban now offers for the disembarkation of an expedition. I am told that the utmost speed would be three ships a day. An Army Corps will require close on 100 ships for its transport. If they can only discharge at the rate of three a day, disembarkation will occupy one whole month, and bad weather would make it still longer. This is a serious outlook. The Orange Free State flanks the line of advance by Natal for some 200 miles, viz., from Ladysmith to Standerton, or even farther. Now the Orange Free State may adopt three courses. I. They may declare themselves neutral, and evince a benevolent neutrality to England. II. They may declare themselves neutral, with the determination of secretly helping the Transvaal as much as possible, and with the idea that the moment may come when it will be opportune to declare themselves on the side of the Transvaal. III. They may openly side with the Transvaal. A glance at the map will show that in the second case they will be dangerous, and in the third case it would be unwise to offer them the advantages an advance by Natal—which would mean a flank march of 200 miles across their front—would offer them. In my opinion, an advance by Natal in either of the second or third cases would be a greater risk than ought to be incurred. It must be recollected that neither Natal nor the Transvaal will provide food for the force that advances on Pretoria. All it eats will have to be brought up from behind it. To advance on Pretoria and leave a hostile Free State to take its own time and opportunity for cutting the communications and stop-

ping the flow of supplies, would, I think, be running an unnecessary and most dangerous risk. I would, in such a case, far rather face the double distance and the possible hostility of the Cape Railway directorate, than risk a march of 200 miles round a concealed enemy. An advance through the Orange Free State would give three seaports as bases instead of one, and at the commencement enormously simplify disembarkation, concentration on the frontier and supply when there. The Orange Free State is open, the advance would be through its centre, the country contains a good quantity of supplies. It would be almost impossible for an advance through the Free State to be opposed by all the Free State troops and all the Transvaal troops—while such a combination is quite possible against a force advancing by Natal. On the other hand an advance through the Free State would have every chance of disposing of that State first, and settling with the Transvaal alone afterwards. Consequently I would most strongly urge that as soon as H.M.'s Government decides upon an expedition they should force the Free State to declare for one side or the other. If they declare for the other side, our route to Pretoria should be *via* Bloemfontein; if they declare for neutrality, they should be forced to give sureties that they preserve that neutrality—failing to do so they should be treated as hostile. A decision in the matter is urgently required, as it is essential the stores we are now ordering should be collected at ports that serve the route which may be selected." That, I believe, was read or communicated to the Cabinet, and Lord Lansdowne told me on the 30th, that the Cabinet had given orders for the expenditure—that was the expenditure for mobilisation—and I then pressed him to at once call out the Reserves, and I pointed out to him in a letter that he would incur a very dangerous military risk if that were not done, but he did not do so. He put it off until the 7th October.

15007. That was a week?—Yes, the 7th October was the earliest date he said that it could be done, and I said: 'The crisis will come before the troops get out to South Africa; may I go out at once?' and it was definitely arranged that I should start on the 14th, and I did so.

15008. As we know, on the 9th the ultimatum came from the other side?—Yes.

15009. That completes the period before the outbreak of the war; is there anything else with regard to the preparations for the war, which is the first head of our reference that you would like to say at this point?—Well, we were late; the preparations were not so well advanced as they should have been, and we were short of hospital equipment, harness and wagons, and those sort of things, and of supplies.

15010. You were short at what point?—At the time I arrived at Cape Town; the troops came out faster than they could be properly equipped, or than we could collect food for them.

15011. The troops were surely not short of food at Cape Town?—No, but if you are sending troops up country by rail you must have magazines somewhere, and, of course, it was desirable to get your magazines as far forward as you could beforehand, and this had not been done.

15012. In Cape Colony or Natal?—In Cape Colony; *See Q. 15294* in Natal it had been done. In Natal, Ladysmith was as far forward as we were holding, and Ladysmith was full up with supplies to the end of the year; they had about 60 days' supplies, that I had arranged for. I had asked for that to be done before I left England; in fact early in September I had suggested Ladysmith should be filled up with supplies.

15013. Do you represent that any of your movements in Cape Colony were delayed in consequence of the absence of supplies?—No, I do not, but I do represent that one of the anxieties I had at first in Cape Colony, and one of the difficulties I had, was, that assuming that I had sent a larger portion of the force as it arrived to Natal, I should have been rather handicapped by want of supplies.

15014. More from the fact that they had not been sent away from Cape Town than from the fact that they were not in existence?—From the fact that they were not at that time in the Colony.

15015. In the Colony at all?—Yes. I was told before I left England that I should start with two months' reserve of supplies, which would not have been a very large amount, but when the preparations were made

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
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V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

17 Feb. 1903.

that reserve of supply included the rations that are loaded with all troops in each ship; it was not a real reserve in fact, it was a distributed reserve. We got it before there was any real reason to move many troops in Cape Colony, but assuming that the original programme had held good, and that the troops on landing had been moved up at once to form an Army Corps on the Orange River, and then it had been intended to commence an advance, the preparations were insufficient.

15016. As it turned out it was not so?—As it turned out it did not matter.

15017. Does that remark also apply to transport?—Yes, all the wagons had not arrived, and the harness was short. At the moment we were not able to get on at the Cape when I got there as much with the preparation of transport as I should have liked, because a good deal of the material instead of having been provided beforehand and being ready, came out with the troops, and when you have to equip an entirely new transport, of which your men know nothing, you want a certain amount of time to do it. In the minutes that I wrote urging better preparation, I always pointed out that the transport would be a strange transport.

15018. And I suppose there again you mean that if you had had to make your advance in the way you contemplated, this deficiency of transport would have been serious?—Yes, there would have been a great deal of trouble, and there was some trouble as it was.

See Q. 21247;
21406.

15019. (*Viscount Esher.*) One of the points you mention in your statement is that no council of war was held; do you wish to suggest that one should have been held?—Well, I do suggest to the Commission that I was placed in an uncomfortable position—I made no complaint myself—but one which I do not think in future a General Officer ought to be placed in. I think there should have been a consideration of the intended expedition at which the Commander-in-Chief designate should have expressed his views before the Army Board or the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, or before some Board who would have heard what he had to say, and he would have had an opportunity of raising a large number of questions that I should have liked many times during the three months to raise, but I never had any opportunity.

15020. You were never called before the Defence Committee of the Cabinet at all?—No, I was never called before anything.

15021. And you were not present at any meeting of the Army Board at the War Office?—Not one—practically at not one. I was President of a Committee which sat at that time in the War Office which had nothing to do with the war, and occasionally Lord Wolseley, if he heard I was in the Office, and there was any question going to be considered in the Secretary of State's room, sent down for me and asked me to come in; but that was a casual matter, and I was never consulted on anything, nor was I ever given any question to consider and answer by anybody.

15022. You had some interviews with Lord Lansdowne, of course?—Yes; Lord Lansdowne's instructions to me were: "Come in to see me if you come to town."

15023. But you did not see the Prime Minister or the Colonial Secretary, or any other member of the Government?—No, nor did I see any of the correspondence that was passing at the time between the Cape and the Colonial Office.

*Vide
page 170.*

15024. In the summary of your evidence there is a heading which begins: "General considerations affecting the plan of the campaign." Did you lay those considerations before Lord Lansdowne or any other member of the Government?—No, I was never asked for my opinion on anything of the sort. I did indirectly discuss them with Lord Wolseley on several occasions, and we differed on an important point—namely, that he attached strategic importance to Bloemfontein which I did not.

15025. But that was a discussion between you and the Commander-in-Chief?—A private discussion.

15026. And these general considerations were not laid before the Government, because you were never asked to state your opinion to any Minister of the Crown?—Never; I was asked for nothing.

15027. I see you say that when you arrived at Madeira you received telegrams from Sir George White and General Forestier-Walker, and you say that you approve of General Forestier-Walker's dispositions with certain exceptions; did you send any reply to Sir George White's

telegram?—I think I acknowledged it. I do not know that I did more, as I had nothing to say to him.

15028. He informed you that the forces of the two Republics were converging towards Dundee and Ladysmith, but you did not upon that send any reply to him, did you?—No, I did not certainly send any reply, because whatever he mentioned in the telegram he had done probably before I got it. I found it waiting for me at Madeira.

15029. You say, "While approving General Forestier-Walker's dispositions." I suppose you telegraphed to him saying that you approved his dispositions generally?—I did. Sir George White's telegram was received at Madeira, and he had sent it on the 15th October, so that it had been waiting two days when I got there: "Transvaal and Orange Free State forces are converging towards Dundee and Ladysmith, and are in strength inside Natal border. Hunter's loss here would be heavily felt. I propose keeping him for the present." That was my chief of the staff that he kept; that was all he said, and there was nothing to answer. My answer to General Forestier-Walker was: "I fully concur in your dispositions. Orange River Bridge most important at this moment. Do not risk much at Naauwpoort or Molteno until you feel strong enough. If sailors go to Molteno, send on good Engineer officer with them, as they are inclined to select points exposed to long range fire. Good luck to you."

15030. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Do I understand, Sir Redvers, that before your departure for South Africa you received no letter of general instructions as to what the Government wished to be done?—None.

15031. Nor on your arrival there?—None.

15032. Or after your arrival?—None—the usual letter of service.

15033. But that is a mere letter of appointment?—Yes.

15034. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Speaking broadly, your opinion is that the Commander of a force such as you had under you at that time should be taken into the confidence of the Government?—I think so. I think I suffered myself a tremendous disadvantage by not having the smallest idea when I arrived at Cape Town of the course which negotiations had been taking, and the attitude of mind in which I should find Lord Milner.

15035. And you further think that such a Commander ought to have an opportunity of expressing his views upon the state of military affairs to the Government?—I certainly think so. I think any man is better for having been forced to explain his views, and the very fact of explaining a man's views very often calls attention to various things he might otherwise overlook, and I think that to send a man out on that sort of expedition without having caused him first of all to give some notion of his policy is really placing him at a disadvantage. There were matters I should very much have liked myself to have brought forward and discussed. I was told to treat my appointment as confidential, and I was not able to discuss them very much, and it would have been an advantage for me to go before a body of gentlemen and say "I think so and so."

15036. (*Sir John Edge.*) When did you first know that it might be assumed that the Orange Free State would join the Transvaal?—I knew it in 1881, and I never altered my opinion.

15037. I know that was your opinion all through, but when were you first informed by anyone in connection with the Government?—By nobody. I believe, if you recollect, in November, 1899, Mr. Balfour made a speech at Dewsbury, and he there said that on the 28th September (the figures worked out to that) if he had been asked whether the Orange Free State were likely to be at war with us he would have replied we were more likely to be at war with Switzerland, and that was the attitude certainly up to the day of my minute of September, with which I was met by Lord Lansdowne on every occasion when I mentioned the Orange Free State.

15038. That in any consideration of the war and how you would conduct it in South Africa you were to leave the Orange Free State out of account altogether?—Out of account; that was Lord Lansdowne's expression, to leave the Orange Free State out of account; and that was really my difficulty, because in my own mind every plan I had and every theory I had about the war was based on the certainty that I should have to fight the Orange Free State, and practically when I was talking beforehand I was always having rather to

argue on the supposition that I should not have to fight the Orange Free State.

15039. (*Chairman.*) Do you not say here that on the 30th September you were told the Government had decided to adopt the route by the Orange Free State?—Yes, on the 30th September; my minute was on the 24th September.

15040. Your remarks apply not up to the time you left the country, but only up to the time of that minute?—That is so. I read in the paper that they had made a treaty; I knew that from the newspapers. I forget the date of the treaty, but it was some considerable time before that—a treaty as to an offensive and defensive alliance.

15041. (*Sir John Edge.*) If you had been allowed to take the Orange Free State into account from the first as a certain opponent, what line would you have taken? Would you have suggested an advance through Natal, or an advance through Bloemfontein?—In all cases on Pretoria I should have advanced through the Free State, and I should have endeavoured not to advance through Natal. I may say that as long ago as 1895 the question was submitted to me, and I gave the opinion then very strongly against any advance through Natal. The difficulties in Natal are enormous, and nobody who has not seen the country can appreciate them.

15042. I think you said you formed the opinion in 1881 that in a war with the Transvaal we should have the Free State against us?—Yes, President Brand told me so then.

15043. And you had never seen anything to make you alter that opinion?—Never.

15044. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Is it within your knowledge whether in the past on recent occasions Generals in chief command have been sent out without some plan of campaign having been discussed by the authorities at the War Office?—Well, I should say not; I should say that usually the plan of campaign has been rather fully thought out, and I imagine known to the War Office, at any rate, known to the General.

15045. It was in the past have been discussed between the General going out and the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes. I went out in 1878 with the General who was then sent to the Cape, but it was more the case of a rebellion, and therefore he was dependent almost entirely when he arrived at the Cape on what the Governor said, so that there was no plan of campaign at the moment, but the whole conditions of the case had been explained to him.

15046. But in this case I understand you had not really any formal discussions with the Commander-in-Chief?—I had no formal discussion with anybody.

15047. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Were you put in touch or were you in touch with the Intelligence Department before you went out? Could you feel yourself in a position to go to them for any information that they might be able to give you?—Yes, they did give me everything that they had, but I considered I was not in a position to direct them to get anything without going to Lord Wolseley and asking him to do it. It was outside the Office.

15048. Did you take out an Intelligence Officer with you on your staff?—No. There were such officers out there.

15049. Of course you could have had any papers from them that they had or any information that they had before you started?—I had all their information before, and they had been preparing information for a considerable time I believe, but the information they obtained, and the action they took, was not directed in any way by me.

15050. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you say that you had all the information the Intelligence Department had furnished to the Government?—I do not know about the Government; they gave me all the books.

15051. And the documents, I suppose?—Yes, I should say everything they furnished the Government with.

15052. Early in August you were aware of the practical certainty in their minds that the Free State would officially join hands with the Transvaal?—Yes, I was aware of it in the minds of the Intelligence Department, but it was not accepted by the Government. So late as the 16th August certainly, at any rate, one member of the Government would not have anything to do with the Free State.

15053. Did you discuss this document of the Intelligence Division with Lord Lansdowne?—No, I do not

think I had any Intelligence Department documents given to me until I was appointed Commander-in-Chief.

15054. That is the point I wish to get at?—I do not think I had, and I was appointed Commander-in-Chief on the 9th of October.

15055. When you told Sir John Hopkins that you had the Intelligence Division information, that was only when you were appointed Commander-in-Chief?—Yes. If I had gone to the Intelligence Department I have no doubt Sir John Ardagh, who was a very old friend of mine, would have given me anything I had asked him for, and I got from the Intelligence Department the information I used in the minute about the port of Durban.

15056. But the Secretary of State for War did not suggest to you at your early interview that you ought to see the Director of Military Intelligence and discuss the matter with him?—No, he told me to keep my appointment strictly confidential.

15057. And consequently he did not discuss with you any documents he had received from the Intelligence Division, giving reasons at great length?—He discussed with me the numbers, which he quoted from an Intelligence Department paper, that he said the Transvaal could put into the field.

15058. But in addition to that, reasons showing fairly clearly the certainty that the Orange Free State would join with the South African Republic?—No; as I say, whenever I urged that I was confident of it myself—and I urged it to him several times, as often as I consistently could—in each case the answer always was that the Orange Free State was to be left out of account.

15059. There was a document on the 8th of August, 1899, giving at great length the reasons for believing certainly that the Orange Free State would join with the South African Republic in war. Were you given a copy of that document at the time in August?—I really could not say; I doubt it. I have seen the document, but my impression is that I got it considerably after that date.

15060. And you say that in any case you would not have paid much attention to it, as your mind was already made up that the Orange Free State would join the South African Republic?—Yes, I was confident.

15061. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did Lord Lansdowne never draw your attention to the treaty of July, 1897, between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal—there are only three clauses to it?—Never. I was aware of that treaty.

15062. But Lord Lansdowne never discussed that treaty with you or mentioned it or referred to it?—Never; I can state that most confidently, because it was a point on which I was always grumbling to Lord Wolseley when we were talking of this war, that they would eventually have to go through the Free State, and I thought it should be settled, and that until we could make a plan of campaign we could not get on. It was absurd my making proposals for what I hoped not to have to do.

15063. Did you see that treaty?—I read it certainly.

15064. Had you seen it?—Yes, I had; I think I had seen it in 1897.

15065. Did it not satisfy you that practically the Orange Free State were bound to assist the Transvaal?—I never doubted it; my point always was that I remembered so well in 1881, as I said, the shameful behaviour of the Orange Free State, and when Mr. Brand was expostulated with he said he could not help himself—that blood was thicker than water, and I said, "Do not let the Government deceive themselves; this same thing will happen, and the Orange Free State men will fight on the side of the Transvaal whatever happens." That was my conviction throughout.

15066. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And you were aware that besides the treaty of July, 1897, there was a Military Convention of July, 1897?—Yes, an offensive and defensive alliance.

15067. There was a Military Convention as well, agreeing as to the command of the two forces, when the two States were acting together, providing for their discipline, supplies, and so forth?—Yes, I knew of that.

15068. But Lord Lansdowne never discussed that matter with you; he never brought that forward?—Never at all; he declined to discuss the question of the Orange Free State with me practically until the 23rd September, when he suddenly told me I might put my views forward as to the route.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
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17 Feb. 1903.

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15069. (*Chairman.*) There was a doubt, though, in spite of all these treaties and conventions, as to the attitude of the Orange Free State, was there not?—I believe that is so, but I had no doubt in my mind as to what the attitude of the Free State young men would be; that was the point.

17 Feb. 1903.

15070. But there might be political reasons for not bringing forward the fact of the convention and treaty?—Yes, that was one of the reasons which influenced me when I said in my minute that I did not wish to do anything which would prevent negotiations or impede negotiations.

15071. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But that would still make it necessary to take steps, in view of the eventuality of the States joining hands?—I thought so.

15072. The only other point I would like to raise on the preparations for the war—a quite different subject—is that you mentioned that the Cabinet decided to send to India for a force of 5,500 men, which was the only organised body of troops they could put in the field at the moment without dislocating the whole of our mobilisation arrangements. During the five years previous to the war, was that the normal position of things, that we could not send 5,000 or 10,000 men out of the country without dislocating the arrangements?—The arrangements there referred to were our arrangements for mobilisation of the Army Corps, and they were complete; the regiments were told off, and I think at that time actually they were warned, at any rate if they were not warned, the warnings were all ready, and everything was settled. The arrangements connected with the Army Corps were so far perfected that practically we had a good deal of work done which would have been upset by withdrawing men for a detached force.

15073. They must have been withdrawn from the same body?—They would have been portions of the same body.

15074. Under the system which then existed we could not have laid our hands on 5,000 men in this country outside the First Army Corps?—Under the system which then existed the very most we hoped ever to put in the field, and the very most the Government had ever allowed the Military to consider that they should put in the field, was two Army Corps, and the First Army Corps was at that time, so to speak, under orders, and the Second Army Corps was nominally waiting in reserve. The Second Army Corps would have been largely formed of Militia, and, therefore, practically taking these men out would have taken the cream off the milk.

15075. I only ask you, with your experience of military organisation, whether that is quite a sound state of things for an Empire with an enormous number of dependencies scattered all over the world?—Well, you must have some limit and you must have some organisation, and I think as we had that force available and as the Government had gone so far as to have these troops in India told off, and as they were a complete force, and as they could come more rapidly, that it was the proper thing to do, and I think it is sound for the Empire to make such arrangements.

15076. Taking the other 5,000 away from our Colonies. Do you approve of that?—Which?

15077. In the Mediterranean?—The Mediterranean has always been considered under our system as holding the first troops available for war, and then you fill up the Mediterranean garrisons again; they are not left empty, but they are filled up with rather younger men.

15078. You do not feel that there is any danger of doing it in the case of a European war?—I do not think there was any danger whatever of doing it under the conditions existing when we went to war at the Cape, but there might be if we were having a war in the Mediterranean.

15079. Not if a war at the Cape had involved the intervention of a European Power?—I do not think so. The Cabinet which must decide that particular question must have some idea as to whether, if they sent a force to the Cape, it would immediately mean an attack upon Malta, for example, and if it would mean an attack upon Malta I do not think it would be right to take the troops out of the garrison. I think you must consider the circumstances of the case, and in that particular case I think it was a very good way; they were on the road, and all ready; they had all their equipment with them, and were ready to go. The

geographical conditions of our immense Empire offer advantages as well as disadvantages.

(*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It has been a moot question, and I wished to elicit your opinion upon it.

15080. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Lord Wolseley gave us to understand that if you wanted a force of, say, 10,000 men to proceed on any overseas expedition, for that force a portion of an Army Corps might be mobilised and utilised; do you agree with that?—Certainly it might. In this particular case we wanted an Army Corps also.

15081. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Without calling out the Reserves?—Yes, you could mobilise 10,000 men certainly without calling out the Reserves.

15082. (*Chairman.*) But only by drawing on the other battalions?—Yes, by drawing on the other battalions.

15083. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That is by dislocating your system of drafts and so forth?—Well, our system is fairly elastic; I do not think there is much to complain of in our system, considering the requirements of the Empire.

15084. We have so many small wars that I wished to see whether we could not supply the small wars without disturbing the general system?—Then you would probably leave your best troops at home, and that in a small war where you would most want them; if you were to leave your Army Corps at home and have your 10,000 men free, either those 10,000 men are your best men or your worst men.

15085. The best men?—Then you do not have your best men in your Army Corps when you have a big war.

15086. I quite understand you might have to throw them in in addition in a big war, but my suggestion only is that there should be 5,000 or 10,000 men or a few more ready to throw into all these small wars we have in different parts of the world, and I want to know whether things could not be so organised as to have a force of that kind always ready without having to go to Parliament?—Practically we have 10,000 men; we have always been able to do that.

15087. Without calling out the Reserves?—Certainly we could do that.

15088. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) When you took part in the former war with the Transvaal did you form the opinion that while the Government of the Free State professed neutrality, the sympathies of the people were with the Transvaal?—They were.

15089. And that they covertly rendered them all the assistance they could?—That is so; it was so to my knowledge.

15090. From that and from what has taken place since you reasoned that the sympathies of the Free State would still be with the Transvaal, and you thought it desirable that that position should be known, and that the route should be through the Free State rather than through Natal?—Yes, I considered that we were bound if we went to war to make war with the whole of the Free State and the whole of the Transvaal, and practically, whatever the Free State said, our difficulty would be equal to the sum of the two States. I did hope at the time that by dealing with the Free State first, the Boers being a very selfish people, it was a thousand chances to one almost against the whole forces of the Transvaal being sent to aid the Free State; and, therefore, they could have been got into order and made quiet before there was any necessity for invading the Transvaal. That was my idea.

15091. And when you were appointed to take command in South Africa, as the responsibility of the campaign would rest on you, you thought that you should have been taken more into the confidence of the Government here than you were?—I thought that it would have helped me a great deal if I had been asked to formulate my views, if I had been given an opportunity of formulating my views, and discussing with the Government the difficulties of the undertaking that I was required to commence.

15092. And you think that sufficient consideration was not given to your representations?—I do.

15093. During the former war were the Boers mounted generally? They were a body of mounted men then?—Yes, mounted men. See Q.

15094. As on the recent occasion?—Yes, they certainly would be mounted.

15095. Might it not be supposed then that it would be a very great advantage to have a very considerable number of mounted men to meet them, so that the force might to a certain extent be a mobile one also?—I think it was to be considered so.

15096. But that was not really the case in the first part of the war; just preparations were not made?—They were not.

15097. It was principally infantry which were sent out?—Yes, almost wholly infantry.

15098. It would have been preferable, would it not, had a larger number of mounted men been sent?—I think so.

15099. (*Chairman.*) We have come to your arrival at the Cape, and in the section of your statement headed "Arrival at Cape Town—the situation" you describe the situation very fully. Lord Esher asked you with regard to the question of general considerations; is there anything you wish to add to that?—I think not.

15100. The question arose whether you could carry out an advance through the Free State, which was your intention and wish, and you had under the circumstances to abandon it?—I never abandoned it.

15101. Well, you had to abandon it in the meantime, at all events?—Temporarily; the enemy had used their initiative and had got much nearer the sea than I thought they ought to be allowed to get, and to my mind the dominant factor in the consideration of any military situation in South Africa at that moment was the extreme importance of preventing the Boers from obtaining a seaport. I cannot say that my information was good, but that was my information, and that was also my feeling, and I felt that as they had deprived us of the garrison of Natal and had in hand besides a force that was amply sufficient to overrun South Natal, it was of the first importance to save South Natal, not from sentimental reasons, but as a military object of paramount importance.

15102. That caused you to go yourself, and to divert your force to Natal?—Yes. I have shown in the paragraph we are discussing that what was present in my mind was that my main objective would always be wherever the largest force of the enemy was, that the war would have to be ended by fighting; and, therefore, as there were more men to fight there that was the place to go to.

15103. Your intention was to resume, so soon as you were able, the advance through the Free State again?—My intention was to resume the original plan, and to commence the advance through the Free State as soon as I had a free hand to do so, as soon as, (having sufficiently secured my flank in Natal, I was able to come back and begin the advance of the war. The calculations on which my departure from England had been based had been upset by the enemy; they were not in Natal when I left England, and they had come into Natal, and that altered the situation temporarily.

15104. But at the same time you had to take Kimberley into account?—I had to take Kimberley into account because I knew of my own knowledge the immense importance that the natives attached to Kimberley. The following is a telegram from the De Beers Directors, Kimberley, to the High Commissioner, Cape Town, dated October 31st:—"We hope with the arrival of General Buller measures will be taken for the immediate relief of this place. Our information, which is reliable, gives not more than 2,000 to 3,000 Boers between this place and Orange River, and in our opinion we could already have been relieved without risk by the present force in Cape Colony. We have a very limited supply of coal, and when it is done we must close down the works, which will cause serious trouble amongst our 10,000 savages in our compounds, who are now kept quiet by being kept at work. If we discharge them, and send them home, they are sure to be driven back to the town by the Boers, which must lead to heavy loss of life. As to the question of food supply, though well provided with some things, we have only nine days' tinned meat in case cattle are taken by the Boers, which, of course, is probable. We do not know the reasons which have delayed our relief, but we think your Excellency ought to weigh the risks caused by delay to this place with its 30,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of whom are raw savages. Now that the General has arrived we respectfully request to be informed as to the policy to be adopted regarding our relief, so as to enable us to take our own steps in case relief is refused. We are sending this by special

messenger to Orange River, and will await your reply." *General Th. Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.*

15105. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Were they ever more explicit as to what the steps might be?—I never asked them.

15106. (*Viscount Esher.*) What did you understand by that expression at the time?—I understood that to be a threat to surrender.

15107. Did you discuss it with Sir Alfred Milner?—I did.

15108. Was that the view he also took?—Well, he thought so. He felt very much the state of Kimberley, and he was most anxious that I should take immediate steps for its relief. I was rather unwilling to do so, and I telegraphed to the officer who was commanding at Kimberley, who sent me a more reassuring telegram, but he said in it that he was of opinion that it depended upon whether the Town Guard would stand the strain of trench work; and I gathered, reading between the lines, that that rather hinted at the same sort of condition of affairs that was expressed, as I understood, by this telegram which I have read, and I thought the two together sufficiently serious to make me take a much greater risk than I liked taking by sending a detached expedition to, at any rate, get near Kimberley.

15109. (*Chairman.*) You say that was from Colonel Kekewich?—Yes.

15110. Have you got his telegram?—His telegram was that he was fairly well off, and that he was not afraid of Kimberley being taken at all so long as the Town Guard did not get worn out by duty, or words to that effect.

15111. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was there any more definite suggestion of surrender made at that time?—Well, I was given the impression such a suggestion had been received, but I cannot say more than that; I did not see it.

15112. (*Chairman.*) What you proposed to do in the case of Kimberley, I understand, was not to establish yourself along the frontier up to Kimberley, but to send a force to the town to carry off the non-combatants, and leave it to make its defence by itself?—Yes, it had half a battalion there, a half battalion of the Loyal Lancashires, and I intended to put in a battalion, and the other half of that battalion, making two battalions, and the Admiral had given me some long range Naval guns, which could have met any guns the Boers could have brought against them, and I thought the place would be absolutely comfortable. We were to remove 8,000 or 9,000 natives, and to leave the place. Really, it would have been an advantage to me, from the military point of view, and they would have been quite comfortable.

15113. Was it not a difficult operation to remove a large number of non-combatants? It would have had to be done in the face of the enemy?—If you once got through into the town the enemy would have been gone on that side, and these men would all have walked out; they were all natives, and could walk 40 or 50 miles a day with great ease. I did not think many of the women would have cared to come away, and they would have been perfectly safe with the long range guns.

15114. You mean by the non-combatants, chiefly the natives?—The natives; the only possible danger was that there might have been some sort of native *émeute* which, owing to their numbers, might have been serious.

15115. Looking to the earlier evidence, supposing they had been dispersed sufficiently to allow an advance into the town, might they not have prevented a retreat?—I do not think so. The Boers are curious people; they fight well and are very mobile, but they are quicker at getting away than any soldiers the world has ever seen, and if they had been defeated sufficiently to be driven away from that side of the town I do not think they would have come back at all.

15116. And it was necessary to clear that southern side of the town of the Boers?—Yes, it was necessary to get into the town.

15117. Because you speak here, I think, of Lord Methuen having sufficient transport and supplies to enable him to leave the railway?—Yes.

15118. And that rather led me to suppose that it meant, to go round the flank of the enemy without dispersing them necessarily?—Well, I was quite con-

General Th. Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

15118. I am confident, in my own mind, that no Boers would ever stand if we had our troops on each side of them, and the only position I knew of at all, or could hear of when I was at Cape Town, was a position there called the Spytfontein position, which, I fancy, was very much what they called afterwards Magersfontein; and I thought that if he got across the Modder and formed a bridge-head there while he was repairing the bridge and getting his railway forward, if he had moved to his right he would without much trouble have caught anybody who was opposing him between his two forces. I did not at that time believe for a moment that Cronje would have got south of Kimberley before he reached Kimberley, nor did he.

15119. You were not taking into consideration the circumstances as they actually developed?—No, I had from the people in Kimberley a definite statement that they knew it could be relied on that there were not more than 4,000 or 5,000 men at the most between us and them.

15120. I think it was less than that—2,000 or 3,000?—One of them said 4,000 to 5,000; they gave very small figures, and they were all Free Staters, who were not very keen on fighting until Cronje came down. Cronje came 220 miles while Methuen did not get 50, and I did not expect that.

15121. And that altered the conditions?—It made it much more difficult for Lord Methuen.

15122. Would that have altered your scheme of operations if you had foreseen that?—No, I think not. I did alter my scheme of operations because of it, and I at once—when I found he was, if I may use the expression, stuck up by the people in front of him—altered my scheme of operations, and proposed to get into the Free State from where he was, and to turn out the people who were stopping him at the same time; in fact, the plan of campaign which was eventually adopted by Lord Roberts.

15123. There was a proposal to make a railway?—It was accompanied by a proposal to make a railway; that was part of it.

15124. I meant to have asked one question about martial law: some difficulties arose in consequence of not being able to enforce commandeering in Cape Colony?—There were immense difficulties in carrying on military operations; it was not exactly a difficulty in not being able to enforce commandeering, but if you cut the fence of an ostrich enclosure and were moving troops across, if it happened to be a Dutchman he came and objected, and threatened an action at law; and everything connected with the initiation of military operations was harassed and rendered difficult by our not having at the time fighting rights. All along the northern frontier of Cape Colony they are mostly Dutch districts, and they managed to give us a good deal of trouble. With military law, and security from threats of police, and so forth, we should have been able to get on much more simply. Sir Alfred Milner did not see his way to do it, and I did not particularly press it, but I was very anxious to get out of Cape Town itself the immense number of Boer spies, Boer propagandists, and people who had been sent down there, partly as spies, and partly to try and promote disaffection. There was a very dangerous man in Cape Town whom I should have liked to get out, and the only way to get him out was either by military law or by the course I proposed. Lord Milner thought he was not justified in doing it by the situation of the moment, and it was not done.

15125. You found it very difficult to keep your plans secret, I suppose, under the circumstances?—Yes; I was fairly lucky, but I never told anybody anything; otherwise it was almost impossible. There were three languages there, and you never knew whom you were talking to.

15126. You have written here as to the general situation on the 22nd November?—A telegram of mine has been quoted as approving of General White staying at Ladysmith. I merely want to call the attention of the Commission to the fact that that telegram of mine was sent in reply to a telegram from him, in which he said he could not leave it. It is in my statement as follows: "A few hours later I received a further telegram from Sir George White, saying that he could not withdraw from Ladysmith, and that he sent a single battalion to guard the bridge at Colenso as the best step that he could take for the protection of Natal." When he sent

me that telegram I replied that he had better stay at Ladysmith; there was nothing else I could reply.

15127. Did he not send that battalion to guard the bridge at Colenso in consequence of representations to him that he should send some force there?—Not from me; I made no representation to him at all except that I wanted to get his cavalry out.

15128. If there was a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief drawing his attention to the necessity of guarding Colenso, that would account for his action in that matter, would it not?—I do not think it would at all. The Commander-in-Chief was seven thousand miles away, and could not possibly know what he ought to do. The Commander-in-Chief tried to help, but there was no idea of his suggestions being orders. He had a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, I know, because I wrote it myself, suggesting that Glencoe was a very unfavourable position, but he left the troops there.

15129. You say it was not in answer to any telegram from you, but there was a telegram drawing his attention to the necessity or desirability of guarding the bridge at Colenso, and this was the step which he took in consequence?—There may have been a telegram, but I never heard of it until now, and, of course, I know nothing more about it, but what he did was absolutely impossible. Colenso was in a pit, and he put the Dublin Fusiliers there and some Volunteers, and General Murray immediately removed them, and very properly, I think, because they could not have defended themselves there.

15130. (Sir Henry Norman.) This was the telegram he received from Lord Wolseley: "I do not wish in any way to hamper your discretion, but personally I am anxious about the safety of Colenso Bridge." Upon which he sent the Dublin Fusiliers and a Natal Battery, apparently rather unwillingly?—He telegraphed home at the time that he had sent the Dublin Fusiliers to Colenso as all he could do to save Natal, or for the protection of Natal. Shall I read the telegram he sent home?

15131. (Chairman.) Yes, what is the date?—31st October. "No. 109a.—With reference to your 200 of to-day, hitherto I have considered that the interests of the Colony south of this required me to hit out. Yesterday's fight shows me that there is risk and limit to this. I wired Natal Governor yesterday that I would send the Royal Dublin Fusiliers to guard the bridge at Colenso as best step I could take for the protection of the Colony. I intend to contain as many Boers as I can round Ladysmith, and I believe they will not go south without making an attempt on Ladysmith. The Boers have established themselves in very strong positions in the hills west, north, and east of Ladysmith; each man has one or two ponies; they live on the country, and their mobility gives them great advantage. They resent intrusion so much that it is impossible to ascertain their numbers. They say themselves that they will attack. Ladysmith is strongly entrenched, but the lines are not continuous; the perimeter is so large that Boers could exercise their usual tactics. Our men want rest from fighting, but I have the greatest confidence in holding the Boers for as long as necessary. I could not now withdraw from it. I think it will be a good plan to send some of the Fleet to Durban to keep the public confident there." That is what he sent to me; he said he could not withdraw, and I then said he was right to stay there, but I did not approve of his staying there.

15132. But it is not the case that he represented that sending the one battalion to Colenso was all he was doing for the safety of the Colony, because he says, in his telegram just quoted, that by staying at Ladysmith he hoped to contain the Boers, and prevent them going further south?—I was reading what he said himself: "I wired Natal Governor yesterday that I would send the Royal Dublin Fusiliers to guard the bridge at Colenso as best step I could take for the protection of the colony." Those are his own words.

15133. Yes, but that has to be read in connection with the rest of the telegram?—Well, I knew, not at that time on the 31st, but three days later, that he had been driven into Ladysmith.

15134. Without going into that just now, I only say that you must not pick out one sentence from a telegram and represent it as the whole of what he was doing for the protection of the colony?—When he says that he would contain as many Boers as he could, and that they would not go south without attacking him?

15135. Yes?—I merely took the telegram as I read it, and I read it that he could not leave Ladysmith; he did not send out the cavalry I wanted, but he sent out one regiment. He should have sent out more. After all, a stationary force can contain no more of the enemy than those who choose to stay round it, and at that time, contrary to his belief, they were actually moving south and invading South Natal.

15136. You said you hoped you would have had all the cavalry out of Ladysmith?—Yes.

15137. Do you think that the force in Ladysmith would have been capable of defending the place without the cavalry?—Yes, I think they would have defended it must more easily. The cavalry really did nothing, except on the 6th of January, when they were brought into action.

15138. Do you think they were only brought into action on the 6th of January?—I learned that was the only day they had anything to do; they were used on the 1st or 2nd of November, but they went back again. I understood they were coming out, but they came to Onderbroek and went back again. Beyond that I do not think the cavalry did anything.

15139. Do you represent that they were not used for the general purposes of the siege?—As cavalry, no, they were not.

15140. As a cavalry force in the field, probably not, as they were inside of a perimeter; but if it is the case that the perimeter was so large that it could not be defended by the force without the cavalry, the cavalry were used probably inside?—I do not think that the cavalry held any portion of the perimeter. It is not a question I expected to be asked, and I do not know it, and I would rather not put down anything with regard to it. I understood you to ask me whether I was right in trying to get out the cavalry, and I think I was, but that is all I say.

15141. You do not want to argue it?—No, I do not know, I do not pretend to argue it. I have no doubt he did what he thought best; I accepted the position that he could not let the cavalry go.

15142. As to the arrival at Durban, have you anything to add there as to the preparations or plans?—No, I do not think so. With regard to Sir George White's telegram of the 30th November, it was sent in reply to my first attempt to send him a signal by flashlight on the clouds, and he only appeared to have seen a very small portion of that signal. Apart from the fact that the statement as to his food differed from any other statement he sent me at any other time, I attached great importance to the telegram, because I took it as a positive instruction to me that he could give me very little assistance in my advance, and, secondly, that he was in some way surrounded by spies from whose espionage he could not escape. I therefore took that as a lesson which ought to affect my future correspondence with him.

15143. Is that what you are referring to where he says: "The enemy learns every plan of operations I form, and I cannot discover source. I have locked up or banished every suspect, but still have undoubted evidence of betrayal"?—Yes, that is what he says.

15144. But surely it was his duty to let you know that, in order that the communications between you might be regulated accordingly?—It was his duty to let me know that, and it was my duty to make a note of it.

15145. Did you carry that so far as not to make any communications with him afterwards?—I think I told him every single movement that I was going to make, fully, but I never discussed movements with him afterwards. I gave him all the military information that it was necessary for him to have, fully and in good time, as my telegrams will show, but I took it as a hint that for some reason or another he did not consider his office was a safe one. I could read it in no other way. I gave him far more information about my plans than he gave me about his.

15146. You have just told us the state of matters you found in the Cape, and that you were surrounded by people by whom you could never tell that your words might not be made use of; was not he referring to very much the same set of circumstances?—Well, he went very much further than I found any necessity for; he said, "Every plan of operations I form"—it was not a question of his orders being known, but it was a question of the plans he formed himself apparently. I thought it a very important telegram, and that is all I can say;

it affected me very much. This is the telegram: "Hay or grazing is a difficulty; I have 35 days' supply of this at reduced ration . . . enemy learns every plan of operations I form, and I cannot discover source. I have locked up or banished every suspect, but still have undoubted evidence of betrayal. Native deserters from enemy and our native scouts report the enemy much disheartened," etc. It struck me as being a very important warning to me; I could see no other object of it.

15147. It affected your communications with him not so far as to prevent you from informing him of plans, but from discussing operations before you had made the plans?—Yes, it prevented me discussing anything with him; that is all. For instance, I will read my answer, in which I said to him on the 4th December: "I shall have concentrated four brigades of infantry, five batteries of artillery, one regiment of cavalry, 1,000 mounted Volunteers, by 6th December, and shall attack. I cannot yet say which route, but will communicate with you in several cipher messages before I advance."

15148. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I do not quite understand how this question has arisen; what course did you actually take in dealing with Sir George White after that? What was your position in consequence of this telegram?—In consequence of that telegram I never concerted beforehand in any action with Sir George White. I told him that I was going to do a given thing, and I think in every case I did that, but as a rule I told him one day and I almost invariably altered it the day afterwards. In raising this question I am not alluding to anything connected with the statement that has been put about in the Press that I told Sir George White I was to attack on the 17th and attacked on the 15th; that is a quite separate question altogether, and has nothing to do with it. The whole of my correspondence and the whole of my arrangements with Sir George White were affected by my knowledge of this telegram, and in consequence of it I probably took him less into my confidence than I did any other General who served under me during the time I was in South Africa.

15149. You restricted yourself rather to telling him the conclusion at which you had arrived without concerting from day to day the steps by which you had arrived at that conclusion?—That is it exactly.

15150. (Chairman.) If he did not mean what you supposed it was rather unfortunate?—Yes, but what else could he mean? He sent that telegram in response to a portion of a telegram that he had seen flashed on the sky. On the 7th December I opened heliographic communication with him, and I then repeated that same telegram, of which he had seen a portion, thinking I might elicit a further or some other answer, and he simply acknowledged it; he did not make any other remark, and did not repeat his former telegram that had come out by messenger, and which I had acknowledged. As he merely acknowledged it without making any further remark, I thought he confirmed his former telegram.

15151. You also said just now, in commenting on this telegram, that it made a statement about provisions which was quite different to any other; what did you mean by that?—No other telegram gave the amount of hay or grazing, or the amount of provisions for his garrison at the same figure, or anything very near the figure, he gave in that telegram. I do not attach any importance to it; it is merely an incidental effect of the telegram; it was once read out in the House of Commons, or I should not have spoken about it at all, but it is the actual fact that no other telegram which he sent gave at that particular time the same period for which he had food.

15152. He did give you subsequently the full details of his provisions?—Yes, I think he did; I got a great many telegrams from him. Practically what happened was that as the siege went on and his relief was put off his powers of lasting extended.

15153. That means to say that instead of calculating full rations he was calculating at diminished rations?—He continued reducing the daily ration, I imagine.

15154. Would not that account for some difference, possibly, in the amounts?—I do not think in that telegram. I do not think the point is worth elaborating; I do not want to make the least attack on Sir George White, and I think he did his very best. I would not have referred to that at all only I wanted to emphasise the fact that his statement as to undoubted evidence of betrayal did to some extent make me adopt towards him

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Bede
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17 Feb. 1903.

General The
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Sir Redvers
Buller,
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G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

less openness of information than I should otherwise have done.

15155. I do not want to raise any point of controversy either, but you did not mention another point in connection with this telegram which I should like to put a question about. You said it also indicated that he would not be able to co-operate with you; how do you find that from the telegram?—He said he could only help me by Onderbrook or Colenso.

15156. Not in this telegram: "With regard to road of advance towards Ladysmith, I could give most help to a force coming via Onderbrook Hotel or Springfield, but enemy is making his positions on that side stronger daily"—That is what I mean.

15157. But he also went on to say: "If force south of Tugela can effect junction with me I believe effect will be immediate and decisive—at present cannot go large, as I am completely invested, and must reserve myself for one or two big efforts to co-operate with relief force." Does not that mean he was quite willing to make one or two big efforts to co-operate?—Quite so. I hoped he would make a big effort, but he rather restricted me. Onderbrook and Springfield, as far as he was concerned, meant the same road for an entrance into Ladysmith; the road coming up from Springfield through Acton Homes, and the road coming from Maritzburg join in the Onderbrook Flat, and therefore by whichever way I elected to come, I had to get into the Onderbrook Flat before he could help me much, and the big effort would be there. In fact, I was to be actually attacking the very lines of circumvallation by which he was contained before he was prepared to offer me any assistance. I could draw no other inference from the expression "cannot go large."

15158. He says, "I could give most help," but he does not shut out the idea surely in that telegram that if you had suggested any other way he would have been perfectly willing to assist you to the utmost of his power?—No, but the telegrams tended that way, and that was the impression left on my mind. One of the reasons that made me give up the first advance by Hlangwane was the fact that going that way he did not hold out any hope of giving me much assistance, nor do I think he could have.

15159. If you agree that he could not, that is another matter, but you think he was willing to do anything he could to strike out?—Yes, he was certainly willing to do anything he thought he could do.

15160. (Sir Henry Norman.) I fancy you are quite convinced that your policy in moving your headquarters from Cape Town to Natal was right and necessary under the circumstances?—I think it was. I do not think myself that I could possibly have done my duty if I had not moved.

15161. And do you think if you had not gone the whole territory would probably have been ravaged by the Boers, General White being shut up in Ladysmith?—Yes, I think we saved Maritzburg by only a very few hours.

15162. You made some observations about the cavalry not being very useful inside Ladysmith; did you hear that, considering the large perimeter of the defences, portions of it were very weakly held, and the cavalry were intended to be used as a sort of reserve, and could much more rapidly than infantry get to the support of the weakly held positions?—Yes; that opens the whole question of holding Ladysmith, which is a matter which I really do not wish to discuss. I was not there, and it was not my business to criticise Sir George White, and I would rather not discuss it; not that I have anything to say against him in any way; but unless you have definitely formed your own mind, and are able to say "I would put so many men into this place, and if they had been on the spot they could have defended such an area," I do not think you are justified in discussing a scheme of defence. Sir George White informed me when I got to Ladysmith that he thought he was right to keep the cavalry, as they formed his main reserve, for he had two sides practically on which he was exposed to attack, and the cavalry could go from one side to the other quicker than infantry, and there was a good deal in that.

15163. That was a consideration which might have made him unwilling to part with his cavalry?—I assented the moment he wished to keep the cavalry; I asked for them, but he said he wished to keep them, and I assented. I thought that as he had to keep the place he ought to decide it, and I did not take the least exception to his decision.

(After a short adjournment.)

15164. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You mention the fact that on your arrival in Cape Colony the bridges had all been taken by the Boers, except the Orange River Bridge?—Yes, except one.

15165. I only want to ask you this one question. You had, of course, no responsibility for that; they had been taken before you arrived; but from a military point of view would it not have been advantageous to have taken precautions to have blown up those bridges before the Boers seized them?—I think not. I do not believe that anybody in England expected the war to begin with an invasion of Cape Colony; and as I have reason to know, when I got there, it was not anticipated by the Boer sympathisers themselves. In fact, Mr. Schreiner told me that he thought it unfair of them to invade the Colony. I do not think it would have been right or desirable in any case to have destroyed the bridges. We had to get over one of the bridges eventually, and it would have been a great deal of trouble to us to have to re-create it. And I do not think there was any moment in Cape Colony in which we had a chance of destroying a bridge before it was crossed. Part of the proposition of the 10,000 men contemplated, I think, at one time in England, that they should guard the bridges, but my idea was that if we did guard the bridges we merely put out a bait for the Boers, who would have been more likely to have come out and destroyed them. I think also that as a rule, if you want to make an advance you should be very careful what you destroy.

15166. As a matter of fact, in war if you allow the enemy to seize a bridge he takes good care, does he not, to destroy it before he goes away?—Yes, to prevent your being able to go over it.

15167. And as a matter of fact the Boers did destroy all the bridges before they retired?—I believe they did.

15168. And that being the case, might it not have been advantageous to have destroyed the bridges before they advanced?—But ours was not a case of retirement; we were not there. I doubt if we could have had a party at the bridge at that moment without danger to the party, and without danger of provoking war.

15169. I was not referring to a military party, but to arrangements which might have been made for destroying the bridge by other means?—Had I been out there I should have deprecated it.

15170. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) One word more about the bridges. Do you think that you had the means of rapidly repairing the bridges there?—The Boers, I believe, had.

15171. No, I mean our men?—I had tried in England beforehand to provide means for repairing both those bridges, and I believe the material was actually at the time in the Colony.

15172. Do you not think it would have been a great advantage to have had a gang of men accustomed to work with wooden structures like bridges, such as they have in America, in the United States, and Canada so as to be able rapidly to repair the communication across rivers?—I raised that question in England, and I remember very well what you have done yourself, and also what we did, as you will remember in the Red River Expedition. I found that for dealing with squared timber the men that we had were quite sufficient. You can make a trestle with squared timber, and specially made ironwork for gripping the cross pieces in a very short space of time. In point of fact, every bridge that we did repair during the war was always repaired first of all by means of wooden trestle bridges, made of the particular scantling provided for that purpose.

15173. But the workmen had not the same experience as those constantly occupied in that work. For instance, they have men for that express purpose on the different railways throughout the whole of America, so that in a very short time they are able to connect again?—We had a certain number of those men at the Cape, and I formed a corps of them almost immediately; they were mostly Americans and Canadians; people employed as engineers at some of the mines, and accustomed to put the different scantling stuff in the mines, and make the wood work of the mines; they were made into a repairing gang, and were used for that purpose. I think that on railway repairs—and I speak of my knowledge in Natal, certainly from Ladysmith to Newcastle—they did the work extraordinarily quickly, and no change of men could have done it quicker.

15174. On the whole you think there was no unnecessary loss of time?—None, I think, at all.

15175. None that could have been prevented?—No.

15176. (Chairman.) We have now got to page 6 of your statement—the situation in Cape Colony. That states succinctly the situation; and I think the only question I want to put about it is with regard to what you say at the bottom of the page, where you state that a message had been received from General Forestier-Walker to the effect that Mr. Rhodes had signified through the High Commissioner his objections to your design for clearing non-combatants out of Kimberley?—Shall I read the two telegrams?

15177. If you please?—The first is: "From the General, Cape Town. No. 564. 10th December. Kekewich puts numbers to leave Kimberley: Whites, 8,000; natives, 13,000. Numbers to remain: Garrison, 5,500; civilians, 5,000; natives, 3,000. I wired to Methuen numbers of civilians and natives to remain, especially the former were larger than can be conveniently rationed, and that I should endeavour to effect a reduction. Rhodes has since informed High Commissioner he considers proposals for defence inadequate, and asks sanction to enrol 2,000 volunteers in the Colony at the expense of De Beers. Unless this is done, and supplies of coal and dynamite forwarded, De Beers must be closed, and white men dismissed. Methuen will, in conjunction with Kekewich, deal with situation, and I have informed High Commissioner that the forwarding of coal and dynamite would unduly delay Methuen, and that the supply could not be maintained." I replied to that on the same day that I received the telegram as follows:—"Code No. 0184. 10th December. Your No. 564. In dealing with Kimberley we must put De Beers out of the question. Tell Methuen that he and Kekewich are to decide on the minimum garrison required to maintain defence on the assumption that we shall occupy Bloemfontein on the 30th January at latest. All we have to do is to keep the Union Jack flying over South Africa, and I trust Methuen and Kekewich to help me to do that without favour to any particular set of capitalists. If while doing that we can without inconvenience help De Beers let us do so, but I imagine the general situation in Cape Colony will immediately demand attention, and consequently the return of Methuen's troops, so do not be misled by sympathy for De Beers' directors, but get all non-combatants out that you can. We cannot keep the railway open, but will reopen it as soon as we can safely do so."

15178. I notice that in the first telegram the number of whites was put at 8,000?—Yes.

15179. I only mention that because I thought in your previous evidence you said that the chief people to come out were natives?—I thought so, and I did not intend to bring anything like that number out. But that is what it came to; we said we would re-open the railway, and there would be no trouble of getting them out. The railway got across the Modder directly the Modder Bridge was completed, very soon after Magersfontein, if not at the same moment.

15180. Then the operation which Lord Methuen had to conduct, as it turned out from those telegrams, would have involved not only taking out 13,000 natives but 8,000 whites?—Yes; it meant running a few more trains, but that was all. He had to keep the line open in any case.

15181. That was part of the operations that you had in view; that he should keep the line open to get these non-combatants out?—Yes, while he got out what he had to get out of Kimberley he was to keep the line open, and I did not anticipate that he would have any great difficulty in doing that.

15182. And that was on the assumption that in Kimberley they had only to deal with 2,000 or 3,000 Boers, as you told us before?—I do not want to belittle Lord Methuen's work. He had a very serious work to do, and he did it very well. At that time, as you will find, I say later it was a desperate situation, and I had to do the best I could.

15183. I am only bringing out exactly what your instructions to Lord Methuen were, and what the intention of those instructions was. That, I think, you have now fully explained?—Yes.

15184. As it turned out he had to fight Magersfontein in order to clear the railway?—Yes, and that I always expected he would have to do. I called it, before he went up, Spytfontein, but it is the same place

—Magersfontein. He had to fight there to clear the railway.

15185. That was a necessary part of his operations?—Yes.

15186. I do not know whether you desire to say anything about Delagoa Bay?—Nothing. I thought I ought not to leave it out, but I quite see that the Government must have had great difficulty.

15187. (Viscount Esher.) Did you discuss the question of Delagoa Bay with the Secretary of State for War before you left England?—So far as regards a base went I did, and he told me that Delagoa Bay was out of the question. There were several proposals that I discussed at the first meeting that I had with the Secretary of State in June. I discussed four routes with him—the route by Fort Salisbury, by Beira, the route by Delagoa Bay, the route by Kimberley, and the route by Natal. I discussed all those four routes with him.

15188. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did you also discuss with regard to Delagoa Bay the introduction of arms by Delagoa Bay?—Yes. I proposed at first that we should send a subsidiary expedition by that route; in fact, the expedition that eventually went by Beira.

15189. (Viscount Esher.) Did you discuss that question as to Delagoa Bay with Lord Lansdowne? You urged it in November, you say?—I urged it the moment I arrived in Cape Colony as the one card I had to play. The Boers having already invaded, and got their whole force, so far as I could understand, practically into the field as against Cape Colony and Natal, I thought that the closing of Delagoa Bay would probably prevent their putting more men into the field; but the moment I arrived in Cape Colony I learned the power of the Boers to put many more men in the field than I had reason to believe they could when I was in England.

15190. (Chairman.) We now come to the point at which you began your operations for the relief of Ladysmith. I do not know whether you wish to go through those in detail in any way?—I do not think so. I have tried to put them as shortly and clearly as I can, and if the Commission have any doubt on any point I shall be very glad if anybody will ask me any question.

15191. Subject to that, you do not wish to amplify the statement; the statement is full and complete?—With regard to that I should like perhaps to say one thing. I have been found fault with in the Press because I told Sir George White that I should attack probably on the 17th December, whereas I attacked on the 15th. I merely want to state that that was a mere ordinary precaution. I had to get across the Tugela, which was sure to take me a whole day, and I did not gather from the telegrams that passed between me and Sir George White, or from my knowledge of the country and the Boers, that there was the least advantage to be gained—whereas on the other hand there would have been immense risk to have been run—by ordering Sir George White out of Ladysmith into the field at a time when I could not possibly join hands with him. I thought that his situation in Ladysmith was one in which he had gone to Ladysmith for his own protection, and from the telegrams that he sent me I gathered that he was not prepared to come out of Ladysmith except to join hands with me, and therefore I should have been utterly wrong from any military point of view if I had ordered him out of Ladysmith, or had done anything to encourage him to come out of Ladysmith until I was across the Tugela, and in a position to make some sort of effort to meet him. Consequently my operation of crossing the Tugela was to be on the 15th, and the 17th was the day on which I told him I expected him to fight with me, and that was the day on which, in the ordinary course, if I had got across, I should have fought. I only want to make that point clear.

15192. I do not know whether you used the words advisedly, but you said that Sir George White went into Ladysmith, you thought, for his own protection?—Yes.

15193. He occupied Ladysmith as a part of the general policy, did he not?—I do not think so. I had no information to that effect at the time; in fact, that is contrary to my information; and I gathered from General French, with whom I discussed the point, that that was not so. I gathered from General French and from general information that I acquired that Sir George White had been driven into Ladysmith, and I read his letter to me of the 31st of October as rather meant

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17 Feb. 1902.

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G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

to convey to me that impression. Perhaps he has given you that letter?

15194. What letter are you referring to?—I am referring to a letter of the 31st of October that was brought out of Ladysmith to me from Sir George White by General French.

15195. No, we have not had that?—It is a long letter, describing the action of the 30th. Shall I read the whole letter? I do not like reading extracts of anybody's letters.

15196. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Are there not some paragraphs that refer to the particular point?

(Chairman) I do not think you need read a long narrative; we have had it in many forms?—He says: "The result of yesterday's fighting between the Helpmakaar and Newcastle roads was disappointing. I may commence by saying that many of my staff were opposed to my taking the field, and thought I ought to wait to strike until the enemy was close into us; but I had got all the troops in Natal Colony, and I did not consider myself justified in allowing myself to be shut in closer, and I determined to strike out." He goes on: "I planned an attack yesterday."

15197. And describes the attack?—He merely goes on to say that the attack did not come off as he intended, and that the position he intended to attack was evacuated. "As soon as I could realize the situation I saw that our force was being rather pressed. All the infantry were in action and French's cavalry; I reinforced French by two cavalry regiments." And he goes on, "But our men could not get forward, they were holding their own, but some of our regiments did not care to go on, and I became anxious as to how the affair was to end. The enemy, as usual, were creeping towards our flank, and I was constantly receiving accounts of the appearance of fresh bodies. Even if the Boers had been driven out they would probably have ridden back in groups to another further back, I felt that the longer this state of things lasted the greater the danger to us. I had to think of Ladysmith. I knew that I could drive them off then, but feared I might not be able to do so later, as the men were played out and short of water. I therefore made arrangements in the rear and withdrew. Considering all things, it was very well done, and our troops were not molested by the enemy." Then he goes on again, "I think we have taught him greater respect for our soldiers, but I cannot, I fear, go on striking out so frequently. They are making entrenchments at long distances and trying to keep us in—I hope they will stick to us and not press the Colony lower down." I gathered from that letter, of which I have only quoted parts, that Sir George White was driven in, and General French confirmed me in that opinion.

15198. The last passage that you have quoted surely shows that he intended to hold Ladysmith, and that that was his object; because he said: "I hope they will continue," I think the message was, "to stick to us"?—On the same day that he wrote that he telegraphed to me and said he could not get of Ladysmith. Of course he intended to hold it.

15199. But he deliberately took up the position that it was necessary to hold Ladysmith, even at the risk of being shut in?—He never told me so.

15200. Did he not include it in the whole course of operations?—Certainly at the time my impression was that he was driven into Ladysmith. That day, by the Ladysmith garrison, was known as Black Monday. They never expected it. He was driven into Ladysmith, and there he was able to make a stand. But I do not think for a moment that on the morning of that day, when he went out, he had any idea that the right thing was to hold a defensive position at Ladysmith. He must have been driven into Ladysmith, or he would never have been ignorant of the fate of his detachment at Nicholson's Nek.

15201-2. Not on the day when he fought the battle of Ladysmith?—No, because otherwise he would not have gone out. He had to get back to Ladysmith, on his own showing, to protect Ladysmith. Surely he would have protected it before he went out if he intended to hold it.

(Chairman.) It is not for me to criticise strategy or tactics; but I understand the letter that you yourself have read to say that he considered it his duty to strike out, but to hold Ladysmith—that that was the summary of the letter.

15203. (Sir Frederick Darley) In that letter you will find that he says "I have made Ladysmith very

strong"?—Yes, he says that. I was not talking—it would not be right for me to talk—about what Sir George White intended. I am merely talking about the plans I made according to what I understood.

15204. (Chairman.) It is suggested to me that it is, as you say, unsatisfactory to have merely extracts; perhaps you would put that letter in. We need not trouble you to read it all?—I think you have it already in the printed book. I only want to explain that with regard to making my plan of attack on Ladysmith I had to take certain matters into consideration, and one of the matters that I had to take into consideration was that I considered, and I thought on good grounds that Sir George White had been driven into Ladysmith, and that I had nothing from him at the time that gave me any reason to suspect the contrary.

15205. I only wanted to bring out exactly what your idea was at the time because that is essential for our forming a conclusion. I will simply put it to you that that was the position which you were under the impression prevailed—that Sir George White's forces had been driven into Ladysmith, and that you had to regulate your conduct of affairs in accordance with that situation?—I say that my impression was that he was driven into Ladysmith and therefore I should not be justified in ordering him into the field for new active operations unless I was prepared to join hands with him at the same time. Then the rest of this section I think, stands; unless there is any question that you wish to ask, I have nothing to add.

15206. Down to where, do you mean?—"Change of Plans," you were dealing with.

15207. You mention at the beginning of that section, "Change of Plans," that the action of Magersfontein influenced your plans?—It did. I wrote at once and telegraphed to the Secretary of State for War, and told him so, explaining how I considered that that action, coupled at the same moment with General Gatacre's want of success at Stormberg—for these two checks were almost at the same moment—made me feel that I should not be justified in taking so great risk as I was proposing to take if I marched round by Potgieter's Drift.

15208. Was that simply on the ground of the encouragement that those events gave to the Boers?—It was on the ground that my two other forces in the field had been brought to a standstill, both of them.

15209. The other two?—The other two, and therefore I was brought to a standstill, too, and my state was very parlous. All the time I had the responsibility of South Natal on my shoulders; I had to consider South Natal, and an expedition by Potgieter's Drift was a risk, it was in sight the whole way from the hills; we were moving under the hills the whole way and almost in shot. And with regard to what I have quoted in that first paragraph in "Change of Plans," I should like to say that my telegram to General Forestier-Walker was in the nature of a testamentary disposition. I telegraphed to him, and told him that the time had come to take up defensive positions. I was going into action the next day, and guns and rifle fire carry a long way. I might have been killed, and had I been killed, and the attack failed at Colenso, the proper thing for him to have done at that moment would certainly have been to have taken up a defensive position.

15210. But you put it to the Secretary of State that whether you succeeded or failed, that would have been the proper thing to do?—You are coming to that telegram presently. I should like to deal with that telegram when you come to it, if I may.

15211. Is it not at the same time?—No. I told the Secretary of State that it would be better to lose Ladysmith than throw up Natal.

15212. (Viscount Esher.) That is the 13th, the next day. According to your statement in this section "Change of Plans," you received the news of Magersfontein on the 12th?—Yes, and I changed my plans really almost directly.

15213. (Chairman.) And on the 13th you telegraphed to the Secretary of State that whether you succeeded or failed, the time had come, both in Natal and Cape Colony, to stand on the defensive until the winter?—Yes; those two telegrams were, as I say, in the nature of a testamentary disposition. I was going into action, and I thought it the right thing to say. If I was killed it covered General Forestier-Walker, and if I was not killed I could have made a new plan the next day and considered what I would do. But, practically, I had in Cape Colony, and I should, if I had succeeded in Natal also, have taken up defensive positions to organise the force

there. The men had been thrown out of their ships, in consequence of the great pressure, into the battle-field; they were not quite fully equipped. I had not nearly as many mounted men raised as I hoped for, and I fully intended to mount a great many more infantry, which I did afterwards. All those measures there had been no time for. I had only had just a month and a half really of almost continuous fighting in three theatres of war to keep back the Boers—in which we succeeded. Lord Methuen, after Magersfontein was, by the 16th, established in a position in which he could remain. General Gatacre and General French were both fairly comfortable, and I hoped to be in the same position in Natal; and then I should have had time to look round.

15214. You said, I think, that you wished to refer to a telegram to the Secretary of State?—No, I do not. I thought you were speaking of a later telegram at the moment when I said that. The telegram I referred to was my No. 79, of the 13th of December.

15215. (*Viscount Esher.*) To whom?—To the Secretary of State for War.

15216. (*Chairman.*) Yes, No. 79 cipher; we have that?—The last paragraph is the point to which I refer in my summary, where I said "The enemy had the initiative, and has used it well. We have staying power, and must now use that." At that moment I was doubtful whether Lord Methuen would have to withdraw or not, and it is qualified by me in my telegram, "If Methuen goes back to the Orange River the enemy probably will press their invasion of Cape Colony, and it will have to be our policy to delay the enemy, and wait till winter comes." I mean that I did not actually recommend the Secretary of State at that moment unconditionally that we should take up defensive positions, but my telegram to General Forestier-Walker, and my sort of advice was founded on a possibility. The possibility to General Forestier-Walker was that I might be killed, and the possibility to the Secretary of State was that Lord Methuen might not be able to remain at Modder.

15217. (*Viscount Esher.*) But on the 12th had your movement actually commenced to march to Potgieter's Drift before you received the news of Magersfontein?—General Barton had gone to Chieveley.

15218. That was in connection with your original movement?—Yes. I had not moved at all to the westward; nobody had moved to the west; General Barton had gone forward with my retaining force, but the other people were concentrated at Frere.

15219. Still, all your orders were issued for that movement?—Yes, and Sir George White was advised, and everything was settled.

15220. It was to have commenced actually on that day?—Yes.

15221. (*Chairman.*) In that telegram you did not say anything about losing Ladysmith?—It is in the letter I think, in the despatch written on the same day; the despatch of the 13th; in the middle of the letter you will see, "From my point of view it would be better."

15222. But when the telegram was received there was nothing before the Secretary of State to show, except from the context, that that meant losing Ladysmith?—No, I should never telegraph to the Secretary of State that I thought I was going to fail.

15223. But you had it distinctly before you, as your letter shows, at that time that if you failed you contemplated the loss of Ladysmith as the best way out of the situation?—I fully appreciated the enormous difficulties of the task in front of me. I do not believe there is a more difficult piece of ground in the world than the piece I had to force, and I was fully cognisant of the very great difficulty I had, and that I was taking a very considerable risk in which I might not be successful. I also had in my mind, as my letter shows, though I did not say it in my telegram (I never send that sort of thing in a telegram except for a very special reason) that I did think it was quite possible that if I failed I might not be able to get into Ladysmith in time to relieve it.

15224. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is that phrase which you quoted about its being better to lose Ladysmith in your despatch to the Secretary of State of the 13th of December?—Yes, just in the middle of it; and in that despatch I gave him what I believed at the moment was an absolutely truthful representation of my own mind. I was by no means quite confident, but I thought I was doing the best I could while fighting; and in the last paragraph of that letter, too, I say the same thing.

15225. (*Chairman.*) I understand that one of your reasons for not taking the direction which you eventually took, or perhaps your principal reason, was that your men were raw?—That was one of my reasons for not going by Hlangwane Hill.

15226. And yet that was the way you eventually went?—Yes. It meant four days' rather difficult bush fighting before we got to a position where we could do anything.

15227. And when you say that your men were raw, what do you mean by that?—That they were only just off ship, and had never had any fighting; most of them had never had a shot fired at them.

15228. But they were part of the Army Corps, were they not?—But the Army Corps had never been shot at.

15229. I suppose that would happen to an Army Corps in any case when it goes into action?—But if the general knows it he cannot take the same risk as he can with men who know all about being shot at.

15230. Is that the position in which you represent that we are: that the first Army Corps is to be regarded as raw troops, with which a general is not justified in taking an action of this kind?—You may have a very good hunter in your stable, but if he has never had a gallop you would not take him out for a long day's hunting. A horse may be a very good hunter, but if he is raw at his work he would not be fit to go a long day, and it is the same thing with a man. If he has never been shot at, and the company have never been accustomed to the stress of war, they are not the same valuable fighting machine that they become afterwards; undoubtedly they are not.

15231. That stands to reason, but I want to know whether in your opinion a General is not justified in taking the First Army Corps of the British Army into an action such as was contemplated in that case?—I do not think that any general is justified in taking any troops into a place where he does not think they will win. I did not think my troops were fit to go into bush-fighting. It is a most difficult thing, of course; it requires an immense amount of, individual resolution; the men are away from their officers and they require to have a certain amount of knowledge of combat before they are much good in the bush.

15232. The word "fit" covers the whole of my question. The troops were not "fit" then?—In my opinion my chances of winning with them were not great; that is not, "fit" from my point of view.

15233. Was that in consequence of their want of training?—In consequence of its having been impossible to train them.

15234. It would be impossible to train them, do you say?—I think so; you cannot simulate a bullet—nobody has ever been able to do so; I wish they could, but you cannot simulate the effect of bullets on a man. The only way to get your men in fighting order is to get them into action first of all if you can, where you can see what they are doing. Then you eventually encourage some and check others, and tell them what to do, and in that way they become warriors. But to take officers and men suddenly into the most difficult sort of fighting you can find anywhere, which is bush-fighting, I would not do it, I confess, at any time.

15235. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was your proposed march to Potgieter's Drift in the nature of a training gallop?—No, my march to Potgieter's Drift was through open country. It was in the nature to a certain degree of this—it taught the men to march at any rate. They had had no marching—they had been nearly a month on board ship.

15236. (*Chairman.*) Then we should be in this same position in any case in which we had to land an army to carry on operations in the bush?—There is hardly a conceivable condition where you would make war in which it would be necessary for the General to force bush-fighting on the day after landing; there are very few places at any rate.

15237. Is it only with regard to bush-fighting that you make that observation?—Yes. In bush-fighting you cannot see your men.

15238. And is it a want of individual initiative that you complain of?—No, I do not want to say it is any fault of anybody. Bush-fighting is the most difficult thing; I have had a good deal of it to do, and I know how difficult it is. The men get away; you lose them, they lose their direction, they go the wrong way, and there is very great difficulty. I have always heard, and

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
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17 Feb. 1903.

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G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903

I believe it, that the battle of Königgrätz would have been over very much sooner than it was if it had not been that such a very large portion of the German Army was engulfed in the wood on the Austrian right.

15239. But is it not part of the condition of modern warfare that the private soldier, the non-commissioned officer, and the subaltern all require to have greater individuality than they used to have?—Certainly it is, most decidedly so; we do not get enough training to give our men much individuality; that unfortunately is true. But I can hardly conceive any amount of training that would make me anxious as a commander to land my troops off ship and take them suddenly into bush-fighting. I should like to know a little more of them first.

15240. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) When you ultimately moved by Monte Cristo and Hlangwane Hill, did they do well then?—They did very well; the West Surrey and the Rifle Brigade were the whole day in the bush, and they really did very well.

15241. (*Sir John Edge.*) I suppose that, even with the best troops, if they were inexperienced in bush-fighting, you would prefer to keep them out of it; it has nothing to do with the courage of the men?—Yes, I have always found that it makes the greatest demand upon officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of any sort of fighting you can conceive of, whatever the training and character of the troops.

15242. They do not quite know where they are going, and you do not know where they are gone?—No, you do not know where they are, and you cannot communicate with or control them.

15243. (*Viscount Esher.*) Your criticism would not apply only to British troops; you would say the same of any troops?—Yes.

15244. All untried troops?—Yes.

15245. (*Sir John Edge.*) The difficulty is that they do not know where they are going, and you do not know where they are?—That is it. All the drill control disappears by reason of the bush. The men are turned loose, that is what it comes to, and unless they are exceedingly handy and accustomed to fight by themselves, they are liable to get in the wrong direction, and fire in a panic, and all sorts of things.

15246. (*Viscount Esher.*) On that question of the Chairman's, you came to the conclusion, then, at that time, that the line of advance which you ultimately took was the most difficult of the four, did you not?—Yes, I came to the conclusion that the line of advance I first tried was a very much easier one than the line of advance by Hlangwane Hill. The line of advance by Potgieter's Drift was recommended to me by those whom I was bound to trust, as being easier; but it was not, and if I had then known the line of advance by Potgieter's Drift as well as I did after I had been fighting there, I should never have gone there.

15247. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) In such a case as that which you speak of, would you say that the former mode of life, the intelligence and experience of Colonial troops come into play, and that they are the more useful?—Yes, Colonial troops in the sense of backwoodsmen.

15248. Yes, those who have been accustomed to the bush?—Yes. I do not think that Colonial troops taken out of Colonial towns would be any better than our backwoodsmen have been in the bush; but, of course, backwoodsmen and men accustomed to fight for their own hand would have been better.

15249. (*Sir John Jackson.*) And in a case where a man has to rely more upon his own resources you would expect to get a better result if you had your troops from a slightly higher level than they are recruited from at present, would you not?—But really our troops are very good. I do not think we have any right to fall foul of them.

15250. Not as regards their courage, of course?—You only want to give them a little shooting. I have been in fights with both the Army and the Navy, and I have nothing to complain of in the men. They want practice in being shot at. When they have had that they are very good.

15251. Yes; but in that particular kind of bush-fighting that you are speaking of, the intelligence of the man comes in a little more, does it not, when he is left all to himself?—Yes, it does.

15252. I am not suggesting that the British soldier is not a plucky man; but my suggestion is whether in a case

of that kind you do not think that the material might be got from a rather better class of man than the recruits mostly come from now, and whether that might not be an advantage?—Yes, it might. But you sometimes find in the most uneducated men a real genius for war—a "hunter's instinct," in fact.

15253. (*Viscount Esher.*) You say that you found the advance by Potgieter's Drift more difficult than you expected?—Yes.

15254. And ultimately, did you find the advance by Hlangwane Hill easier than you expected?—No, I think not. It was very difficult. The men really fought very well indeed for fourteen days and almost fourteen nights without stopping. They never let go anything that we had got, but we only got it almost by inches at one time. The Boers themselves and the German officers who were with the Boers at the top of Spion Kop told my officers that it was absolutely impossible to get into Ladysmith. It was not impossible, because we did it; but I assure you the difficulties were very, very great—the sheer fighting. We were under the hill the whole way. As they fell back every position they occupied commanded the one we had just taken.

15255. When you ultimately advanced by Hlangwane Hill do you consider that the Boer force was weaker than it would have been at the time you would have attacked it before?—I consider that at Spion Kop and Vaal Krantz I disposed of their very best educated men.

15256. Had not the advance also through the Orange Free State weakened the force?—No, I think not. I think it had very little effect.

15257. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) As regards the maps that you had for that chain of mountains, were they sufficient for your purposes?—The only map I had I had created. This (*producing the same*) is the map we had. There was no map of that country.

15258. I mean, for forming your ideas was it sufficient?—Yes, it is not a bad map; it is an inch to a mile. I had it made in Maritzburg.

15259. Before you got up there?—Yes. Before I got to Frere.

15260. Did it prove sufficient?—Yes, I think it did.

15261. It was fairly accurate?—I got it compiled from all the different farm surveys and made into a map of a scale of one inch to a mile. That was the map we used until we got on to what is called Grant's map.

15262. So that we cannot say that any misfortune occurred from want of maps?—No, I think not. There were no minor surveys. Spion Kop, for instance, in this map is in the wrong place; but I think it was good enough to fight by.

15263. On the whole, you did not suffer seriously for want of a better map?—No, I do not think so. But with a better map we should have got our ranges more quickly.

15264. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) At the time you attacked Hlangwane Hill do you not think that the Boers were very much shaken by your three previous attacks?—I attacked practically new commandoes. Nearly all the fighting at Spion Kop was against Free Staters, with a certain number of what might be called the permanent army of the Transvaal, namely, Johannesburg and Pretoria Police; but there were very few Transvaalers who came into action against us beyond the police. At Hlangwane Hill the people who were opposed to us were entirely Transvaalers.

15265. Who were not opposed to you before?—They had not been. They had no doubt been in support.

15266. But in point of fact, so far as the opposition was concerned, they were fresh divisions?—Yes, quite fresh.

15267. Reserves for the former divisions?—They were the men who were holding the positions that we had not attacked. They were told off all round Ladysmith. I sent home a Boer map which I found, and every position had a different commando attached to it. The Free State commandos were on the west, so that as the men we attacked on Spion Kop came from the west; our fighting there was principally against Free Staters.

15268. Do you not think that their morale must have been somewhat shaken by the previous attacks and the losses?—I think it must very much. At the same time they stood very well at Pieter's Hill—extremely well.

15269. But still, you think their morale was affected?

—Yes, I think so. They could not stand constant fighting, and we could. If we had not gone on fighting we never should have got in.

15270. Even though your men had been as well trained and accustomed to fighting as when they did attack at Hlangwane Hill, and in the supposition there had been no previous attacks, do you not think that your

task would have been a much more difficult one than it was?—Yes, I think it would have been very much more difficult for that reason, and also for the reason that on the 15th of December I had not force enough really to justify me in going by Hlangwane Hill. I had an extra division when I tried it, but at that time I had not that extra division.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

17 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Wednesday, 18th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary*).

General The Right Hon. Sir REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., recalled and further examined.

Colonel The Hon. Sir F. W. STOPFORD, K.C.M.G., C.B., Military Secretary to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa (Sir Redvers Buller), was also in attendance.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

15271. (*Chairman*.) When we left off yesterday we had just finished the section of your statement headed "Change of Plans"?—I want, if I might be allowed, to make three points in my evidence yesterday a little clearer than I think I did, if there was any doubt about them.

15272. Certainly!—The first two, perhaps, are small points, and they relate more to attacks made upon me than to anything that actually affects the Commission, but it might be said against me that in my narrative I have slurred over an accusation that was made against me, which was that I had not, when I arrived at the Cape, advised the Government to send reinforcements quickly enough. I do not know whether any member of the Commission has heard that said; but when I arrived at the Cape it was not very easy at first to ascertain the exact military situation. It was very evident to me that the authorities at the Cape had been taken by surprise by the suddenness and the severity of the enemy's attack. In the files of newspapers that were given to me on arrival I found that Mr. Rhodes the day before he left Cape Town had expressed his certainty that the Boers would not fight; and in the interview that I had on the second day with Mr. Schreiner, who impressed me as a very loyal, honest man, he gave me to understand that he could not help thinking that there was some error altogether in anticipating any invasion of Cape Colony. He wrote, as I have said, to Mr. Steyn protesting against it; and I did not think I was justified in asking for a further Division until I saw what result that letter had. On the day, which I think was the 10th November, when I received Mr. Steyn's answer from Mr. Schreiner, I at once telegraphed direct to the Government for the next Division. That is the point with regard to reinforcements.

15273. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) On that might I ask a question which I intended to have asked you yesterday. The point, to my mind, that wants explaining more clearly is this: You told us yesterday that when you went to Natal it was with a view of saving Natal, but that your scheme of advancing from Cape Colony up through Bloemfontein remained unchanged; you intended to take it up at a later date?—Yes.

15274. To do that would have involved reinforcements, surely. If you diverted a large portion of your force to Natal would it not have required reinforcements from England to carry out the ultimate scheme of advancing up through Bloemfontein. That struck me yesterday in hearing your evidence on that point?

—I will read the telegram I sent when I did ask for reinforcements.

15275. (*Chairman*.) What is the date of it?—The 10th of November. I had asked on the 4th of November that a Division might be prepared, but I said, "Do not take up shipping until you hear from me again." On the 10th the Secretary of State telegraphed to me: "Division is being prepared, but we cannot venture to take up shipping without knowing for certain whether it will be wanted. This can be left open as long as you please, but provision of ships, particularly horse transport, takes time. Can you now say by what date you will want the troops?" I telegraphed the same day (my No. 27), "Your No. 12 (that was the telegram that I was answering), The defence of Ladysmith seems to have so thoroughly checked the advance of enemy that I have some grounds for hoping that successful relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith may end opposition; on the other hand, reliable Dutch here predict guerilla warfare for certainty. I think, therefore, I ought to have another Division as soon as possible. My great want at present is mounted men. I am raising as many as I can, and should like as soon as possible a few good special-service officers, not above the rank of captain, for service with them—Infantry men for choice." That was on the 10th. As soon as I really had time to look round I asked for a Division; I think I did that as quickly as I could.

15276. (*Chairman*.) What is the next point?—The next point is a point that hangs on to an answer that I gave to a question which Lord Strathcona asked me yesterday. He asked me whether I did not think mounted men were specially necessary, and I said Yes, and, as that telegram shows, I did think so. But I had forgotten at the moment that there has been several times public discussion on a telegram I have never seen, which was supposed to have told the Colonies that Infantry were preferred. Very indirectly, I was mixed up with that telegram, and I should like to explain the circumstances.

See Q. 15093-8.

15277. If you please?—I was sitting one day on a Committee at the War Office when I was told that the Secretary of State wanted to see me. I went into his room, and he had in his hands a paper (I think it was about the end of the first week in October; I am almost sure it was in October), and he told me that he had received from the Colonial Office an offer to send Colonial troops. A conversation ensued as to them. I was not shown the paper, and was not given any accurate figures, and it was rather a casual conversation, but I gathered that the point in his mind at that moment

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

was what he should pay them. I further gathered that his intention was to accept men from the Colonies, but to say that the English Government would only pay them at the rate they paid their own soldiers. At that time I was looking forward to arriving at the Cape and finding myself in a hornets' nest, and the only card I had in any sense up my sleeve was my conviction that the action of the Boers, if they did go to war, would drive out of the Transvaal, out of Johannesburg especially, and also partly out of the Free State, a very large number of very useful fighting Englishmen, who would probably be rather bitter, and most likely be immediately anxious to take up arms against the Boers. I had always calculated that they would give me a force of from 8,000 to 10,000 men, which would be a very effective mounted force. I had at the time also in my own mind calculated that I should have enough saddlery, and I did not want to mention this idea to Lord Lansdowne. The price in South Africa for mounted men had formerly always been, 5s. a day, and I did not believe myself that I should get these men under 5s. I wanted to pay them 5s. a day, and, to avoid being tied to a less sum for the Colonial mounted men, I told Lord Lansdowne that so far as I was concerned I should be quite satisfied if he would take all the Infantry that the Colonies would send, but that I did not think there was any necessity for taking a very small detached force of Cavalry. My idea was that all the Colonists could ride, and that I could mount them and turn them into Mounted Infantry and pay them all alike, 5s. a day. I have only gone into that explanation because it meets the point that has been raised.

15278. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do you remember which of the Colonies it was that came under your notice then?—I do not think Lord Lansdowne mentioned them at all.

15279. Because, as regards the Australian Colonies, as perhaps you are aware, the first contingents that went out, certainly from New South Wales, and I think from the other Australian Colonies, went at the expense of the Colonial Government; there was no question of Imperial pay?—Unluckily for me the Australians did not come under my command at all, and I do not know the conditions under which they went. I only wanted rather not to pretend that I had not cognisance of that telegram. I wanted to be open in fact.

15280. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) It was not that you considered that mounted men would not be useful or required, but that you thought you could get a sufficient body of men in South Africa?—As a matter of fact the composition of the expedition was not mine, but I did expect that on my arrival at the Cape I should want mounted men immediately, and that my need might be urgent; and I thought therefore that it was better for me to take what I could get in the Colony at the moment (these other Colonies' troops were only at that time being thought of), and that later on if the War assumed greater proportions I should be able to make more at leisure arrangements for troops from those Colonies.

15281. Could you have foreseen the turn that things took you would certainly have desired more mounted men sent out at once?—I should certainly.

15282. And so soon as you had an opportunity of forming mounted corps you did so. You did ask for them afterwards?—The day I landed I began to create mounted men.

15283. Only you were deficient in mounted men to begin with?—Yes.

15284. Greatly deficient?—Yes.

15285. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point?—The third point that I rather wanted to explain was the question (I do not know what impression I left upon the Commission) as to my views of the position of Ladysmith, because it is rather of importance to me. I have this morning put together the telegrams, references to telegrams, and the extracts from them, from which I formed my opinion, and in looking over the book I found that I had quite forgotten that Lord Wolseley had formed at home exactly the same opinion that I had, that is to say that if Sir George White went into Ladysmith it would not definitely tend to the protection of Natal. May I just read those selections?

15286. Certainly?—On the 28th of October Sir George

White telegraphed to me, "Natal requires earliest reinforcements possible; will do all my means admit of to conquer enemy." I can give you, if you like, the numbers of his telegrams I am quoting from.

15287. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The dates, I think, will be useful?—That is 'No. 122, 28th of October.

15288. (*Chairman.*) Are these telegrams to you?—Yes. From Sir George White.

15289. To you?—To me.

15290. I do not think we have them?—I understood that they were all printed. I can read it all, I have it here.

15291. We have the telegrams that begin on the 26th of November, but I do not think we have the earlier ones?—Then perhaps I had better read the whole of it. "No. 122, 28th October, from Sir George White. Have a very strong force in front of me with many guns. Natal Colony requires earliest reinforcements possible. Troops here very heavy work, especially cavalry. I will do all my means admit of to conquer enemy. Very short of staff and officers. Hunter indispensable." On the 30th October he telegraphed to me an account of what has since been known as Nicholson's Nek, and he wound up that telegram by saying, "After being in action several hours I withdrew the troops and returned unmolested to cantonments. The enemy are in great numbers." On the 1st November I telegraphed to him and said, "Please telegraph me accurate description of your view of the situation. I doubt if the Boers will ever attack you if entrenched. Hitherto you have gone out to attack them. Can you not entrench and wait events? No reinforcements can reach you for at least 14 days." On the same date I had also asked General Hunter for a report, and he reported on the 1st of November, "Boers are superior to General White in numbers, mobility, and long range artillery. I think they will shortly interrupt railway and telegraph; that General White can defend himself against capture; that you should, if possible, guard intact the bridges at Colenso and Estcourt, and defend the passages of the Tugela River till you can relieve White." Then on the 31st October Sir George White telegraphed to me, "I wired Natal Governor yesterday that I would send the Royal Dublin Fusiliers to guard the bridge at Colenso as the best step I could take for protection of Colony. I intend to contain as many Boers as I can round Ladysmith, and I believe they will not go south without making an attempt on Ladysmith." Then he went on to reply to my telegram. He said, "Ladysmith is strongly entrenched, but the lines are not continuous. The perimeter is so large that Boers could exercise their usual tactics. Our men want rest from fighting, but I have the greatest confidence in holding the Boers as long as is necessary. I could not now withdraw from it." And on the same day, the 31st October, I received from London a telegram from Lord Wolseley, in which he said (that will be in the London telegrams), "Issue whatever order you deem best to White, who is now one of your Generals. Telegram from White leads me to fancy he means to hold on and allow himself to be besieged in Ladysmith. Is he wise to do this, which would place all Natal at the mercy of the enemy?" Then Sir George White wrote me the letter which I referred to yesterday, of the 31st October, of which I think you have a copy, and in that letter there is one reference that I did not read yesterday that I saw afterwards. He said when he retired, "I had to think of Ladysmith, and I knew I could drive them off, but feared I might not be able to do so later, as the men were played out and short of water. I therefore made arrangements in the rear and withdrew." And at the end of his letter he said, "Yesterday when I recognised that I could not break up the enemy around us in the field, I sent the Dublin Fusiliers and 6 Natal Guns to Colenso to try and close that road south to the Boers in case they ignored Ladysmith. I think they would stick to us." And then he sent out a message by pigeon, which we got on the 9th of November, in which he said, "Enemy have long range guns all round us, but it is impossible to ascertain the strength in which he holds his different positions. We calculate his circle must be over 20 miles. Our position is also very extended, about 11 miles to enable us to retain Artillery position, which if lost would make Ladysmith untenable. This curtails our force for offensive operations without great risk to Ladysmith." I do not want

to labour that point any more. I only want rather to let the Commission understand that, though I do not in the least deny that Sir George White may have had strategical ideas in going into Ladysmith, the impression which those telegrams gave me (and equally gave Lord Wolseley) was that he was driven into Ladysmith, and practically as an Army in the field his power was gone, and that the only advantage he was to me was that as he defended Ladysmith he did automatically, undoubtedly, contain a certain number of Boers.

15292. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You answered the Commander-in-Chief's telegram to you on the 31st October, in which he says, "Telegram from White leads me to fancy that he wants to hold on and allow himself to be besieged in Ladysmith," on the 1st November?—I answered it the same day, I think.

15293. On the 1st November?—Yes, "I suggested to White that Colenso and line Tugela offered promising position, but he has selected Ladysmith, which he says is strongly entrenched, and whence he could not now withdraw. I suspect he is right in this. His supplies are there; if he sent them back in advance he might be isolated without them; and *vice versa* he might lose them. His men also must want rest badly. I have arranged with Admiralty to protect Durban; Maritzburg is at present indefensible."

15294. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) On that point there is one matter that I think you ought to have an opportunity of explaining. We have not the notes of yesterday's evidence before us yet, but if my memory serves me right (you will correct me if I am wrong) you told us that you had instructed or advised, either before you started from England or from Madeira, that stores should be poured into Ladysmith as rapidly as possible. Do you remember saying that yesterday?—I think you rather misunderstood me. I did that in England at the time that General Symons moved the force to Glencoe. I went up to London and opposed it by every possible means in my power. I pointed out to Lord Lansdowne that it was like stretching out your arm to have your hand cut off; that a small force like that could do no good. I then went to Lord Wolseley and said that at any rate Glencoe ought to be fortified, and should have at least 60 days' provisions, as I was perfectly certain that in the event of the Boers ever invading, Glencoe would be isolated; and a telegram, which I daresay I could turn up in the War Office Book (but I have no reference to it here) was then sent, asking what provisions were at Glencoe. The answer was rather a peculiar one; that there were only six days' and no need for more, because it could be supplied by the railway. My conviction that the railway would be cut was the very thing that made me wish for more supplies than the six days'. And then, I think at my instance, Lord Wolseley sent a telegram out in which he said that every isolated post was to have at least 60 days'. That order affected Ladysmith, and therefore Ladysmith had the 60 days'. That is what I mean.

15295. That is as far as you went?—Yes.

15296. I thought I understood you yesterday to say (you can always correct it on the notes if you went too far, or I may be wrong) that a telegram was sent instructing them to pour stores into Ladysmith as fast as possible?—Oh, no.

15297. (*Chairman.*) You do not want to pursue that point further than you have stated it?—No.

15298. Because, as you are aware, we have had an opportunity of hearing the views on the strategical positions from Lord Wolseley and from Lord Roberts, but we accept them as views expressed by those authorities on the strategical position, and we accept yours in the same way?—I do not want really to give any views on the strategical position. I only wanted to make it clear that I had grounds upon which to base my opinion (which I thought you rather questioned yesterday) that I was justified in thinking that I could not count much on the Ladysmith garrison.

15299. I understand your views; do not take it as accepting them?—I do not want you to do more.

15300. Then now shall we go on?—If you please.

15301. We come now to the point of your summary, which is headed, "Events of the 15th December,"

and I take it that this is the account that you wish us to accept from you of those events, and I do not know that I have any question which I wish to put to you with regard to them; do you want to amplify them?—There are only two matters which I want to be sure that I have made clear. I hope I have practically made it clear that I never attacked on the 15th at all. I have been accused of having done so, and it has been said that every military man condemned the execution of that attack. But I made no attack. I stopped at the very earliest moment in the morning every General from moving, and no attack was made on Colenso at all on the 15th of December. I have tried to make that clear here.

15302. You stopped the movements as soon as you discovered the position?—My left Brigade moved too soon, contrary to my orders, I did not succeed in stopping it, but withdrew it at once. But no other troops, except some artillery that got into the wrong place, moved forward at all for any purpose of any attack. And if I have not made that clear I should like to read General Hildyard's view, who commanded the 2nd Brigade, the attacking column; three or four words from his own account of what happened.

15303. Very well?—I have here the autograph report of General Hildyard, of the action of his Brigade on the 15th of December, and these are the very few lines that I want to read: "The orders received were to seize the kopjes north of Colenso when the bombardment had made itself sufficiently felt. Before this moment arrived the Commander-in-Chief informed me that owing to the loss of the guns the attack could not be carried out to-day and that the retirement of the Artillery was to be covered by the 2nd Brigade. The 2nd Queen's and 2nd Devons were informed accordingly, and directed to cover its retirement, the former west of the railway, the latter east of it, taking care not to be involved more than could be helped in an engagement with the enemy." I only wanted just to read that to show that there was no attack at all, (The word retirement in General Hildyard's letter should have been "withdrawal") and that the only military action that I directed that day was a series of attempts to recover some guns which had been taken into a position into which, in my opinion they ought never to have been taken.

15304. (*Viscount Esher.*) Had you intended to attack?—Fully. I had given all my orders the day before.

15305. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I think you ought to have an opportunity of giving your reasons with regard to those guns, why you say it was equally impossible to prevent their withdrawal by the enemy, and which you say you would be glad to give?—I offer myself rather more to be cross-examined. It is difficult to fight against a man of straw; that is my position really. I state it as a fact, and I have seen a certain amount of fighting. The guns went down into a place where they were within 300 yards of cover, which was in the occupation of the enemy, and within 1,200 yards of a fortified hill which was held by the enemy. The fire from that hill, principally from the hill, as I was given to understand at the time, but also from the bushes, the cover, disabled the guns by either killing or wounding the whole of their men, and I was not informed of it by the officer in charge until he had abandoned his guns. I got down to the nearest place I could, with anything like safety, approach behind the guns, which was a large donga, and from there I directed certain endeavours to retrieve the guns. But they were absolutely in the open. The first two we got away; I do not think the Boers realised what we were doing; the men while under fire managed to hook two on to the limbers I sent out, and brought them back; but the horses and men of the other two limbers I sent forward were shot down and either killed or wounded. At any rate, they did not come back, and when a further attempt was made later in the day the limbers only got half way; there was nobody with the guns to hook on; they were entirely abandoned. I was about 800 yards behind them, I suppose, and the bushes in front of them at the edge of the river were less than 300 yards from them. Those bushes later on were occupied, but at that time they were in possession of the enemy, and though, of course, I could have pushed forward and got to the river, and having got to the river I might possibly have managed

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

to get live horses or men up to the guns to draw them back, yet the whole of the time the guns would be under fire from the entrenchments on the top of Fort Wylie, which commanded the plateau we were on by about 150 feet, and looked down upon everything. I believe myself that it was absolutely impossible.

15306. I wished rather to direct your attention to the last few lines of the last paragraph in your statement. You are aware that it has been said that if it was impossible for us to get the guns away, it might have been made equally impossible for the Boers to take them away?—Yes; but I do not think that it has been said by anybody who has seen the place. Of course, anybody here may say it. I do not think that anybody who had seen the place could have said it. I know some German wrote an article in a magazine and said that we could have held the donga. But from the donga you could not see the guns. My men were very much exhausted that day by want of water; there was no water at all on the ground they were fighting on, and I was very much impressed, I admit, afterwards by their exhaustion. They were very ready to fight, but they went to sleep, and anybody who witnessed the trouble that I had to get men out of the donga to make the efforts which they did make to get the guns back would have, I think, entirely agreed with me, as did all the officers who were present. General Clery agreed with me, and at the time he was there with me, that it was impossible by any means that we had, without a very heavy loss of life, to have kept near enough to the guns—that is to say, in sight of the guns, within range, without unduly exposing the men—in order to get the guns back. And if I had left it to the night I should have left a very considerable portion of my force (and my force at the time was none too great to defend Natal, which was my principal object) exposed the whole of that afternoon under fire from Fort Wylie and the hills on the other side of Colenso, which looked down upon the plains we were on; they would have had to remain there the whole of the day under fire from Boers concealed in very safe positions. What would they have done in the night? There were more Boers there than I had men, and they would have come across the river—there was nothing to prevent them—and we should have had a rough and tumble on the banks of the Tugela, in which I fully believe we should have been worsted. I do not think it was possible. I do not believe any living man could have got those guns away. I do not think so. Of course I could have kept the guns under our fire, but there was no use in that if I could not withdraw them and I could not.

15307. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) At any rate, you were of opinion they could only have been regained at such a loss of life as would have been unpardonable?—I think so; they had been deserted. Let it be understood, it was not as if they had men with them. If I could have sent limbers up and had one live man to hook in, there might possibly have been a chance; but if you send limbers up the men dismounting to hook in are such a mark—and there must have been at least 300 rifles firing at them, and firing at them with a plunging bullet at about 1,200 yards range.

15308. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You say here in your Statement that shortly after the return of the officer you had sent to Long's Brigade Division the guns ceased firing?—Yes.

15309. Was the account that he gave to you on his return of the actual position of the batteries at that time correct?—It was not correct; he told me that the guns were comfortable. I went to the only place whence I could see the whole of the ground from which I intended to have directed the attack, and the guns went beyond the position that I allotted to them; they were out of my sight, so that I merely saw them go down, and when I saw them go down I sent out after them, thinking that they had gone much too close, and the officer came back and said the guns were all right; but they were not all right.

15310. Then you do not consider that he carried out your orders correctly?—As I told him the following day, he failed to carry out my orders. But I do not wish to discuss this. He was a good man and served me well; anyone may make mistakes.

15311. (*Chairman.*) Then the next head is, "Con-

siderations as to future policy," and there you have given us a statement of the telegrams which you sent expressing the views which you then entertained as to policy?—Yes.

15312. You say that you hoped thereby to elicit from the Government a definite opinion as to the course which they judged it expedient for you to pursue?—Yes.

15313. You thought it was for the Government, then, to express an opinion upon that matter?—The Government had elected that it should be; they had interfered with me.

15314. By expressing a preference for Kimberley?—By sending orders who was to command in the sphere of my operations. I considered that that was a very strong step for them to take, especially as it was in direct opposition to my definitely-expressed opinion. The question of the relative importance of Kimberley and Natal was a question which had been discussed very much between me and Sir Alfred Milner before I left the Cape, and I was well aware that our views were not entirely in accordance. I thought then, and I think now, that the Government were acting upon advice which was not mine, and that in the action which they were taking with regard to officers under my command, they were influenced by considerations for Kimberley which were different from those which I myself entertained at the time. I thought, therefore, that it was really a political question more than a military question. It was perfectly immaterial to me whether I fought at Kimberley or at Ladysmith. For reasons which were not very easy to be expressed, but which had considerable weight with me, I considered it was more important from a military point of view to fight at Ladysmith. But I did not then, and I do not now, consider that those considerations were strong enough to have over-ridden strong political considerations.

15315. But the result of the fighting on the 15th, so far as your policy was concerned, was to bring you to the position which you were describing to us yesterday, and which you put forward on the 13th, that you must let Ladysmith go and take up a defensible position?—The expression "let Ladysmith go" is a military expression; it does not mean "let Ladysmith fall."

15316. What does it mean exactly?—It means removing yourself from immediate touch with the place. Oddly enough, exactly the same expression was used to me a short time before by General Clery. When I first sent him to Natal he said, "Let Estcourt go." I did not wish to do so, and he did not; but "let go" does not mean "let fall." There were 12,000 men in Ladysmith.

15317. But it meant to stop the operations for it relief?—To suspend the operations for its relief—just so.

15318. That is the meaning of the expression?—That is the meaning of the expression. It is a well understood expression. I think every soldier really understands it. I am sure Sir Henry Norman would say the same thing—that "let go" does not at all mean "let fall."

(*Sir Henry Norman.*) Certainly.

15319. (*Chairman.*) Then you were to take up a definite position until you got further reinforcements?—Until I got further reinforcements, or until (which I confess I did not anticipate), it might have been possible to have gone round by Kimberley and come across very much by the same line by which Lord Roberts afterwards thought he would be able to do it. I want you to notice that just below what you have read I say, "I therefore laid before them my opinion from a military standpoint as to the measures best fitted to meet the situation." The situation there was the situation, of course, that they had created. I had not a single available man in hand at the moment except the Fifth Division, and they had, I thought, ordered the Fifth Division up to the Modder.

15320. (*Viscount Esher.*) What exactly prompted your telegram of the 15th December to the Government? I thought I understood you to say that the Government had decided not to reinforce you but to send a force to Kimberley, to send the Fifth Division there?

See Colonel
Long's State-
ment in
Appendix,
Vol., p. 341.

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

Is that so?—Yes. Before I attacked at Ladysmith the Government had committed my only reserves to the relief of Kimberley.

15321. Can you refer to the telegrams in which you suggested that the Fifth Division should come to you?—I did not suggest that the Fifth Division should come to me. I suggested that Lord Methuen should be left in command on the Modder.

15322. But I really want to understand it. I want to get really the broad issue. It was not, you say, your failure at Colenso which solely induced you to send that telegram of the 15th of December, No. 87, to the Secretary of State?—Not at all.

15323. Then it was something else. I want to get exactly at what it was?—As I said yesterday, my proposal to take up defensible positions was to a certain degree in the nature of a testamentary disposition, in case anything happened to me.

15324. I quite understand that?—At the time I had only one free Division; they were the only reinforcements I had. There were no other troops on the sea at that time, nor at that time had the Sixth Division embarked; so that there was, at any rate, the whole journey from England between me and any further reinforcements at that moment. Accordingly, I had to consider what I had better do, should I attack Ladysmith again, or should I do what I thought would be a rather easy way of getting a certain amount of advantage against the Boers—should I attack Kimberley.

15325. Should you leave Natal and go round to the Cape?—I myself?

15326. Yes, you yourself?—I did not like to leave Natal. The reason I have given influenced me. I thought—and I honestly believe now from the after events that I thought rightly—that had I left Natal it would have encouraged the Boers to attack Ladysmith, and Ladysmith might have been taken, and, therefore, although I believe that from an abstract military point of view it would have been the right thing for me to have jumped at once into the train and gone to Kimberley, made a diversion, relieved Kimberley, and come back again, I did not like to do it because I did not like to leave Natal. Therefore, if I stayed in Natal, I wanted, and I wanted immediately, a Division. I had, I thought, to overcome a preconceived opinion on the part of the Government, namely, that they attached more importance to the relief of Kimberley than they did to the relief of Ladysmith.

15327. But you see, in your telegram of the 15th, you do not suggest to the Government, or tell the Government that you wanted to go to Kimberley?—I do not; and I purposely did not.

15328. But if I had received that telegram, I do not think I should have gathered from it that your wish was to go to Kimberley, unless you sent some other communication to Lord Wolsley, or some one else, which would throw light upon the situation?—I perfectly admit that; for I did not want to go to Kimberley, and I have told you why. But I ask you to consider my position. I was in the position of a man who had never been consulted at all, whose advice had never been taken, and whose advice had usually been rather curtly, not very politely, refused. I have shown you that it was only by the accident of my friendship with the Prime Minister's Private Secretary that Sir G. White obtained in time nearly half the force that he had in Natal. I have shown you that the Secretary of State so little realised the value of time in war, that he deferred mobilisation, against my advice, for a whole week at a most critical moment. The only difference in my treatment by the Government in England and in South Africa was that in South Africa instead of ignoring me they interfered with me. I had to intervene, as I have told you, to protect my Officers from being superseded, immediately upon any miscarriage, against my wishes and without knowledge or examination of the circumstances. And now, the Government had interfered by committing the Fifth Division to the relief of Kimberley without so much as a reference to me. (See *Lord Lansdowne's explanation*, Q. 21259). The principal adviser of the Government during all previous operations had been the High Commissioner at Cape Town, whom I knew to be committed to the very policy with which I disagreed.

Time was too precious to be wasted in argument or discussion. My telegram, as I have said, laid before the Government my opinion as to the measures best fitted to meet the situation they had created by their interference. They might have reasons of paramount importance for that interference or they might not; they had not vouchsafed me information. They might have realised the consequences that would flow from that interference if I failed at Colenso and be prepared to accept them, or they might not. Experience had shown me that it was useless for me to tender advice to the Secretary of State for War, for I had already for six weeks been suffering from his neglect of my advice. My only alternative was to present to him strongly the situation created by his interference. If that interference was based upon paramount considerations of policy, it might be right that he should prevail; if it were not, I was pretty confident that he would abandon it very speedily, as in fact he did.

15329. Then what reply did you expect to get?—I expected the exact reply that I got, "Use the troops," and I immediately acknowledged it, "Thank you very much, exactly what I wanted."

15330. It did not occur to you, of course, at that time that that telegram might very well give to Lord Lansdowne and the Government, and subsequently give to the public, a wrong impression of what your state of mind was at the time?—It did not occur to me at the time, and it did not occur to me that there ever would be people who would endeavour to interpret a telegram addressed to the Secretary of State for War, under one set of conditions, by the light of telegrams addressed to an officer in command of a fortress in the field under a totally different set of conditions.

15331. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Then the Royal Commission may be of some value?—I am very glad that there is a Royal Commission; it may be of great value.

15332. (*Viscount Esher*.) It has given you, at any rate, the opportunity of interpreting that telegram, which, to a certain extent, has misled people, as you are aware?—I do not think it has misled people except in cases where it has been designedly misrepresented. You must remember that that telegram has been published by people who, when they published it, absolutely refused to publish the fact that it was consequent upon an order that they had sent, and who refused to publish the acknowledgment that I sent of it.

15333. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) With reference to the maps of which you spoke yesterday, did your map show a Drift over the Tugela where General Hart advanced to?—Yes, it did.

15334. Did you find it to be correct?—I think it was approximately correct. He went the wrong way, he advanced towards the wrong place, but the Drift was there. I never went down to it myself, but I had very good information at that time from a member of the Natal Government who was the head of my Intelligence Department, Mr. T. K. Murray, who had been living most of his life south of Ladysmith, and knew every drift and almost everything.

15335. You are aware that people on the spot who live there declare that there is no Drift there?—I go further to prove that there was a Drift, because I advanced General Lyttelton's Brigade on seeing what I thought was a hostile movement being made; and I have since that seen in the *Times* a statement made by Commandant Edwards, and have had from a friend of mine in Natal a statement that Commandant Edwards made to him, who assured him that if it had not been for the advance of General Lyttelton's Brigade, 2,000 Boers were going to have attacked General Hart's Brigade in flank by that Drift, and Commandant Edwards' expression was "by the Drift that the British had missed." It was what is called a bridle drift, you know.

15336. (*Chairman*.) Then shall we pass on to "Events of the 16th to 18th December," in which you go in detail through the communications which passed at that time between yourself and the Secretary of State, and also between yourself and Sir George White in Ladysmith. I might just say that we have before us a copy from

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

the War Office of the Siege Correspondence, (*Vide Appendix, page 631, post.*), which I believe includes all the communications that passed between yourself and Sir George White?—I do not know whether that correspondence is placed in series.

18 Feb. 1903. 15337. Yes, it is by dates?—Does it give the numbers of the telegrams?

15338. Yes. Would you like to look at it (*handing the same to the Witness*)?—I only want to point out that I was given some extracts by the War Office which I was directed, if I dealt with them at all, to publish as a whole, and from those telegrams as given to me the numbers had all been eliminated. I am always particular in telegraphing to number my telegrams, and if the numbers are left out and the order of telegrams is inverted what can happen is, and what really did happen to me was, that a very false impression may be given to the public by later telegrams being put in front of earlier ones.

15339. I mentioned that we have the telegrams before us because it might save you going through them in detail. We have all these telegrams?—The only point with regard to those telegrams to which I attach the slightest importance really is the fact that one telegram which I was ordered to publish is not in the shape in which I sent it, and that the following telegram, which conveyed a very different impression from what was sought to be conveyed by the publication that was made, was not published. My No. 92 was followed by my No. 93, and my No. 92, of which rather a strong point was made, was not published as I sent it, but published as it was said to have been deciphered. I have given it in the narrative as I sent it.

15340. (*Sir John Edge.*) What is the date of that?—The 16th of December.

15341. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It is quoted in a series before us?—Exactly, but those are wrong—that is the point. In all the telegrams that I was ordered to publish (and I protested against publishing them wrongly) I was told to publish them textually as they were given to me, and to some of mine were given the dates on which I sent them and to others were given the dates on which Sir George White received them. As regards that particular telegram, No. 92, the date of the receipt by Sir George White, the 17th, is given, but I sent it on the 16th. My original telegram gave its own date, as I think all my telegrams did, but the War Office left the dates out. I have given the reference to it at the bottom of my Statement.

15342. (*Chairman.*) We do not seem to have that?—That is what I am afraid of.

15343. Would you like to look at this document again (*handing the paper to the Witness*)?—That is it, you see; that is what was done, No. 88 was published and hung on to No. 92, but as a matter of fact No. 88 was answered by Sir George White long before he received No. 92. This was not fair—that is all.

15344. Will you read your No. 92?—Yes.

15345. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are you confident of the date being the 16th, because in their correction note they say it was the 17th again?—I am absolutely confident. A clerk brought me No. 88, which I thought was an important telegram. I had had it repeated by the signaller and sent back to me, and he brought me the signaller's returned telegram. I wanted to alter it. You will see in that series of telegrams that in no two telegrams did Sir George White ever give me the same period for which his supplies could last. I said in the original telegram "How long"; I wanted to alter it to "how many days." I was on my horse at the time, and I gave the clerk instructions to strike out the words "how long" and put in "how many days." By mistake too many groups seem to have been struck out. I may say I never saw the telegram until after I got to England.

15346. Which, No. 92?—Yes, my No. 92. I did not pay any attention to it. It was meant to be a verbal correction. I put into the end of it the remark about the ciphers because at that very moment I had received a letter from the person who sent me my best information telling me that they were satisfied that the Boers had got a certain number of cipher or code telegrams, over which the deciphering had been written,

and, therefore, those groups they would have been able to read in future.

15347. (*Chairman.*) I think it would be better that you should give us the actual text of No. 92?—The actual text of No. 92 is at the bottom of page 9, the last two lines of page 9—my No. 92 cipher of the 16th December.

15348. It is all there?—Yes, that is the telegram: "My message, No. 88 cipher. Groups 31 to 43 were correctly sent, but in place of them and of first number of 44 Group read as follows, 'How many days can you hold out?' Also add to end of message, 'Whatever happens recollect to burn your cipher and decipher and code books and any deciphered messages.'" It is a stupid telegram; it is not a telegram that I ought to have sent, but it was sent in the hurry, and I never knew anything about it until I got to England, as no acknowledgment of it was ever received. Sir George White never acknowledged it. He acknowledged No. 88, but when I was given the chance of publishing his acknowledgment, and did so, I was not allowed to complete it by showing that he acknowledged No. 88 only. He said, "Your No. 88 of to-day received;" he did not refer to No. 92.

15349. I think that appears in the telegrams?—Yes, but it did not appear in what the War Office gave me to publish.

15350. But it appears now?—Yes, confidentially to you, but it has not appeared in public.

15351. (*Viscount Esher.*) It is No. 92 which you speak of when you say it is a stupid telegram?—Yes, I followed it by No. 93.

15352. (*Chairman.*) No. 93 is the one on the next page?—Yes; No. 92 in the way it was published was published rather to give colour to the fact that in No. 88 I had suggested to Sir George White he ought to surrender, and it was published, no doubt, for that reason, but if they had also published No. 93 I do not think it would have been possible for anybody to have given it that meaning.

15353. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you explain that?—My No. 93 was, "I find I cannot take Colenso, and I cannot stay in force near there as there is no water, but I am leaving there as large a force as I can to help you; but recollect that in this weather my infantry cannot be depended on to march more than ten miles a day. Can you suggest anything for me to do? I think in about three weeks from now I could take Colenso, but I can never get to Onderbroek." No man would have sent that who had the moment before ordered the man to consider the possibilities of surrender. I ask too is it common sense to suppose that a General ordering an Officer to surrender would do so covertly by elimination of words from a previous order? No Officer would think of obeying without question such an order so conveyed. That telegram, No. 93, as you have it, is not my original telegram; it is one of those which have been altered.

15354. Do you mean that if your second telegram had been published as you sent it, it would have explained No. 88?—Yes, if No. 93 had been published.

15355. And that it would have explained it in such a way that it would have been clear that you did not mean Sir George White to surrender?—What I mean is that by putting my No. 92 in this paper as a note to No. 88, it is fairer than it was; but what was published before by the War Office was my No. 92 given in extenso, as it was assumed to have altered No. 88, the original telegram in the words in which I sent it not being given.

15356. Of course we only want to give you an opportunity of making any explanation which you wish, but the question which will always arise is this: what is the meaning of those words. After which I suggest your firing away as much ammunition as you can and making best terms you can?—The meaning of those words was this: I was face to face with a man who had a better force theoretically, a more experienced force, and a larger available force to help himself than I had to help him. In his telegrams he had thrown the whole onus of his relief upon me; he could not come out, he could not go large and could only help me in a particular hole, the most difficult place to get to. As I say, the onus of his relief was thrown upon me, and practi-

Vide page 176 ante, col. 1.

Vide page 176 ante, col. 1.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

cally he had got into Ladysmith and was directing me, as he did then and afterwards, to bring the whole forces of the Empire to get him out. I am satisfied in my own mind that if I had been in Ladysmith with that force I could have come out any morning or evening that I wished to from Wagon Hill and along the line of the watershed; there is a very interesting watershed there. I happen to know Ladysmith very well myself. In 1881 I selected Ladysmith as a defensible position against the Boers, who had at that time no guns; and therefore I knew the country. From Wagon Hill it comes round, you turn at the end of Besters Spruit and come on to the next high hill and then you go down a little at the top of Onderbroek and come out at Groblers on the top of the hill, so that the whole way out of Ladysmith he would have had strong artillery positions to take up and help his attack as he came along. There could have been no difficulty whatever in getting out of Ladysmith provided he could be received at the bottom of the hill, where I hoped to be able to receive him. And that is what I expected to be able to do for him. I did consider that Sir George White was a man who would never give up Ladysmith if he could possibly keep it, but I did not consider that he had much initiative for active fighting, and I thought that the most effective lever I could employ to move him would be the warning that unless he could offer me active assistance he might possibly have to surrender. At any rate I think I may claim that he felt it so because in his reply to my No. 88 you notice he introduced a subject that I never mentioned. He says, "I cannot cut my way out to you." It is put in the paper you have given me "I fear could not cut my way to you." He brings that in. I do not wish to say anything against Sir George White, but if I have to defend myself I have to tell the truth. It will be found later on that when Sir George White came to the conclusion that I should not be able to help him he did then offer to try and cut his way out, but not till then (that was about the 28th of January, as I have mentioned further on), although at that time he had only 7,000 men whom he could put in the field. At the time when I asked him to suggest how he could do something to help me he had over 12,000 men, and he suggested nothing.

15357. Just one question about that suggested movement. Would he not, in the earlier part of his march, have been under a flanking fire from Bulwana?—I thought myself that he could have formed his troops in that large sort of pan after you come through Ladysmith beside Middle Hill, just at the extreme west end of Wagon Hill. He would then have been on the Nek, and then if he had kept round he would have been out of shot practically from Lancers Kop, and I think it would have been a very long range from Bulwana. And he had two Naval guns against the one on Bulwana, and could have, as he did afterwards, put one on the top of Caesar's Camp, where it remained to the end of the siege.

15358. (*Chairman.*) But in your telegram of the 1st November, which you quoted a little time ago, you said that you admitted that he could not withdraw from Ladysmith?—At that time; there were only 1,000 men in Natal on that day. I was there with 20,000 men at this time; that is a very great difference. He could not withdraw from Ladysmith alone, but he could have come out of Ladysmith to meet me. And at that time he was hampered with sick and wounded, whereas at this time they were all made neutral in the Intombi Camp.

15359. Still that means that he could have made a movement out with his troops to meet you, but could not have taken either his non-combatants or his stores out?—But his non-combatants would have been perfectly safe; the Boers did not kill the non-combatants, and if he had joined me we should have defeated the Boers the next day. There is an enormous difference between a man withdrawing from a place without any assistance whatever and a man retiring from a difficult position in the field. I wanted him to retire from Ladysmith. I would not have cared what happened to Ladysmith if I got him out. He might have left all his guns behind and it would not have mattered. I did suggest to him the point that he might fire away all his ammunition; that was all part of the original idea. The truth is that I did not want to order him

out as long as he said he could not come; but if he had given me the slightest chance—there were at that moment two or three, I think, perhaps risky operations, that I would willingly have undertaken to help him out. But he gave me no chance of helping him out; he met everything with a *non-possumus*.

15360. Please understand that I am not arguing the point; I am only trying to make clear what you meant?—I also do not want to argue it. I only want to make it quite clear; that was my point, that short of positively ordering him I did everything I could to induce him to do something.

15361. But the movement which you suggested was a movement for his troops which were fit to take the field to join you, but to abandon for a time at any rate the position of Ladysmith, to be occupied by the Boers if they chose to walk into it?—Nothing would have pleased me more than to have got the Boers into Ladysmith. The possession of Ladysmith was of no use to anybody. It was of use to Sir George White to protect himself, but it was of no strategical value as long as there were no troops to bar us. It did not close the passages of the Tugela in any way; it was 16 miles from the Tugela.

15362. I am not going into the question of strategy, but the Boers would then have walked in and taken possession of the place and you would have had to make operations which might not have taken place in Ladysmith itself but you would have had to make operations afterwards to drive them back?—I had to make those operations in any case in order to get to Sir George White.

15363. But if he had made the movement which you suggested?—If he had made the movement which I suggest he would have helped me to get to him, and that was the very thing he did not seem inclined to do.

15364. But still it would have been capable of being represented as a fall of Ladysmith in the first place?—No, I do not think so. When two forces are in the field and are separated by the enemy, and those two forces succeed, after a battle, in effecting a junction, they most decidedly are not supposed to have contributed to the fall of anything; they have gained a great success.

15365. But still if one of the forces is in a town and has abandoned the town, and that town is occupied by the enemy, you speak of it as an abandonment of that place to the enemy?—A few tin houses—a village; but I deny that if we had met, Ladysmith would have been occupied by the Boers. We should then have been on the hills, and they could not have got in.

15366. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But if Sir George White had been successful in such a movement as you suggested, that would have cleared the Boer trenches at Colenso, and you would have had no difficulty whatever in advancing?—No, certainly not. I should have had 32,000 men to command instead of 20,000, and if I had succeeded in gaining such an enormous success over the Boers there is no doubt whatever in my mind that in a very few days we should have had them out of Natal.

15367. (*Viscount Esher.*) But, having that very strong opinion, and knowing all the ground, as you did there, you do not seem ever to have directly telegraphed to Sir George White to come out of Ladysmith, as you say he should have done?—I never did because, as I say, I fully intended to do so the moment I was over the Tugela within reach of Ladysmith. If I could have made on the 15th the lodgment that I expected to make in the corner of the river there, I had my telegram absolutely composed in my head in every single detail to send to him. But I have never ordered, except under great stress, any officer under my command to take a military step which he considered beyond his powers.

15368. But then, in this case, you did not ask Sir George White directly, in so many words, "Can you or can you not come out of Ladysmith?" There is no telegram which shows that; there is only your obscure telegram, if I may say so, which has been so misinterpreted according to you?—I admit the criticism, but I can only say that I should do it again with the same man. He told me he could not come out of Ladysmith; he told me so definitely from the beginning. The very day I arrived in Natal he met me by a telegram practi-

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

cally to that effect, that he could help me only very little and only when I got close to Ladysmith.

15369. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I see that in his telegram of the 18th December, in answer to yours of the 17th, Sir George White stated distinctly, "Your messages were previously confident, and I had made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek, and could still do so if you had Colenso"—Yes, he could have done so. I thought he could, and I meant to have ordered him to do so. But he had never told me of his preparations.

15370-1. And further on in the same telegram he says, "Meantime I will do all I can to maintain an active defence, and will co-operate with you to the extent of my power if you advance again"—Yes, that he was able to co-operate later, and if I had Colenso—that is the whole thing. Colenso, as Sir George White and I understood it, was always the north bank of the river, and not the south bank. If I could have got across the river, I am perfectly certain he could have come out. But what I have rather got at the bottom of my mind at the present moment is, that I have been attacked because I told him I should want him on the 17th and did not ask him to fight on the 15th. I gather that he rather made a point of that himself. But that very telegram to which you have called my attention proves that I was right. I had to get to Colenso—the north side of the river—before he could do anything.

15372. You see that telegram is in answer to one of yours of the 17th, in which you say, "I think in about three weeks from now I could take Colenso, but I can never get to Onderbroek," and he says, "Your messages were previously confident, and I had made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek, and could still do so if you had Colenso"—Yes, I always thought he could. No doubt throughout my mind Colenso was the key of the position. If I could have got across and established myself on the 15th, I have no doubt that I should have had Sir George White out on the 17th—none whatever.

15373. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose you see now that your telegram of the 15th December, which you sent to the Secretary of State, was misunderstood from your point of view. If it had not been, you never would have received the telegram of the 18th of December in reply?—I do not think it was misunderstood. I think it was thoroughly well understood. It was differently interpreted when many months afterwards they received my telegram to Sir George White which they at the time had no knowledge of.

15374. No, but it led directly to the telegram of the 18th December, which was the telegram in which they announced to you the appointment of Lord Roberts?—Did it? That I do not know anything about. That I do not profess to know. But if you read through the telegram of the 17th (I have not got it here in this series) you will see that I got directly what I wanted. I certainly at that time should have been very glad to give up any command for the sake of the Empire to get what I then wanted. Pray do not think I have the slightest grievance at being superseded by Lord Roberts. I had as much as any one man could do in Natal, and more than was enough for me. I have nothing to complain of.

15375. (*Chairman.*) Have you brought out the points that you wish to bring out now about that telegram?—I have nothing to add.

15376. (*Sir John Edge.*) Read in any way that it is possible to read your heliogram No. 88 of the 16th of December, could it be read to mean that Sir George White should surrender before the very last moment, before everything was done?—I do not think it could.

15377. I do not think so either?—I do not honestly think it could; I know I wrote it with extreme care; it was not a very easy telegram to write. I did feel at the time that it was of enormous importance to me to get rid of the incubus of Ladysmith, and that if I could have got Sir George White out at any price, at any sacrifice, I should have done so. I did think I was using words that would spur him on to give me some idea of what he could do. He said in his later telegram that he was making arrangements to fight towards Onderbroek, but he had never told me so, and he had full information from me of the force I was coming with and what I was going to do.

15378. But even without your explanation, which I think fully explains why you worded the heliogram in that way, I cannot see how it could be read as a suggestion that he should make any surrender before the very last moment—until after the last moment?—I am very much obliged to you for saying that. I can truly say that that is my impression also.

15379. (*Sir John Jackson.*) You referred to a telegram in the print that we have before us, which you say is not a correct rendering of the telegram as you sent it; will you be good enough to read the telegram as sent by you? What is the number in the print of the telegram?—It is No. 28 in the print. As sent by me it was as follows: "No. 93 Cypher, 17th December.—I find I cannot take Colenso, and I cannot stay in force near it, as there is no water, but I am leaving there as large a force as I can supply with water. I will do anything I can to help you; but recollect that in this weather my Infantry cannot be depended on," and then the rest is as it is in the print. That is the difference. I may say that at that time I was supplying the force I had at Colenso with water by train from Estcourt, and I had to make all those arrangements for that water supply on this very 16th. I may also mention that although, for some reason of which I am quite unaware, the War Office asked Sir George White for all his correspondence with me, they did not do me the honour of asking me for my correspondence with Sir George White, so that that print is only a one-sided document. I have never had a single question or inquiry of any sort, kind, or description addressed to me by the War Office with regard to my operations in Natal or anything connected with them.

15380. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) From the time you came home?—From the time I left England, practically—not one single question has been addressed to me on any one of these matters which have been talked about and spoken about in the House, where statements have been made that were quite untrue, I hope from ignorance, because if they had asked me I could have told them at once that they were untrue.

15381. (*Sir John Edge.*) Was No. 28 a heliogram or a telegram?—Every one of these is a heliogram.

15382. Then No. 28, which is before us and which purports to give your No. 93, was their reading of the heliogram?—I take it that it is their deciphering. Those errors do happen.

15383. And before it was published it was not corrected by reading your original, which was kept?—No reference has ever been made to me for the original document.

15384. May I ask you just one more question? Have you gone through this part of the correspondence that we are referring to, between the 26th of November, 1899, and the 28th February, 1900, and compared it with your own copies?—I have never seen it until this moment.

15385. Then, as a matter of fact, you cannot say whether it correctly represents your copies?—I cannot.

15386. Nor, I suppose, can you say whether it correctly represents heliograms that ever reached you?—No, I cannot.

15387. You cannot say whether the heliograms which are put down here as from Sir George White ever reached you?—No, I cannot.

15388. (*Chairman.*) I thought you said that they were all repeated?—To me?

15389. Yours were repeated to you, and I suppose Sir George White's were repeated to him?—I am not sure. I rather doubt it; but that would not have been within my knowledge.

15390. When a heliogram is repeated, that is pretty clear evidence, is it not, that it has been received?—It is absolute proof that it has been received. I do not think they were all repeated. I have in original here everything as I received it, or as I deciphered it. I do rather hope (because I feel it is not quite fair to me) that the Commission will take notice of the fact that I have never had a reference of any sort or kind addressed to me for copies of my telegrams, or with regard to any action that I took, or for an explanation of any telegrams that I sent.

15391. If we ask you for them you have no objection to putting in your telegrams for our information?—None whatever, if I can get somebody to copy them.

15392. We can get them copied?—I ought to say that I had scarcely looked at my books of telegrams until a fortnight ago.

15393. Then if we have finished with that head, the next one is "Policy projected for Cape Colony." Is there anything that you want to add with regard to that?—I want to call attention to the second paragraph beginning "On the 24th December I received a telegram from Lord Roberts." I should like to read the telegram because, no doubt Lord Roberts had forgotten that telegram at the time when he gave his evidence, of which you referred a portion to me. In that evidence which you sent to me he said that from the very first, in fact I think he said from 1897, he had always considered that an advance through Kimberley was the proper line to follow. But in this telegram, which was his only instruction to me, he distinctly gave me instructions that he was intending to advance by the central line, according to the original plan of campaign.

15394. Are you referring to his telegram of the 23rd of December?—Yes.

15395. Which you received on the 24th?—Yes, that is the one.

15396. And what is the point in it on which you rely—it is a long telegram?—It is the first sentence of all. "So far as I can see at present, the best way I can co-operate with you on my arrival in South Africa will be by carrying out the original plan of campaign, an advance in force through the Orange Free State." That was his instruction to me, and later on his instructions with regard to Lord Methuen were to the same effect. I only mention the point because it was on that telegram that I based the arrangements I made to have everything ready for his reception; and when on his arrival he complained of the disposition of transport, and so forth, I do not think we could have been blamed at all because the transport was arranged with a view to the plan of campaign which he had given me, and which was a different plan of campaign from that which he has given you.

15397. What did you interpret "the original plan of campaign" to be?—An advance through Bloemfontein by Bethulie: that was the plan of campaign when I left England. He says here "An advance in force through the Orange Free State," and that was the only way he could have got by that railway.

15398. But did you have a distinct plan of campaign presented to you before you left England?—I presented one to the Government, which I understood was accepted, that I was to go through the Orange Free State and march through Bloemfontein. Bloemfontein was taken as an indication of the direction.

15399. That was not consistent with an advance such as that which Lord Roberts made afterwards. Could you not bring it under the original plan of campaign?—No, distinctly not. He advanced by a different line of railway.

15400. But it was an advance through the Orange Free State?—Quite so, but then you must remember that directly after he had sent this telegram he received my telegram in which I proposed to the Government, and asked to have referred to him, the plan of campaign which he afterwards adopted, which was an advance to the Modder and thence to Bloemfontein. Now in acknowledging that he did not accept it; he queried it on a minor point, and followed that by a telegram from Madeira in which he said he thought the *status quo* the proper thing, which I took to be a quiet way of telling me that he did not agree with my plan, although that plan was the one which he afterwards adopted.

15401. But you did not have any instructions from the Government regarding your line of advance, did you?—It was well understood between Lord Lansdowne, Lord Wolseley, and myself, that the intentions with which I left England were to land the three Divisions, one Division at East London, one Division at Port Elizabeth, and one Division at Cape Town, and to concentrate them upon the two bridges at Norval's Pont and Bethulie with a view to advance through

the Orange Free State. That was the original plan of campaign.

15402. My impression was that Lord Wolseley said that there were no instructions given to you; that you went out with a free hand?—There were no instructions, and I went out with a free hand on the understanding that I was going to do a definite thing. I kept my hand as free as possible, but during the fortnight before I embarked, I was pressed very much by both Lord Wolseley and Lord Lansdowne to give the ports of debarkation for the different Divisions of the Army Corps, and I declined to do so until the day I left England. On the 14th of October I went in the morning to the War Office and proposed that Gatacre's Division should be landed at East London, Clery's at Port Elizabeth, and Methuen's at Cape Town; but I distinctly qualified that by saying that every ship was to call at Cape Town for orders, because I did not know what the condition of affairs might be when I arrived at the Cape.

15403. The point for which you particularly wished to mention that telegram from Lord Roberts was with regard to the transport?—Yes, with regard to the general arrangements that I made for his arrival. I thought it my duty to do the best I could, and we were working at cross purposes on account of the instructions he had given me, which were not in accordance with the policy he afterwards adopted. I make no complaint.

15404. You are not referring to the difference between regimental transport and the transport afterwards adopted? You are more referring to the position in which you placed the transport?—Yes, to the distribution of the transport.

15405. A certain amount of transport was placed at a certain point to facilitate the advance?—So far as possible, the transport was placed along all the three lines of advance to the bridges at Norval's Pont and Bethulie; and when Lord Roberts arrived it had to be brought in large quantities westward to be concentrated on the western line. That could all have been done before his arrival if we had known it. I am not raising this point to make any complaint or to say anything for myself; but certain officers who were carrying out my orders rather want it to be pointed out that they were doing the best they could according to their lights.

15406. The question of regimental transport or the other system you are going to raise later on?—If you wish me to do so.

15407. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Before leaving that telegram, I think it is only fair to point out to you that a little lower down in it Lord Roberts appears to have taken something of the same view as you did, at any rate as to the unimportance of holding Ladysmith in case you and Sir George White succeeded in joining hands?—Yes, as he said in that telegram.

15408. He thought it was advisable that you should evacuate the place, and hold the line of the Tugela, which is very much the line of policy that you mentioned to us just now, in case you and Sir George White could have joined hands and given the Boers a doing?—Yes, in all those things I find Lord Roberts in accord with my views practically, and in the same way he also approved of what had been also my original idea, that Kimberley, if made safe, could be left alone.

15409. (*Chairman.*) That is the only point you wish to amplify in that section?—That is all.

15410. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Had not the state of affairs altered very much after you left London and before Lord Roberts arrived, I mean with respect to the invasion of the Cape Colony by the Boers?—No, I think at the moment that Lord Roberts arrived—accompanying that statement with the fact that he arrived and brought reinforcements at the same moment—we had practically got back almost to the position in which we rather hoped to have found matters at the time when I originally arrived. When I arrived, I was short of troops, and Kimberley was attacked and Ladysmith was attacked and Cape Colony was invaded; and at the time Lord Roberts arrived the relieving force was close enough to Kimberley to support it, and the relieving force was close enough to Ladysmith to support it, and in both cases the forces were able to prevent

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

See Q. 21236

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

any further Boer advance by those roads, and in Cape Colony itself the invasion was decidedly checked and was being, to some extent, forced backwards.

15411. At that time the bridges on the central line were cut by the Boers. Would Lord Roberts not have found the same difficulty in advancing by the central line, from the nature of the country, as you found advancing on Ladysmith?—I think he was perfectly right in what he did, and it was the very same policy, I may say, that I myself had suggested, without any communication with him, that he should adopt. But I did not understand that you were raising that question. I entirely agree. My only point in raising the question was that I did not know it was his intention to advance in the way I proposed, and that I understood from his telegram that, with the facts telegraphically before him, his intention was to advance by the original route.

15412. That was your point, I understand. As Lord Roberts says to you, "To carry out the original plan of campaign and advance through the Orange Free State in force appears to me to be the best way of co-operating with you"?—Yes.

15413. When he arrived in South Africa, of course, he found it would not be the best way of co-operating with you?—I quite agree, but the only reason why I raised the question was this:—I understood from the portion of the evidence he gave before the Commission that has been sent to me, that the fact that he told me that he anticipated advancing by the central route had been forgotten by him, and that he left the Commission under the impression that he sailed from England with the intention of advancing by the other route. I was ignorant of that intention.

15414. And you agree with him that the advance he made was, under the circumstances existing when he arrived, the proper course to pursue?—I do entirely, subject to the fact that personally had I been directing it I should certainly have made a railway.

15415. (*Chairman.*) The next heading is the "Movement to Springfield." Have you anything to say with regard to that?—No, nothing at all, I think.

15416. Then the next is, "Events of 17th to 27th January, 1900"?—I have only to say with regard to that that I had considerable doubt whether I should put anything in about that at all; but I was advised by the one man I consulted that he did not think I ought to leave out a reference to Spion Kop; and, further, that should it be the intention of the Commission to examine Sir Charles Warren, I should like him to see what I have said. That is all. It is with some diffidence that I put anything in, but I was advised by one I trusted that I ought to do so, and I have done so.

15417. This you put in as your statement of those events?—Yes.

15418. I see you say that you were not altogether dissatisfied with the results of Spion Kop?—I was not. I believe at this moment that those six days' operations at Spion Kop really relieved Ladysmith. They were really the actual cause of the relief of Ladysmith. With out them I should never have got in by Hlangwane.

15419. Because of the effect on the enemy?—Yes; we did inflict very great loss upon the enemy; we knocked the heart out of them there—there and at Vaal Krantz.

15420. We wish you to understand that we desire to give you every opportunity of making any statement that you may think it advisable to make with regard to any of the events connected with Spion Kop?—If I thought there was anything that the public could gain by a discussion of the events of Spion Kop, even though it would drag me through the deepest mud, I should be the first man to wish to be examined on the subject. I am ready here to answer any questions that I may be asked, in the fullest possible manner. But I do not myself think that there is anything I wish to volunteer beyond the bald statement that I have already placed in my narrative.

15421. And you do not think it is in the public interest necessary to go beyond that statement?—I do not believe it would be to the public interest to say more than that. As I am on this subject I should like to add that I have always considered the first publication of the Spion Kop despatches as a piece of stupidity but not

a malignant one. It was a question upon which it was my duty, as an officer partly concerned, to present the Government with the facts of the case in the fullest possible detail, and I therefore sent home every document of any importance bearing upon the case; but it never occurred to me that any of them would be published, and I was fortified in that belief by a knowledge of the attitude that was taken before the House of Commons by Lord Hartington and Mr. W. H. Smith in the matter of McNeill's zarefa, where this very question was very fully discussed in the House. That is my opinion, and I am very much obliged to you for giving me the opportunity of putting it down.

15422. We are very much obliged to you for making it. Then the next heading is, "Movement to Vaal Krantz." Is there anything in that section to which you wish to refer?—Nothing. This section and the following one bring out a question which has been a good deal discussed in the Press. That is all. I have rather gone into diffuseness with regard to this section and the next one, "Events of 6th to 8th February," because they bring out a question which has been a good deal commented upon in the Press. I have nothing to add to what I have stated there.

15423. Which particular question do you refer to?—Well the question as to whether or not I was afraid to fight.

15424. (*Viscount Esher.*) I do not think anyone has ever suggested that?—It has been suggested.

15425. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Was it not rather a suggestion that you advocated surrender?—It was after that. This is the question of a telegram of which Lord Roberts published a part in his despatch, and I think it would have been fairer to me if he had published the whole of it. It raised a point that I have personally a little resented, and which was not met officially, as I think it ought to have been. However, it was not. I have given the full particulars. I refer to the telegram of Lord Roberts in which he told me to appeal to the patriotism of my troops.

15426. That the honour of the Empire was in their hands?—Yes.

15427. Do you think that implies a want of courage on your part?—It has been so interpreted.

15428. Because people often have appeals to the honour of their troops, and so forth?—I am not speaking of the honour of the troops at all, but of the way in which Lord Roberts in his despatch, I think of the 7th of February, quoted that telegram of mine. That has been interpreted very adversely to me, and as I think I have shown here, my correspondence with Lord Roberts does not bear out that interpretation.

15429. Lord Roberts could never have intended it?—I do not say that he did. I am only saying what happened.

15430. (*Viscount Esher.*) It shows how easily telegrams can be misinterpreted and how unfortunate it is?—Well, the tail end was left out, and it is a pity.

15431. (*Chairman.*) What was left out?—The sentence at the end of the telegram, "The question is, how would such a loss affect your plans, and do you think the chance of the relief of Ladysmith worth the risk," is left out in Lord Roberts' despatch. The part he published of my telegram made it appear as if I was only deterred from fighting by the chance of losing 2,000 men. It is in his covering despatch, I think of the 7th of February. I would show you the point in a moment if you have the Blue Book, Volume I. C. 457, 1901, of Despatches. (*The Book was handed to the witness.*)

15431*. (*Viscount Esher.*) Here you say, "At this time Lord Roberts telegraphed on behalf of the War Office asking whether there was any position in Natal that could be made virtually impregnable by a force of 10,000 men, and suggesting that the line of the Tugela might be such a position." What were they driving at then; what does that mean; how would you answer that question?—I should read the telegram as involving a proposal from the War Office that I should let Ladysmith go. There were two propositions at that moment made to me. I had better quote them both. One was that Sir George White should abandon his hospitals and break out, and the other was, could I occupy an impregnable position in Natal.

15432. That meant "Could you occupy an impregnable position in Natal if you only manned it with a force of 10,000 men"?—Yes.

15433. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Have you identified that telegram in the Blue Book?—Yes.

15434. What was the point?—The point that I raised was this. Lord Roberts in his despatch said: "On the 6th February I received a telegram from Sir Redvers Buller reporting that he had pierced the enemy's line and could hold the hill which divided their position, but that to drive back the enemy on either flank and thus give his own artillery access to the Ladysmith plain, ten miles from Sir George White's position, would cost him from 2,000 to 3,000 men, and success was doubtful. General Buller enquired if I thought that the chance of relieving Ladysmith was worth such a risk." That was not my enquiry. My enquiry was whether in the face of the instructions he knew he had given me,—that I was not to attack unless I was confident—how would such a loss affect his plans. I had no idea at the time what he was doing; he had not informed me how he was going into the Free State, or anything.

15435. What were the exact words that Lord Roberts used?—The words that Lord Roberts quoted, do you mean?

15436. Yes?—The exact words he left out were these, "I am not confident, though hopeful I can do it. The question is how would such a loss affect your plans, and do you think the chance of the relief of Ladysmith worth the risk." He left out the point of my being hopeful that I could do it, and left out the whole of my question which was based upon the condition that I had his plans to consider. I do not impute the slightest desire to mislead, but as a matter of fact that telegram has been quoted very adversely to my interests.

15437. (*Chairman.*) Then your next heading is "Necessity for continuing active operations. Correspondence with Lord Roberts." That also we may take as expressing your views?—I think that explains the situation unless you wish to ask me anything.

15438. The next heading is "Movement to Hussar Hill. Events of 14th to 28th February." That gives your account of the series of actions?—Yes.

15439. (*Chairman.*) We have now got to the point of the correspondence with Lord Roberts as to future policy?—Yes. I may summarise that correspondence very shortly by saying that in it I think it is clear that periodically Lord Roberts rather wished to get me off the railway, and at other times he wished something done to lift me on the railway, and that personally my own view was that until I got out of Natal I ought not to go very much off the railway.

15440. You wished to adhere to the railway during your progress through Natal?—I wished to get the railway through Natal repaired almost before anything else.

15441. There was a considerable interval during which I suppose Lord Roberts and you were agreed that you should not move?—I was never agreed; I wished to move within a week after arriving in Ladysmith, and I proposed to do so in my first telegram.

15442. Which telegram do you refer to?—I sent the telegram on the 3rd March, and it is printed on page 20 of my summary of evidence (*see ante* p. 183): "My own view would be that we should send three brigades to occupy Northern Natal." I thought I ought to have gone on at once then, and if I had got to Laing's Nek, as I hoped to have done before the end of the month of March, I thought it would have been of enormous assistance to Lord Roberts and a great impediment to the enemy.

15443. But as a matter of fact you did not move until when?—I did not move until the 7th of May.

15444. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was that in consequence of Lord Roberts discouraging you?—From my point of view entirely. I have quoted the telegrams at some length because they are a little confusing, but I think if you will read them through you will see that Lord Roberts' policy changed, and while at one time he would not let me attack the Drakensberg, because he expected to clear the passes by operations

of his own, at another time I was to attack the Drakensberg Pass at any cost.

15445. (*Chairman.*) He of course was unable to move on from Bloemfontein for a considerable time?—He did not arrive at Bloemfontein until 14 days after I relieved Ladysmith, and when he got to Bloemfontein he was in such a position that he was unable to advance; but I did not know at the time, and I did not in the least anticipate that he would be unable to clear his flanks and his communications.

15446. But as a matter of fact he was not able to do that, or to advance for a considerable time?—He practically did not move for two months, and during those two months he practically kept me doing nothing too.

15447. Until he did advance he could not very well co-operate with you through the passes, could he?—No, I did not myself think he could ever have helped me at the passes within any reasonable time.

15448. Or drawn off the enemy from you by any operations?—No, he could not have done so. But I could have drawn the enemy off him.

15449. And the time he did ask you to co-operate was at the time when he was making his advance on Johannesburg?—As soon as he was ready to advance he told me to occupy the enemy, and I at once moved to Newcastle and thence to Laing's Nek.

15450. I think I ought to say that in Lord Roberts' examination, when he came again on the 10th of February, we had from him his statement of the communications between himself and you, and the objects for which he made the propositions he did?—The propositions he made on what date?

15451. From the 2nd of May?—That comes later; practically that was the time he told me to move. I thought you were referring to the former period.

15452. No; as soon as he began to move he did enter into communication with you with regard to operations which had the object of your moving into the Free State?—He proposed to me a series of operations then, and they were a series of differing operations; at one time I was to go to the Free State, and at another time I was to go somewhere else. At one time he proposed I should go to Belfast.

15453. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There is an earlier period on the 5th April?—But I thought we had disposed of that.

15454. On the 5th of April it appears that Lord Roberts had directed you to send him a Division of Infantry?—Yes, he had. May I make myself clear? I understood from the Chairman that he had passed that period and was then coming to the period after the 4th May, and my last answer only related to that.

15455. There is a period between the relief of Ladysmith and 2nd of May which has to be accounted for?—There is; I have endeavoured to deal with it in this memorandum, but of course if you wish to ask any questions, I will answer them.

15456. I rather gather from the telegram of Lord Roberts that he would have wished you to operate through Van Reenen's Pass, but you hesitated?—I did; that was early in April.

15457. Yes, 5th April. He says this: "I might have hesitated to order this had he been preparing to operate towards Van Reenen's Pass. The presence of a portion of his force in this direction would assuredly have had the effect of drawing off some of the enemy from this part of the country. Buller was most pressing that the Biggersberg should be his first object." I raise this point because a question has been frequently raised in this country as to why there was no movement between the relief of Ladysmith and the beginning of May?—With regard to that period I should like to take you back as far as Lord Roberts' telegram to me, No. 613, of the 23rd March (*see ante* p. 184), which I have referred to on page 21 of my Statement. He sent me that telegram and he said, "I shall be delayed here for some time yet, we have run short of supplies, large numbers of remounts are required for Cavalry and Artillery drafts have to be sent up and men must be given either tents or blankets: many of them have only greatcoats." Then he went on and he said, "I shall be sur-

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

prised if Passes are not practically cleared as we near Kroonstad." But the point I had to answer was when he said, "I shall be delayed here for some time yet," and I answered that at once on the following day in my No. 226 of the 24th March, referring to his telegram 613, and I said, "Do you think I could be of any use to help you with supply? I think that within five days from the start I might possibly get up Oliver's Hoek Pass, now held only by the Harrismith Town Guard, all Englishmen, who will not fight unless there is a large force of Boers to make them. By four days later I shall have turned Van Reenen's and if my information with regard to the railway is correct in eight days more it should be open to Harrismith, say 17 days or perhaps three weeks from the start. When the line is opened I should be able to put up each day 400 tons, say two days' supply for 70,000 men and 10,000 horses. Of course I cannot promise this would come off, but I can try." That was a proposal of mine intended to deal with his not being able to move because he was short of supplies. In his telegram he gave me no hint of any intention of coming down towards me, and I rather wanted to draw him towards me because I thought, although I did not like to say so in so many words, that it would be better for him to clear all that difficult country about Ladybrand before he left Bloemfontein rather than to leave that behind him. In that telegram the only idea he gave me was an advance on Kroonstad which was due north of him. He apparently did not receive my No. 226 before on the same day he had sent me a telegram crossing mine, and not based upon mine, in which he said, "C642, 24th March. Secret. Will you have sufficient transport to enable two divisions of Infantry with proportion of Artillery and 1,000 Cavalry to move into the Orange Free State in about three weeks time should it be necessary for me to call upon you for assistance to that extent, and supposing that the enemy's hold on Passes is so far weakened as to admit of your forcing your way through them." As he had previously told me that I was not to attempt the Passes until he had weakened them, I gathered from that telegram that he had given up his idea of going on to Kroonstad and that he intended to move towards me, and I replied at once by my No. 227 of the 25th March, quoting his telegram No. 642, and said, "To enable me to reply as to sufficient transport will you tell me how many days' supply I should have to take with me, the direction in which I should have to operate and whether I should have to continue to supply myself from Natal or could I, when in the Free State, draw on some advanced post there." I was 45 miles from the top of Van Reenen's Pass and from Van Reenen's Pass to Kroonstad would have been about 120 miles. I could not have supplied myself from Ladysmith unless I was given time to re-open the railway to Harrismith, and then I should have had to have a new base, and I should have required a certain force to protect my railway to Harrismith. That telegram again crossed a telegram from Lord Roberts in reply to my number 226, which I first read, in which I offered to put supplies into Harrismith, and he said, "C654, 25th March. Yours 226 of yesterday. If information about Drakensberg Passes is correct you could not do better than act as you suggest." (That was merely to occupy Harrismith.) "The presence of one or two divisions of your force at Harrismith three weeks hence, especially if provided with equipment for onward movement, would be of material assistance to me. It would be a great advantage also to be helped with supplies from Natal."

15458. That is the point I wanted to elicit?—I never undertook to put two divisions into Harrismith and to open the railway and keep it open; I offered to supply Harrismith, and he had asked me if I could send divisions to Kroonstad, a totally different operation.

15459. You had about the equivalent of four divisions?—Yes, and I was holding about 95 miles of front, and I had repaired the railway up to the face of the Boers.

15460. What did you take to be the total of the enemy?—At that time there were about 14,000 men in the Biggarsberg.

15461. What was the next step after that?—I answered Lord Roberts at once, on the 26th, and I answered his last one about the two divisions, and I said, "No. 229, 26th March, your No. 654, I will try what I

can do. I shall not be able to assist for a week as Warren, who will have to hold Ladysmith, thinks he ought to have 2,000 mounted men left with him. I cannot say that demand is excessive, as he would only have six good battalions and the shaky eight battalions of the old garrison, and there is a strong force of the enemy in front, but I must wait for remounts to enable me to give them." At that time I should say I had allowed, after the relief of Ladysmith, the whole of the Natal Volunteers, who had been shut up in Ladysmith, and the whole of the Imperial Light Horse, who were the best irregulars of Natal people we had, to go back to their homes in South Natal to get new horses and refit after the siege, and I was awaiting their return; they were like Volunteers, not quite up to date, and they ought to have been back. They had promised to come back in three weeks but they did not come back so quickly. My telegram went on, "The latest information is that Kruger has told the Transvaalers that they have done so much harm in Natal that the English will never forgive them and that they must fight now not for their independence but for their lives. I do not know if this is true, but it is certain that they have done immense wilful damage, and also certain that for the last few days Kaffir rumour points not to a retirement but rather that they will advance if we do not. I will, however, do the best I can to carry out your wishes." Then the next telegram—

15462. The only question I want to get at clearly is, could not you have spared two divisions and yet have left yourself with 14,000 or 15,000 men in hand?—If Lord Roberts had asked me to spare two divisions, yes I could.

15463. Did he not ask you that?—No, I was just going to read a telegram on the point; he answered my 227 by his number 669 on the 26th March, and he said, "Any force coming from Natal will have to make its own arrangements about supplies as far as Kroonstad should it go West, or the Vaal River if it has to go North. After that has been reached it will have to be reconsidered, but it seems probable that we shall have to depend upon Natal for a portion of our supplies while we are in the Transvaal"; then he goes on, "As the feeding of a large force presents such great difficulty you will better arrange for only one division being despatched to operate with me in the first instance, and that I should wish to be Hunter's. If a second division can be sent later on it should be Lyttelton's, but I doubt if you will be able to spare more than one division as Natal must be occupied and the line of railway leading direct to the Transvaal will have to be repaired and guarded." So that he then threw upon me the sending of one division which I was to keep supplied the whole way to the Vaal River, and which I was to be responsible for, though it was to co-operate with him, but was not to be under his supervision at all; and besides that I was to clear Natal and to open and complete the line to Laing's Nek. I could not do it, at least I did not think I ought to be asked to do it. That is the real point.

15464. (Chairman.) The question I was asking was on the subsequent point, the correspondence in which began on the 2nd of May with regard to the passing through the passes and going up to Vrede and Standerton. That was Lord Roberts' plan at that time?—Lord Roberts appeared to think at that time that I could get up the Drakensberg anywhere, but there were really only two practical passes up which any column could have gone up the Drakensberg, one Van Reenen's Pass from Ladysmith, and the other Botha's Pass, about half-way between Newcastle and Laing's Nek; and if you went up through Botha's Pass it was infinitely easier and simpler to keep on the high ground above the gorge of which Laing's Nek is a portion, clear Laing's Nek and bring the railway through, than it would have been to have gone loose into one of the most difficult parts of the Free State. That Vrede country is not steep, but it is a very contorted, difficult country; the sources of the Klip River are very boggy, it is extremely difficult for soldiering, and there are also some rather difficult hills. I could see no possible reason for going to Vrede. I should not have been in touch with Lord Roberts; I should have been 40 or 50 miles from any of the troops he advanced with, whereas if I got to Standerton by the railway,

which was very much the easier operation, I covered Vrede entirely, and cut any of the communications the Boers would have had for supporting it. Therefore it was in my opinion very much better for me to clear Laing's Nek and to make the railroad through it instead of moving up a most difficult hill and then trying to supply the column at Vrede by that hill with the enemy all the time on my flank and rear.

15465. I only mentioned it in connection with Lord Roberts' evidence to say that he had given us the correspondence which passed between you and him with regard to those propositions. You have alluded to it also in your statement; so that I presume we have the full situation before us?—The correspondence really began on the 15th May, I think.

15466. The correspondence with regard to that particular point?—Yes, the principal correspondence began on the 15th May.

15467. Have you anything else to say with regard to the advance that you did make in the passage through the Drakensberg and the advance on Standerton?—Nothing, I think, except with regard to my conversation with Botha. I knew I had a good deal of influence in the Wakkerstroom district with the resident Boers. All the principal Boers or their fathers had served under me 20 years before. I knew a great many of them personally, and I was of opinion that if I could have been allowed to do what I suggested to Lord Roberts, that is to say, to allow them to keep their arms to protect themselves, the whole of that district would have surrendered at once. It did entirely surrender to me as a going concern; the Landrost handed over the place, every official remained at his post, and the whole district surrendered to me, but I could not accept their surrender unless I offered them protection, and the only means I had of protecting them was by letting them keep their rifles to protect themselves. When they surrendered the Landrost handed over to me for punishment, and I tried him by Courtmartial, a principal Boer who had shot in cold blood a messenger who was carrying proposals for peace. That shows how much they did surrender, but Lord Roberts told me that the only terms he could give were unconditional surrender, which was to be accompanied by disarmament. Chris. Botha was there at the time with the whole of the Swaziland Police, which was one of the mercenary regiments of the Boers, and the moment I withdrew General Hildyard from Wakkerstroom those police arrested the Landrost and the whole of the lot who had surrendered, took them away, and the district went back to a state of antagonism again.

15468. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) There has been a great deal of discussion in the last three years not only in official circles but elsewhere, as to what "unconditional surrender" means. Is any surrender otherwise than conditional?—I never before heard of unconditional surrender, and personally I should never think of offering it to anybody, because if you put a man's back against the wall and give him no means of escape, he is generally a very awkward customer.

15469. Surrenders are generally conditional?—Yes, but I had always from the very earliest inception of the War conceived that the real way to end it would be by getting, if possible, some portion of the Boers to revolt from the tyranny of the others, and as I knew I had a very considerable personal influence in that district I thought this was a good opportunity, and therefore I had the conversation with Botha that has been recorded in the papers. I wish to deny that there is the slightest truth in the assertion that he took advantage of it to remove any guns; he did not move anything.

15470. That concludes the statement you have submitted?—That concludes everything, except that I think it fair that I should say with regard to the correspondence you have mentioned, and which Lord Roberts alluded to in his evidence, that I do not know what deduction he drew from it. But I would like to call attention to this—that the moment I had got through Laing's Nek the very first telegram I got from him was that he wanted supplies from Natal, and that I was to come on to Standerton at once, which, if I had been at Vrede at that time, I could not have done.

15471. (*Sir John Hopkins*.) I should like to ask

from your experience of the range and power of your guns in the field, whether you consider that the field artillery was equal to what the Boers brought against you as field artillery?—No, the field artillery was not equal to some of the guns the Boers brought into the field as field artillery; but it must be recollected that our field artillery was very much more mobile than those guns the Boers brought, and that we were able to get our field artillery into places and to use it within periods of time which would, I think, have been impossible with the Boers; and we must also recollect that the young Boers are past-masters in the art of driving oxen; their guns were mostly drawn by oxen, and they were able to do things with teams of oxen that we had nobody in our Army capable of doing; and no other beasts than oxen would have done what they did. Therefore I think you have to discount the general question a good deal by those considerations.

15472. It was rather with a view to leading up to another question. Were you satisfied with the naval guns, which, of course, had a greater range as field guns?—I was exceedingly well satisfied with the naval guns, and especially with the naval gunners. I thought the naval gunning, their system of gunnery, very far in advance of our artillery system; but I was not satisfied with our cordite. I think the foreign system of intercepting the recoil which was adopted by the Boers was far superior to ours, that is to say a big Boer gun would fire at its extreme range (I saw it happen myself) a shell, and that shell fell and made a great hole in the ground; a native got into the hole to see how deep it was, and the next shell that came went into the same hole and killed him. I do not think we had a gun that would put two shells running into the same hole.

15473. With regard to the cordite, are you alluding now to the changes of range in the individual charges of the cordite, or to the erosion of the gun through it?—I am not alluding to erosion; I did not find that the erosion was very serious. Captain Jones would give you better information about that than I can; but I think we had a new tube put in one of the guns in the field without any trouble. I allude to the cordite itself; our cordite was not smokeless, and it was not in my opinion so certain, so even (that is the word), as it ought to have been.

15474. I think that comes out in some of the Naval evidence. With regard to the shooting of the Naval guns, were you satisfied with them?—Yes I was; I thought the fire discipline of the Naval gunners, the independence of their different guns crews, and the rapidity with which the different captains changed their targets as occasion offered was very much superior to our Artillery system.

15475. And as far as the shooting went, do you think it was as good as you could expect?—I thought quite as good; some of it was admirable. As to the two 12-pounder quick-firing guns of the "Terrible," that were under the charge of Mr. Ogilvie, as he was then, I do not think we should ever have got into Ladysmith if we had not had those guns. They were firing on a Boer sangar, and I was looking through my telescope, about 2,800 yards off, and the last two shells went into the sangar, I do not think three feet in front of the leading men who were taking it.

15476. You had no experience of the 4.7 guns with your force, had you?—Yes, I had four.

15477. That was afterwards, in your advance?—All the time, we horsed them and took them on.

15478. Had that gun practised at the enemy while it was with you?—Yes, an immense deal of practice.

15479. Did you see anything to remark on in the accuracy of fire of the 4.7? Was it as good as it should be?—I thought it was; occasionally they fired extremely well. Towards the end, when perhaps there was rather more demand for very accurate firing, one of the guns had got rather eroded, and Captain Scott, under a certain amount of pressure, I am afraid from me, had departed from his original design of carriage and made a lighter one, and undoubtedly the lighter one was less successful, and the gun did not shoot quite so well. With the old carriages, the first ones he made, the shooting was better.

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

15480. Taking the 47 as one of the heavy guns accompanying you in the field, do you consider that on the whole the shooting was as satisfactory as you would expect it to be, taking carriages and everything else into account?—I thought it very good indeed; I considered it was excellent.

15481. (*Chairman.*) You are also prepared to answer questions on any points in the Memorandum which was sent to you? (*Vide Appendix, page 575 post.*) I do not know that it is necessary to go into the first point about the adequacy in point of strength of the force in the field at different dates, and what they had to do. I presume that has come out in the summary of your evidence which we have dealt with?—I think so.

15482. Then with regard to the quality of the men?—I think with regard to the quality of the men that we were all of us very favourably impressed; there were some officers who had doubts as to whether some of the Reservists would prove of equal value with the men who had remained in the ranks, but I think those doubts were removed, and that the quality of the men was quite as good as we hoped for. They certainly shot, on the whole, extremely well; the fault in their shooting was that it was difficult to keep them attentive. An old Boer whom I knew well once expressed it to me in this way, "For two hours your men would hit our little finger, but after that they go to sleep and then we sometimes shoot them."

15483. How do you think their shooting compared with the Boers'?—On the whole it was better. I think our gun was better than the Mauser, and that on the whole as long as our men were really shooting they shot rather better than the Boers when they were in a place where they knew their range, but the conditions of light and atmosphere in South Africa are so very different from the conditions in England that it took the men a good long time before they could easily, quickly and accurately pick up the range.

15484. Are you speaking now of the Regulars?—Yes.

15485. Do you make the same remarks about the Irregulars?—The Colonials who shot well, shot well, but the Colonials who did not shoot well shot remarkably badly.

15486. They most of them shot well?—A proportion of them.

15487. Had you many Colonials with you?—I had at first about 3,000 from Natal of regiments I raised at the Cape, mostly composed of men who came from Johannesburg.

15488. All South Africans?—Well, they were all sorts; as good men as any in the lot were a small detachment of five men of the Kent Yeomanry who came out for a lark. These were right good men to shoot and everything else.

15489. You had not to do with corps raised in the overseas Colonies?—No, except with Strathcona's Horse; they were with me, and they were excellent.

15490. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) At what time did they join you?—They joined me the day I started for Standerton; I think they joined me on the 18th June. They were originally intended for an expedition that Lord Roberts devised, but it did not come off, and I caught them at Durban and told Lord Roberts I would bring them up the shortest way to meet him, and they stayed with me until I left the country, and were a most excellent regiment. They shot very well, rode well, and fought well, and were under a most admirable commander; they were much more like a disciplined corps than most of the other Irregular Corps I saw.

15491. (*Chairman.*) Had you the Yeomanry also?—None.

15492. Had you any Militia?—None; I had a certain number of Volunteer Companies who came out to join their regiments, and they did very well indeed.

15493. As to marching, were you satisfied with the marching of the troops?—Yes, the men after I once got them into condition never gave us the least trouble, and they marched very well.

15494. And horsemanship or horsemastership?—The horsemastership was bad and the horsemanship was not too good on the part of the Cavalry, and not nearly good enough on the part of the Mounted Infantry.

15495. Were you satisfied with the troops—the Regulars, in general physique, morale, and intelligence?—Yes, I thought they were quite up to the standard of any English soldier I have seen during my service, and better in fact than any I have had during the 45 years I have been in the Army. I think there has been general improvement in the soldier as a soldier, and I think these men were quite up to the best standard.

15496. The conditions of modern warfare call for more intelligence from the individual soldier, do they not?—I did not consider that my men were soldiers until they came down from Spion Kop; they went up recruits, I think, and they came down soldiers; they learned a great deal in those four days at Spion Kop; they got into the habit of fighting, and got to understand what they had to do themselves, and were quite different men when they came down.

15497. You could rely upon their intelligence better after that?—Yes, they had begun to learn fighting.

15498. Is there any way in which you think the training of the men ought to be modified in future in order to make a better fighting machine under modern conditions?—I think that as regards drill we went into the war very fairly equipped; I saw nothing to make me think that our drill book was wrong. We have learned some lessons, of course, from this War, because our drill book was written for a rifle and for artillery of a shorter range than those we met and used, and therefore there are certain small changes of detail necessary in the drill book, but I thought, as a whole, our drill was very good. I found in war exactly the same fault that I found at Aldershot on every field day, I always made the same remark—that the men knew how to do it, but they did not know what to do. That is the real gist of the criticism I should like to make. There is nothing you tell them to do that they do not know how to do if they are fairly well taught, but they do not know what to do when the moment comes because they are never allowed to have an opportunity—either officers or men—of exercising the slightest amount of independent judgment before they get on the field of battle.

15499. And in that respect you would wish to see the training altered?—Very much.

15500. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How would you alter the training?—The way I should begin to alter the training would be to abolish the War Office as it stands, and there really to my mind lies the true crux of the question. As long as the War Office exists as it is the Army is tied up in red tape, and the principles of the War Office are nothing but red tape. That instruction is forced down through every rank in the Army.

15501. (*Chairman.*) You speak with considerable experience of the War Office?—Yes, I know the War Office well; I have been 25 years there, and I have sat at the desk of every clerk in the War Office and gone through his year's work with him.

15502. Would you explain what that means?—Upon this matter I wrote down a few words, as I thought I could make it shorter if I wrote it beforehand, and I think it will fully explain my meaning:—

"In the interests of the education of officers the reorganisation of the War Office is an urgent necessity.

"It is essential there should be a standard organisation of staff work and a standard pattern of staff duty, which officers should look to and learn from. Those standards ought to be found in the War Office. They are not to be found there now, nor ever have been in the past.

"The work in the War Office is, of its very nature, divisible into two distinct but inter-dependent sections: 'The Military Policy of the Country' and the 'Military Government of the Army.' Under the first head are found the duties of the Secretary of State; under the second those of the Commander-in-Chief. This is the division which Lord Cardwell evidently intended but did not live to create. This also is the reform which was advocated by Lord Hartington's Committee, though, unfortunately, owing to the adoption of a misleading nomenclature, the excellence of that Committee's recommendations was never properly appreciated.

"What they recommended was the appointment of

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903

a Chief of the Staff; what they meant to recommend has found happier definition in the phrase 'intellectual equipment.'

"No one who studies the inception of the late War can fail to see how seriously the situation was affected by the want of some sort of intellectual equipment for the Secretary of State.

"On the other hand the Army suffers seriously from the interference of the civilian officials with the authority of the Commander-in-Chief.

"For the Military Government of the Army the system adopted should be the same Staff system as that which directs an army in the field. This is essential. The present regulations which impose two different systems in peace and war are absurd.

"To unite the two sections of the reformed War Office the Commander-in-Chief and some of his Staff should be members of the Board of Intellectual Equipment on one side, and the Accountant-General should audit the expenditure of the Military Staff on the other. But I need not go into details. Suffice it that I feel confident that a workable proposal could be put forward which if adopted would train the whole Staff of the Army in time of peace to the duties which must fall to them in war. This is not now the case.

"It would be difficult to over-estimate the advantage of this training. The great defect at present throughout all ranks of the Army is the want of a sense of the paramount importance of co-operation. I believe this defect to have its origin in the natural resentment of officers against the stringent and inelastic system of red tape and regulations within which they are pent and against which they chafe.

"Such restrictions necessarily promote rebellion rather than co-operation. All ranks are possessed by the notion that authority is stupid and exists mainly to be outwitted. Officers acquire the idea that it is meritorious to exceed, outstep or evade orders. This works infinite harm. Every mess-table has its stories of how so-and-so snubbed, confuted, or ridiculed the War Office with success.

"There is scarcely one officer in a hundred who has been taught any rule which would guide him in deciding how to act when confronted by the problem so frequent in war: 'I have my orders, but what ought I to do?' If he does not evade the problem by inaction, it is a chance if he acts aright; because, owing to his defective training, he acts on the wrong impulse. He does not ask himself how he can best further the operations as a whole, but how he may most plausibly excuse himself, if taken to task.

"Our officers and men as we recruit them are deficient in 'hunter's instinct'—too highly civilised, if you will. Some special training to make good that deficiency is now needed. The fundamental principle of this training should be that everyone must understand that he has to fight for the main chance, and not for his own hand. The system of the War Office teaches exactly the reverse. The root of reform must be found there. The War Office should hand over to the Army the funds voted by Parliament and allocated by the Secretary of State, and the Officer Commanding the District should be responsible for those funds and should be accountable for those funds; he should watch their expenditure and account for that expenditure through his staff, and in that way it would be brought down to every man in every rank in the Army that the expenditure of military funds is a matter in which they ought to have a vital interest. At the present moment they are entirely removed from that interest. I have heard a Commander-in-Chief himself say that he did not consider he had the slightest responsibility for expenditure, and it is the same with most of the officers in the Army. The only way in which I think you can get the training for war is through, in the commencement, a financial training; if you make officers responsible first of all for their finance they will gradually become responsible for other things, and they will gradually learn to think."

15503. (*Viscount Esher*.) A considerable step has been made in that direction lately?—I should say that every step taken lately has been going backwards.

15504. But in the direction of finance?—I beg your pardon; I think the most retrograde step that has ever been made has been made lately.

15505. I mean in the allocating to the Officers Com-

manding these new Army Corps a certain sum for which they are to account?—£200 a year, I believe.

15506. They are to have a special confidential branch of the War Office attached to them?—Exactly, that is where the retrograde step is that is; the whole sin and error of the thing in my opinion. Take Aldershot, there is an Army Corps at Aldershot; the First Army Corps; they have nominally thrown dust in the eyes of the public by saying, "Oh, yes, we have handed over to General French the control of the expenditure we have allocated to that Army Corps." But they have put a Principal War Office Clerk and 16 War Office clerks into an office at Aldershot, and now what is going on at Aldershot? Sir Frederick Stopford can tell you more about that than I can, but according to my belief what is going on at Aldershot is that instead of a man having even to consider (which he had before, and which was some check upon him), "Is this worth writing to the War Office about or shall I do it myself?" he merely runs across the road into the War Office at Aldershot and says, "Is this all right; will you pass this?" and the clerk says, "I will pass it." And the whole need for thought is taken off his shoulders.

15507. We understood that this War Office official who was sent down to Aldershot with his staff of clerks was to be subordinate to General French; that was the impression left on us by the evidence given here, but you understand that is not the case?—You will find that he will be a War Office clerk and will not be subordinate because he goes to a higher power; he does not correspond with French and French alone—if he did so then he would be subordinate, but he corresponds with the War Office who are above French, and therefore he cannot be subordinate to French.

15508. You understand that he would be either in correspondence with the Accountant-General at the War Office or the Financial Secretary, over the head of General French?—Yes.

15509. (*Sir Henry Norman*.) He must be, under any circumstances?—He is; but he need not be, because General French ought to do any correspondence.

15510. Then General French would come under the head of a clerk of the War Office?—Yes; but he would get his money, and would deal with it as he liked; he would come under them for review, but he would have spent it.

15511. It would never be contemplated that General French or any other General should have power to spend money according to his own will?—Not according to his own will, but as allocated by the War Office.

15512. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Would you go so far as to say that the General of a District or an Army Corps should contract with the Government to maintain so many thousand men for a certain sum?—Not at all; the Secretary of State for War in his office would fix the rate of pay for the various branches, and he would tell the man in the district the number of people of each of those branches he would have, and that officer would pay them. All the main channels of expenditure are fixed by numbers and by rates of pay; but when it comes to the flotsam and jetsam of expenditure, I think that the whole of that responsibility should be thrown on the General of the Army Corps. It is in war; he has then to do everything, and why should he not be trained for it? Where you can stop him you do not allow him to do it, but where you cannot stop him you allow him to do it.

15513. I only raise difficulties for you to upset them; but, for instance, as to drafts going to India and men being taken from one district to another, would there not be a difficulty as to which General the expenditure was to be taken by?—The expenditure for drafts is really no expenditure; it is merely putting the men into a ship.

15514. Still, there is expenditure connected with it?—The expenditure is voted for all those drafts, and it is merely a question of putting it in one column or another when it gets to the War Office; say that you have to send out a thousand drafts, and those thousand are coming from ten places, there will be expenditure as each of those ten places for 100 men, we will say if the War Office takes the money for the 1,000 men, each of these men in the ten different districts will know

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

that he is able to send his 100 men, and it will be put together when the accounts are put together.

15515. My point is that if a fixed sum is allotted to each General, the man who had sent most men away with drafts would undoubtedly have a heavier expenditure thrown upon him than the other men would have? —So he would, but his fixed sum would be an average sum per head of the draft.

15516. You go into detail?—That is how it is done now.

15517. That is the way you object to?—I object to its being done at the War Office, and I do not see why it should be.

15518. Supposing there are six army corps created, would you allocate a fixed sum based on the number of men who are paid, and who belong to the army corps, for each corps?—Yes, I would give the average according to the average expenditure of each of those corps; but if a man reports, "I have exceeded my Vote for movement of troops by so much because you threw upon me the movement of more drafts than I anticipated, or that you anticipated when you made your average," that would be set right by the War Office; it would be legitimate expenditure, and would come out of the main Vote.

15519. Could they recover from the other army corps the balance they had unexpended by having less drafts taken from them?—All that is done now by the War Office, and could be done, under the conditions I propose, by the Accountant General.

15520. But under your system I want to see where it would come in?—It would come in under what I call the Intellectual Equipment Branch; the Accountant-General would do that; the Accountant-General does it for the Navy, and what I propose is very nearly what is the Naval arrangement, that is to say, they give a captain a ship, and they allow an average expenditure for that ship, and then haul him over the coals, not doing him much harm in the process, if in any particular thing he spends too much. He gets an average amount of rope, for instance; he is not tied down to a rope, but on the whole an average is taken by the Accountant-General, and they see that the individual commander does not exceed his proper average according to the work he has to do.

15521. When manœuvres take place that involves large expenditure of various sorts?—Yes; for that they always have a sort of special grant. When I was Quartermaster-General I devised a system which is still in existence for manœuvres. You allow the General a lump sum. Before manœuvres now they telegraph to Aldershot, for example, saying, "We want manœuvres, and so many men will go from Aldershot." The General sends up an estimate of £2,000, and he is authorised to spend £2,000. That is the principle upon which the manœuvres are done now, and I may say that it is a principle which has always been in my head as capable of great expansion.

15522. (*Viscount Esher.*) Supposing you take the Inspector General Fortification's work, for instance, and take, for example, the Second Army Corps, a certain special sum is allotted for barracks and fortifications in the lump; would you propose that Sir Evelyn Wood should have the discretion as to whether he should spend that money on fortifications or barracks, as the case might be?—Oh, no; there again you bring in your Intellectual equipment, and the great benefit the Intellectual equipment would be is that you would get what is very much wanted—a military policy for the Army. We have no office of military policy at the moment, but policy should decide entirely what was to be built and where, and the Second Army Corps would, as now, have its expenditure in works divided into the three heads: all important works, quasi-permanent and smaller works, and maintenance, and the only freedom Sir Evelyn Wood would have would be a certain margin out of maintenance with regard to which somebody would go round and see if he really did keep up the different things he ought to keep up.

15523. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you define what you mean by "military policy"?—By "military policy" I mean first a certain amount of looking ahead beyond the idea of the moment.

15524. As regards organisation?—As regards organisation, as regards numbers, as regards defence, as regards offence, as regards buildings, as regards comfort of soldiers, as regards recruiting, and the conditions under which soldiers live; all those things require a policy, and they are constantly changing. Somebody comes into the War Office, and one man says, "If you want recruits you must have warm baths for all the men." Another says, "If you want recruits you must have dining-rooms, you cannot get on without dining-rooms." Another man says, "That is no use; dining-rooms only give the men more fatigues to clean them; you must have cubicles." Another says something else, and you will see all round barracks these different ideas begun, and then they stop, and then another one begins, and so you go on, and there is nothing to bring those ideas into a policy. There is no permanent office to say, "Look here, that is all very well; you are all agreed that recreation-rooms are the most important thing at present; do let us finish the recreation-rooms before you go into anything else; we cannot afford more than a certain sum of money every year, nothing else can be done but the recreation-rooms." That is what I call a policy.

15525. Would you include in it mobilisation schemes, strategy, and intelligence, and all that together, or would that be separate?—"Intelligence" is a word used in a funny way.

15526. Then I will use the word information, which I think is better?—The intellectual equipment would deal with military policy only and have nothing to do with the Army; nothing to do with the Commander-in-Chief; it is a question of the Secretary of State for War. When we go to War the Secretary of State for War becomes the most important official in the country, and he ought to have an office which knows all about that, but he has nothing now.

15527. Quite irrespective of the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes, the Commander-in-Chief has more than any man can do in looking after his Army.

15528. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Would the evils which exist in any degree be decreased by giving discretion to Officers Commanding Army Corps, because one might be in favour of cubicles and one in favour of something else?—I specially said that all these questions which involve any principle of expenditure would be a matter for the Secretary of State through his Intellectual Equipment.

15529. And that would give no discretion to these Officers Commanding Army Corps?—Not in a question of high policy, and I think they have plenty to do without it. My idea is to introduce a training in independence of thought by a training in financial independence.

15530. (*Viscount Esher.*) What you mean is that if a man has to pay some ridiculously small sum for some fault, a case which in these days would probably involve no end of correspondence with the War Office, you would allow that to be settled absolutely by the Officer Commanding the Home District?—Yes, I would.

15531. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) At what point would you bring in the control, because it might not be a very small sum, or it might be larger than anticipated?—The control would come in by the audit and there is this point. It should come in through the General's own sense; he should think and decide whether he could deal with the question or should refer it. The accounts would be the control and the General who authorised the expenditure would be responsible for all the expenditure he authorised. He is not now; he is responsible for nothing practically in England. He is tied up very much. When he goes to war he is given the national purse to draw on and he has not had the slightest training whatever to enable him to do it properly.

15532. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Therefore you would make the General Commanding the Army Corps, an Accounting Officer?—He would have an accounting officer under him who would keep the accounts.

15533. But he would be responsible for the accounts?—Yes, not for their accuracy, that would be the Accountant, but for the expenditure.

15534. Would not that take up a good deal of his time which ought to be devoted to the training of his

corps?—I do not think so. There are very few questions; there are regulations and the number of questions which arise is very small.

15535. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Do the different Generals now of the different Divisions make their own contracts for beef, and coal, and all that kind of thing?—I think not, except at Aldershot, but I could not be certain. I introduced a system at Aldershot when I was Quartermaster-General, under which they were authorised to purchase direct as a training for war.

15536. In fact, your contracts then are all local?—Mostly.

15537. And really carried out by the General Commanding?—Yes, to a greater extent than elsewhere; a good many contracts are made locally for the War Office by the local authorities.

15538. (*Viscount Esher.*) But over a certain amount I think they have to be referred to the Director of Contracts?—Yes, but they have changed lately, and I will not be certain about the contract question.

15539. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are these questions of devolution to generals and the institution of a bureau of military policy the only two points on which you insist as to reform?—That is the basis on which I should like reform to commence; if you smother reform by small details it is bad. By giving a certain period every year to the training of troops on strange ground you could teach them a good deal, but I believe myself that round all our stations, if a good deal of the money now spent on moving about troops were allowed to the officer commanding to train the troops where he lived you would get a great deal of very good instruction, provided you had a staff which had studied the subject, and which could go about and show people how to start the training. He has just been reappointed, I understand, but one of the so called reforms that was made lately was the abolition of the Director of Military Education.

15540. (*Chairman.*) Have you made any conclusions from the experience of the War about the question of training on the duties of regimental and staff officers?—Yes. At the beginning of a war our staff officers do not know their duties, and the true reason is that they are called upon in what I might call their sedentary duties to administer regulations with which they are absolutely unacquainted, if they have not been previously at war, because the whole regulations of the Army practically change on going to war; the General supercedes the Secretary of State, and the powers of the staff officers under him are very much greater than they are in peace time. Consequently the training they receive in peace time does not fit them for the duties they have to perform in war.

15541. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You are speaking of the Adjutant-General ("A" Department)?—Of all Departments. A good many of the contracts have perhaps formerly been under the Director of Contracts, but when we go to war the officer has to do them himself, and he has not had the opportunity previously of making mistakes, and finding out really what he ought to know.

15542. (*Chairman.*) How would you rectify that?—I would allow more freedom in peace time; I do not care how strict you keep the supervision, and it could be kept strict in peace time, but it seems to me reasonable to train a man under supervision for the position you know he will have to take up without supervision when he goes to war.

15543. What about regimental officers?—The objection I have to staff officers is the same throughout the Army; independence is not sufficiently studied, and the red tape in fact that is used to tie up the higher officers is also felt by the junior officers for this reason, that the moment you deprive a man in authority of any power of doing individual work he has somehow or another to make his authority felt, and he immediately begins interfering with those below him, and that pressure that comes on at the top is felt throughout the whole Army. It begins in the War Office and as long as the War Office goes on as it is and as long as its duty is always to interfere with and not to encourage any individual action, I am afraid we shall not improve our training.

15544. The company officers did well in the War, did they not?—Yes, as I say, the drill book and teaching of our Army is good, and I think the soldiers have gone as far as they have been allowed to go. In all our garrisons the instruction given within the limits of the instruction possible is good.

15545. As to supplies, were you satisfied?—Yes, I thought on the whole the ration was good and the supplies were good.

15546. And the method of supplying?—The method of supply rather opens the question of the transport, whether you ought to separate the supply from transport, which I believe is advocated now, but personally I always object to separating the responsibility for the wagon from the responsibility for the load it carries.

15547. That means you are in favour of regimental transport?—No, that means I am in favour of making supply and transport one service.

15548. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) One department?—Yes.

15549. With one head?—Yes.

15550. (*Chairman.*) You have certain definite views about land transport, but have you anything you wish to say about supply?—With regard to supply, I should like to say this, that I do think it is quite right to have only a fixed ration, it is quite right to have as liberal a ration as you can, but the British soldier is very fairly well paid when he is at war, and he generally has more money than he wants, and he usually gambles. If it can possibly be done, it is an enormous advantage to the Army generally to provide the soldier with a certain number of simple luxuries in the way of eatables. According to my experience, the scourge of the Army in the field is either enteric (sometimes called typhoid fever, or dysentery, and the origin of both those diseases is in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred found to be in digestion, and indigestion is provoked and promoted by hungry men getting unsuitable food. Therefore you can save an immense waste of the Army and you can to a great extent lessen your loss by sickness by a certain amount of judicious expenditure, which really need be very small, because it will nearly all be recouped to you out of the men's pockets. I am convinced myself that I had much less enteric during the two months I was waiting at Ladysmith—which was just the sort of time after very hard work when men do get enteric—because I was able to make arrangements to give my men things like Quaker Oats, jam, sweets, and different things, especially butter; we were short of vegetables in Natal. The doctors agreed with me, and I had the whole time I was in the field a very effective canteen that we always managed to get up as part of our supply. It was a great boon also for the company officers.

15551. Have you anything to say about the horses?—I did not like the Argentines as a rule; some of them were good, but the best horse we had out there, if he was given a chance to get right, was the English.

15552. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Better than the Cape horse?—As a rule, yes; the Cape horse when it came into our Cavalry was not so good as the English horse.

15553. You mean the English horse when acclimatised?—When the English horse was acclimatised and taken care of he did extremely well. I took out two horses, and I used them very hard and brought them home, they are both going on now, and they are as good as the day I took them out to the Cape.

15554. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Did you find the Canadian horses good?—They were not a great success, I think; some of them were very good, but the proportion of very good ones was small.

15555. Of course, this corps you spoke of lost a great many of their own horses, some two hundred, I think, so that they had to get Argentine horses to replace them, I believe?—Yes, I understood that corps was exceptionally well mounted; I know Colonel Steele told me so, and the men were very partial to their own Canadian horses, and, as you say, they did lose a great number in that expedition. They agreed never to think any of the remounts they got as good as their original horses.

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18 Feb. 1903.

15556. (*Chairman.*) We now come to Land Transport.—Broadly speaking, what I want to say to the Commission about Land Transport is this, that I am in favour of regimental transport, and the reason why I am in favour of regimental transport is, that we have in our Army a regimental system for good or for bad. At the present moment it is one we have no chance of getting rid of, and therefore it forms a sort of permanent line of organisation, that it is easier to follow than to depart from. For that reason, I think that in the case of the transport which is directly wrapped up with the comfort of the individual men it is better to make the great divisions of any system suit the divisions that affect the men, and therefore it should be based upon the regimental system. I would like to put in a Paper (*the Paper was handed in at Question 15561*)—I am afraid you will think it too long to read—which I have written on the transport, and the point on which I have argued is this: we have a system that is the growth of years; we have three times to my knowledge, at any rate, tried the system of a corps of transport, and it has each time broken down in War, and eventually we have evolved the system of regimental transport, with a corps divisible into separate companies, aiding its organisation—that is to say, the Army Service Corps. I maintained that system throughout the time I was in Natal with great success. I had no trouble with my transport at all, and I may say that my men were as well fed as any troops have ever been, chiefly due, if to anything, to the excellence of the transport. But it was broken up on the other side, and they tried a new system; no doubt that was done under great stress, and was not properly thought out beforehand, and could not be, and it broke down; and the different commanders, it appeared to me as I watched, reverted automatically to the nearest approach to the old regimental system that they could get to, and that I think was a proof that the old regimental system had something in it. Now, we are in this position, that the regimental system has been condemned by the highest authority, but no real system has been offered in lieu of it. The only books of Regulations we have got affecting transport, and all our books as to mobilisation, and all our military literature affecting transport are based on the regimental system. If the system is a bad one, there should be new books at once, and if the system is not a bad one we should use those books, but it cannot be right to keep those books and to allow even the temporary arrangements that have been made now for Volunteers and Militia in England; those books, are all based on the regimental system, and that cannot be right if the system itself is bad. At the large stations they are commencing to attack the system at the top because they are dividing the supply and transport, and they are appointing two Staff officers to do the work where formerly there was only one; Directors of Supply and Directors of Transport are being appointed to all these Army Corps, but to my mind they are not wanted.

15557. Did you maintain the regimental system throughout with your troops?—Entirely; curiously enough (I think I am justified in quoting it), when I was in Pretoria in October, Lord Kitchener told me there were only two columns that had proper transport, mine and Lord Methuen's, and I could not help replying, "Yes, and do you know why? Because they are the only two that kept regimental transport."

15558. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What system of transport did you adopt in the large engagements you had on the Tugela, for instance the Spion Kop engagement?—I had hardly anything but oxen at that time; I left all the mules at the Cape for the advance through the Orange Free State, and I requisitioned ox transport in Natal for my operations in Natal.

15559. Was that a regimental transport or a combined transport?—Regimental transport; the wagons were issued upon the system in our text books upon the regimental system.

15560. For instance, you had a number of regiments engaged there; did each regiment take its own transport to the front, or were they all combined together?—A portion was combined and a portion remained with the regiments. In the paper which I have already referred to (*Vide Question 15561*) and which will appear as part of my evidence, I have sketched what regimental transport is, and perhaps you would like me to read that, but practically it comes to this, that regimental transport, properly so called, is

divided into two. There is a first line transport, and I believe nobody has ever proposed that that should not be regimental; that is what I call the fighting transport. It carries the ammunition, the entrenching tools, the medical stores belonging to the regiment, the signalling equipment, and the machine gun or guns, and that is all. That is the first line of transport, and wherever the regiment goes that must go with it; the medical things are wanted for immediate treatment in the field, and the signalling apparatus, machine guns and ammunition are also wanted. Then there is the second line of transport, which is also regimental, and that is a certain number of wagons according to what you are going to carry. It contains always one day's and sometimes more days' rations for the men of the regiment, and in the regiment it is subdivided for the men according to companies, and also carries their tents, their blankets, and their cooking things. So that the regiment, as a regiment, has always with it its transport for its immediately-required fighting things, and sufficient to keep it going in health for the number of days that the general officer in chief command thinks it will be required to be self-supporting. Behind that there is what we call the Army Service Corps Supply Column, and that belongs not to the regiment but to the brigade, and that, again, is filled up from what is called the Supply Park, and that belongs not to a brigade but to a division. If you have any more you have the auxiliary transport formed by the Army Service Corps.

15561. (*Chairman.*) Will you now put in the paper which you have prepared?—Yes, it is as follows:—

"It is impossible to offer any remarks on the transport system of our Army in the late South African War without reference to the criticisms passed by Lord Roberts upon the system which existed by regulations at the commencement of that War. They are to be found in his despatch dated, Cape Town, 6th February, 1900 (*see Appendix, Vol. p. 234*), and in the long report on Transport attached to his despatch dated, War Office, 24th January, 1901.

"In the former document Lord Roberts, speaking of the existing system as the 'Regimental System,' complained (1) that no organised Transport Corps existed when he arrived in South Africa; (2) that some thousands of mules had been collected and a number of ox and mule wagons purchased, but that the system upon which they had been distributed, though it might answer for peace manoeuvres, was quite unsuitable for extensive operations in a country where all necessities required by the Army have to be carried for a considerable distance; (3) that the system was extravagant.

"In the later document there are signs that the Commander-in-Chief's judgment had undergone considerable modification, and that his forcible condemnation of the system which he found in existence had given place to an argumentative defence of the alternative system which he introduced.

"It was unfortunate that neither Lord Roberts nor Lord Kitchener nor Colonel Sir W. Nicholson, who soon after landing was appointed Major-General Director of Transport, had any previous knowledge of the conditions affecting South African wheeled transport. The War Office system which they overthrew had been built on the experience of a century's campaigns, and was especially designed to meet South African difficulties; and the criticism that 'There was no organised Transport Corps in existence,' disregards all the lessons of that experience. During the last hundred years the British Army has tried at least three Corps of Transport, and has abandoned each of them in disgust. To students of transport matters these expensive failures of the past, the 'Royal Wagon Train,' the 'Land Transport Corps,' and the 'Military Train,' are now merely milestones on the road to progress. Guided by past failures the Mobilisation Branch at the War Office had devised a system on lines suited to the idiosyncracies of our Army. Anyone who has ever studied Army reform well knows how greatly reform could be facilitated if our Regimental System could be disregarded or abolished. But that system has grown up with the growth of the Army; it permeates and affects every detail of military organisation; it cannot be disregarded nor abolished; and if the system of transport at all deserves the designation of a 'Regimental System,' it is mainly because it was adjusted to our regimental organisation. In many respects, however, it was not in any sense regimental.

Let us first examine what the War Office system was. It was sub-divided as follows:—

“(A) *Regimental Transport*.—This was transport allocated to regimental units, but by regulation available for general transport purposes, whenever military requirements demanded it. Regimental transport was divided into two divisions—(1) First Line Transport or, as I think it should be called, Fighting Transport. This was for the carriage of ammunition, entrenching tools, first-aid medical stores, signalling equipment, and machine gun or guns. (2) Second Line Transport or, as I think it should be called, Subsistence Transport. This was for the carriage of one or more days' rations for men and forage for animals, blankets, regimental equipment, baggage, tents, etc. The wagons of the Second Line Transport were so arranged that the number of days' rations carried per company or minor unit could be increased at will by diminishing the stores and equipment. Thus, e.g., if tents or blankets were left behind their equivalent weight in rations could be carried.

“(B) *The Army Service Corps Supply Column*.—This was of varying strength, but carried at least one day's ordinary and one day's emergency rations for every man, and at least one day's forage for every animal in the unit (N.B.—Unit in this case means divisional troops, a brigade, corps troops, etc.) The Supply Column thus formed the first reserve, and was the connecting link with the Supply Park (C).

“(C) *The Supply Park*.—I prefer the German word, 'Rolling Magazines.' This carried at least three days' rations and forage in rear of the force, but might be increased, in accordance with circumstances, to carry any number of days' food that the exigencies of the situation, the nature of the operations, or the state of the country, might require.

“(D) *An Auxiliary Transport* formed into companies under Army Service Corps Supply and Transport officers. In South Africa these companies were to consist, for ox-transport, of about 100 ox-wagons with a maximum carrying power of about 600,000 lbs. divided into sections of 10 and sub-sections of five wagons, each under mounted European conductors and sub-conductors, and, for mule transport, of 40 mule wagons with about 400 mules. Each mule company was under a military company—staff with a proportion of wheelers, saddlers, and shoeing-smiths for each section, and was divided into four sections of 10 wagons each under European conductors.

“*Note*.—It is necessary to note that in addition to the above classes of transport there was another large and important one in South Africa. This was the 'Technical Transport,' that is to say the vast transport (chiefly mule, but in part ox) for the Royal Artillery ammunition columns, for Royal Engineer telegraph, bridging and pontoons, balloons, etc.; for the medical units for their ambulances, field hospitals and equipment, and for the Naval Brigade for their heavy guns. All of this had been supplied on the full scale to the different units concerned before Lord Roberts landed. In an European war this transport, the medical excepted, would not be supplied by any Transport Department nor by the Army Service Corps, being already a part of the organisation of the unit and provided for in the war establishments, or in other words 'regimentally.' (The Naval Brigade, of course, is excepted.)

“It is claimed that the guiding principles of this carefully elaborated system were (1) Decentralisation of administration by the formation of handy transport units under the immediate command of those directly interested in their efficiency. (2) Establishment of a chain of responsibility. Every commander of a unit, i.e., of a company, battalion, brigade, or division had direct charge of a portion of that unit's food supply. (3) Interdependence of supply and transport. Nothing is more fatal than to hold one man responsible for a wagon and another for its load. (4) Elasticity, or almost automatic expansion or contraction into units of any size, equipped with each class of transport. The addition or deduction of any unit to or from a brigade, equipped as it would be with its own regimental transport, merely necessitated the corresponding addition or deduction of a proportionate carrying power to or from the supply column and supply park respectively by the senior Army Service Corps officer. His responsibility

for both services, supply as well as transport, was thoroughly established and understood.

“Such in briefest outline was the 'War Office system' arrived at through countless changes, the result of the experience of many campaigns, carefully worked out by the Mobilisation branch, understood by every staff officer who had studied his profession and the A.B.C. of the Army Service Corps Officer. It was in working order, and had received universal approval from the Army in South Africa until Lord Roberts's arrival.

“On the other hand what was the system that replaced it? All transport animals, vehicles, and *personnel* (except the regimental small-arm-ammunition-carts and machine guns), including even the Technical Transport with Royal Artillery, Royal Engineer and Medical units, were withdrawn and formed into transport companies of 520 mules and 1,600 oxen respectively, under Army Service Corps officers and others.

“As the commissioned and subordinate *personnel* of the Army Service Corps were insufficient to find the staff for these companies it became necessary to add to each Army Service Corps transport-company thus formed another of equal strength, and to divide between them the subordinate military *personnel*. These newly-formed companies were handed over to the command of any officer who could be found, Regular, Militia, Volunteer, or Colonial, while the accountability for both was to remain with the Army Service Corps Captain. As demand for more transport kept increasing, attempts were made again and again to divide and subdivide the *personnel*. These efforts at sub-division continued until the staff to be divided fell to unity or zero. Originally it was intended that these companies, of one uniform strength, should lend to the several units of all branches the vehicles and animals required for the day, withdrawing them into one camp for the personal supervision of the company-officer after each march. The impracticability of such a system became at once apparent. It was abandoned perforce, and the idea of an uniform establishment became a stumbling block. In the result brigades, columns, etc., had to be supplied with transport wholly or in part from one or more transport-companies. Odds and ends of transport were left without a home. Headquarter Staffs of transport-companies found themselves with a few odd wagons—possibly part mule, part ox—with no transport to look after and no troops to serve, because all their vehicles, animals, and drivers had been distributed elsewhere. Various expedients were tried, though with indifferent success, to remedy these defects, and moving Transport Depot Companies were formed from any odd *personnel* that could be discovered, to sweep up the floating fragments and form them into new companies.

“The sudden abolition of the existing tables caused considerable inconvenience. True, some new tables were published, but they were incomplete and were furnished too late. The result was that every Commander took what he could get and generally a great deal more than he was entitled to. Supply Columns having been omitted as an integral part of the new transport-system, Commanders knowing that they had no reserve behind them, took with them, whenever they could, huge trains of transport which seriously compromised their mobility and military efficiency. Moreover, since under the War Office system the Supply Column was really the Supply and Transport Company of the units to which it belonged, its abolition involved the separation of the whole *personnel* and equipment of supply from the unit.

“It is not an unfair criticism of the new system to say that it failed to attain the centralised responsibility at which it aimed.

“It divided supply and transport, and dislocated both services.

“It swept away all basis of calculation of transport requirements and destroyed the elasticity that was inherent in the existing system.

“It substituted for the direct responsibility of the regimental transport officer and his commanding officer the uncertain responsibility of a transport-officer, who might or might not be an expert. Usually he was not, and frequently he was not even present with his charge. As soon as the force took the field, the theory of close or constant supervision of the transport by the Transport Company-Commander failed, except in rare cases, to pass into practice. His vehicles, animals, etc.,

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18 Feb. 1903

were parcelled out to various units, and he often had no idea where to look for the transport for the efficiency of which he was supposed to be responsible.

"Army orders themselves proved the defects of the new system. First, the Bearer Companies were completed to their original 10 ambulances, according to the War Office system. Then the Field Hospitals were reconstructed according to the War Office system. Ammunition Columns were re-created distinct and separate units according to the War Office system. Finally, on the 19th and 21st May, 1900, Army Orders re-appointed Regimental Transport officers and sergeants according to the War Office system. In fact attempts were made to restore as far as possible the framework of the carefully devised scheme of transport which had been so hastily destroyed.

"When Lord Roberts landed at Cape Town every unit in the country was complete with its full scale of transport, and ox transport sufficient for the supply park of an army was ready to be placed wherever it might be required. In fact early in January not fewer than 15,000 draught and pack mules were actually with the troops, and in addition to them about 1,000 ox wagons with 16,000 oxen were echeloned on the three lines of advance. It must not be forgotten that until Lord Roberts landed, the original plan of campaign, namely, an advance along the western, midland, and eastern lines on Norvals Pont and Bethulie Bridges had never been cancelled, and that the only telegram from Lord Roberts which gave any indication of his intentions seemed expressly to confirm these lines of advance. The transport was laid out to conform with this scheme. Roughly speaking, half of it was on the western line, and the other half divided as equally as possible between the midland and eastern lines. The all important considerations of veldt, water, and immunity from infected beasts and disaffected men naturally governed the choice of positions for these concentrations. Unfortunately a large number of the six or seven thousand mules (not included in the 15,000 with the troops) in the various remount depôts were sick (some 3,000 stallion mules having very unfortunately been sent from Italy), and the provision of vehicles and harness had not kept pace with that of mules. Notwithstanding all these difficulties sufficient transport was ready for the advance on Bloemfontein, before the troops were ready for the transport. That advance was apparently accompanied by only 11,362 mules and 9,778 oxen, numbers considerably less in mules than those previously actually in possession of the troops, and leaving a large number of reserve oxen.

"The début of the new transport system was marked by the total loss of a convoy of 200 wagons, the whole of which fell into the hands of a small force of Boers at De Kiel's Drift. The result was well nigh disastrous to the army in front. Orders for a retirement are said to have been actually written; and there can be little doubt that the expedition would have had to halt, if not to retreat, but for the fact that the Cavalry division had not adopted the new transport system. Consequently the Cavalry supply column was able to save the situation, though the men suffered great hardships and were only kept alive by the offer of £1 reward for every beast they could seize. I do not want to press the argument unfairly, but it is my conviction that a loss of this extent could not have occurred under the old system. Centralisation of responsibility had destroyed individual responsibility. Subordinate generals were not answerable for supplies beyond those with their immediate unit.

"The whole question is one of immense importance. If the regimental—or War Office—transport system be so wrong and unworkable that it has to be upset at the most critical moment of a campaign, then the work of mobilisation that has been carried on in the British Army for many years, and is still being carried on, is obviously wrong and vicious. There is hardly a pamphlet or book of regulations connected with mobilisation that should not be torn up, and the whole care and labour for many years of the mobilisation branch should be thrown into the waste paper basket."

15562. The only other point you were to speak to was the medical and engineer services?—I wanted to emphasise the fact with regard to the medical service that I thought a very grave mistake was made during

the debates that took place in the House of Commons upon the medical service. In giving the number of beds in the field the War Office always included what are called the field hospitals. That is really the mobile equipment that follows the Army in the field for the immediate treatment of men after they are received from the Dressing Station. They are called a hundred beds each, but they have only a limited number of stretchers, and the essence of them is that they should be empty; so that when speaking in the House of Commons of accommodation which has been made for the sick, and the Army is fighting in the field, it is wrong to include the number of nominal beds belonging to these field hospitals, because they ought only to be full the day after an engagement or for as many days as it may be found impossible to evacuate them. Practically speaking in a well-organised campaign they should never be full more than a day, and most days of the week they should be empty. I think that the mistake made is that as a rule we have sent out too little hospital equipment at the beginning; they have counted these field hospitals as beds when they were really not beds. Secondly, it is very much overlooked by our medical officers that you cannot depend upon making a hospital anywhere, and saying, "I have got a general hospital of 200 beds, and 200 beds are sufficient for a force of, say, 2,000 men"; because the men are being reinforced by drafts and although the force is kept up at the same numbers, there are many more men coming through the ranks, and therefore through the hospitals than those hospitals are made to carry. In our overseas wars we should provide very much more transport for evacuating our base hospitals than has been the custom. I should have been smothered in Natal had I not at my own instance provided five hospital ships; and they were hardly enough. I got hold of the best ships I could find amongst the transports, and had them converted at Durban into hospital ships, and consequently I kept my hospitals always fairly free and most of the time, except immediately after the relief of Ladysmith, I had my men very comfortable. It was done by getting the men away, and it is far better for a sick man, no matter what the journey is, to get him put on board ship, and sent home than to have him at a convalescent depôt pining his heart out and doing nothing in some small place in the country which he ought to be fighting in. The two points I want to emphasise are that there should be enough beds, irrespective of field hospitals provided in any future campaign, and that the provision for moving men should be much more liberal.

15563. Were you satisfied with the medical service?—Yes, I thought the medical service was good. I thought our nursing service was indifferent. Our nurses I thought badly trained and poor. They are not regular nurses.

15564. Are you speaking of the women?—Yes. I thought on the whole—and I really think I exercised as much supervision as it was possible for any general to have exercised—the medical service was good, some of the hospitals were splendid, and some of the hospitals were of course not quite so good, but they were all good. We got rid of our wounded and sick very well, and I think with comparative comfort. There were the usual complaints, but nothing much, and there was really no very bad discipline case that occurred at all in connection with the hospital. On the whole I thought the men were well taught.

15565. (Sir Henry Norman.) These nurses of whom you speak as not being well trained were not regular Army Nurses?—Yes, they were Army nurses; I thought the Army nurses were indifferent. You examined Sir Frederick Treves the other day, did you not not?

15566. (Chairman.) Yes?—Did he not say that?

15567. No, I think he spoke very highly of the nurses?—I should like you to examine Miss McCaul on that point. She was one of the two nurses that Sir Frederick Treves brought out with him, the other died. I do not think our female nursing system is as good as it should be, because I think our nurses are above their work. Their training is more to do small odd jobs for the comfort of this or that patient than to nurse. That is my general impression.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.E., G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

15568. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) To carry out your view would involve an immense increase of the establishment?—I think in war you can always get lots of nurses.

15569. But these nurses under the Army Rules have to be three years in a civil hospital before they can be taken on probation and then they have to be tried on probation for some time and accepted, and after that they are employed on general duties?—Yes, but all those nurses should be quite capable of superintending a hospital equipped with what I might call journeywoman-nurses. I do not for a moment suppose we ought to keep up in peace time an establishment of nurses that would be required in war, but I do not think we insist on the nurses we do keep performing duties which would make them able to take the position I think they ought to take in war.

15570. Is not your idea rather that they should perform what I may call a lower kind of duties than are allotted to them now; for instance, the Army Hospital Corps men are supposed to do all things for the men connected with washing and personal attention?—Yes, and they do, and do it on the whole very fairly well.

15571. You would not give that to the nurses?—No, but I would give the superintendence of it to the nurses; the nurses should know how to do it as they have been taught, and how to teach the men to do it if the men had not been taught before; she should be more of a nurse.

15572. They have gone through that in the civil hospitals during the three years when they perform very menial duties?—I do not say they do not know, but I say I do not think they do it. I was not satisfied, I confess, with our military nurses, and I thought that the hospitals where the civil nurses were taking the lead were more comfortable.

15573. (*Chairman.*) Had you Army nurses?—A certain number. But I am also speaking of our hospitals at home.

15574. This is what Sir Frederick Treves said: "(Q.) Was there not in that force a regular establishment of nurses. (A.) No. (Q.) And was your opinion of the nurses satisfactory? (A.) All that I came across were excellent; I could not speak too highly of all the nurses I came across all down the line."?—That is nurses not of the regular establishment.

15575. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) There were two classes of nurses, I gathered, sisters and nurses, the sisters being of a superior grade, and more of the class of superintendents than the others?—I believe that is so, but I did not understand myself the distinction between the two. I think they were all sisters.

15576. Not only Sir Frederick Treves, but Professor Ogston who saw much of them spoke in very high terms of them?—I do not want to say anything against any individual nurse as I thought they were very good, but as regards our female system, I say that in Natal, and also at home, I thought it left a good deal of room for improvement, and I do not think our military nursing-sisters took, in Natal, a position which was of the same advantage to the sick men as in some cases was done alongside them by the civil nurses. I should like to add that I see it is proposed to divide the Royal Army Medical Corps into sections, each section of which is to have its particular mission. I should be sorry myself to see that done, except upon an understanding that all the sections would begin with the same ground work. I think it is essential that all men who are connected with hospital attendance should be taught the duties of hospital attendance as a distinct duty. It is a great advantage that some of them should cook, and it is a great advantage that some of them should do other things, but I think that after their first-aid training the next important thing is the training in hospital attendance. You never know when you may have to use men for that, and it is a duty that is of the first importance.

15577. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I think there is some mistake as to some of the evidence given a day or two ago; the Army Nursing Department, besides the Matron in-Chief, consists of a certain number of superintendent nurses, and all the others are nursing sisters?—Yes.

15578. There is nobody under them; they are the ones who have been taken in as trained in civil hospitals for three years, and then on probation, but the whole number of nursing sisters for the whole Army is about 75 or 80, so that it is quite obvious that it is inadequate to furnish nurses in war time; for instance, Natal had eight or nine nursing sisters, and it had during the war very often 1,000 patients?—I think those nursing sisters are not made to take the position they ought to take in a military hospital. They would be at the top of any defined establishment created during a war, and they did not seem to me to be able to fill the position as well as I thought they should have been able to. I do not want to say anything against them, and many of them worked extremely well, but I was disappointed with the way in which, being called to a rather high position, they undertook it. As I am on hospitals, may I tell one story, a very short one, which shows the defect of our military arrangements and the defect of our military education. It happened to me at Ladysmith. I was endeavouring at the moment to provide for the evacuation of the Intombi Hospital, which had 2,500 patients in it, and I had created a temporary hospital out of the old barracks at the other end of the town. There was very great difficulty about bedding, there was much of the bedding they did not like to bring out of the old hospital; everything in Ladysmith had been taken to Intombi, and I went round the new hospital one morning and found that a good many of the fever patients had no beds, nothing but one blanket to lie on. I swept Natal with telegrams, and got a train up by the end of the week with as many mattresses as I could possibly get—bought, begged, or borrowed. As I was going to Church on Sunday morning, I saw the wagons coming from the station with these mattresses, and I sent and found out that they were the mattresses for the hospital. I did not go to the hospital again until the next Monday week, eight days afterwards, and there was exactly the same situation that I had seen 10 days before, the men were all lying there without beds, and I said to the doctor in charge, "How is this? Where are those beds?"; his answer was "We have not got any, sir"; I said, "I saw them come last Sunday week, why have you not got them?" He said, "I have not got them." I then said, "You have your own transport, why do you not send for them?" "I sent for them, sir." "Why have you not got them?" "They would not issue them." And the fact was this, that according to the War Office Regulations in a garrison, hospital-bedding is a barrack-supply, and is accounted for by the barrack-master, but in the field it is supplied by the Ordnance Department, and for the whole of those 8 days the head of the Ordnance Department and the head of the Barrack Department in Ladysmith, had been fighting over which of the two should take these beds on their books and issue them to the hospital, and during that time the patients had been kept on the ground. That is War Office training!

15579. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I might have a little diffidence in asking you the question I am about to put, except that I know my object in doing so will not be misunderstood. You have said, I think, that as to Strathcona's Horse, a body of about 600 men, they did good service; they were with you during the whole of your command after Ladysmith?—After the 18th June.

15580. They did good service and they were fortunate in having a good officer in command, Colonel Steele?—Yes.

15581. And I think you said also that their discipline was excellent?—Yes, I did say so.

15582. The reason for my asking you is that Colonel Steele and all the officers, 20 or 25 of them, were Canadians—colonists?—Yes.

15583. It has been said here that the officers in the Colonial Corps, or the chief officers, should without exception be from the British Army, but these were all Canadians, and you were satisfied with them in every way?—Yes, Lord Strathcona, and as you have brought that point up in that manner, I must say I was perfectly satisfied, and no officer ever had a better corps under his command than I had in Strathcona's Horse, but on the general question that you referred to

*General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Butler,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.*

18 Feb. 1903.

you must recollect that Colonel Steele was himself an officer of a sort of regular corps.

15584. Of the North-West Mounted Police?—Yes, and had been trained as an officer of police, and therefore he was very superior as an officer to the ordinary run of chance Colonial whom one picked up and put in.

15585. I merely put the question from its having been said that the officers of the Colonial Corps should be from the British Army. I gave that as one instance, at any rate, where the officers did their duty well, and to your entire satisfaction, all being Colonials?—Yes, I met several Colonial officers who were trained as officers in the Colonies, who were excellent officers; but I think what must have been meant by the evidence you referred to were the Colonial officers of irregular corps who had never been trained as officers.

15586. The training the officer I refer to had was all in Canada, in the Militia or Police there?—Yes.

15587. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I have only one further question to ask you. One witness after another who comes here says it is essential to get more independence of action and individuality among officers and men. The only step you have suggested towards that end is devolution to Generals in districts; how do you propose to get more initiative and more independence? What steps can you take?—By giving it.

15588. In what way?—If you occupy the General with thinking about what he himself has to do, he is to a certain degree relieved of thinking how he can find fault with what the man underneath him is doing. I admit it is a gradual thing, and you can only do it by gradual training.

15589. How would you give initiative to the field officers, commanders of companies, and subalterns?—Our present training is a training of interference, and that has to be amended, and the only means I can think of for amending it is by removing interference at the top, not the bottom. It is all very well to say that the subaltern does not interfere with the sergeant, but he has nothing else to do, as the captain is always interfering with him, and I would take it off at the top.

15590. It does not seem to me to follow that a certain amount of devolution from the War Office to districts, would be a cure?—I did not say anything about devolution from the War Office; I wanted to let the War Office manage its own affairs. It was to be a devolution, as I want the Army to manage its own affairs. I want every man to be responsible for his own work, and I think they will gradually fix their own spheres and do their own work; at present they create a sphere by interfering with the men below them.

15591. There seems little use to recommend that there should be more initiative among junior officers, unless one can put forward suggestions as to how that is to be arrived at; it is difficult to see any practical way of doing it?—I will send you a document on the subject.*

15592. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) I should like to ask one simple question on the subject of training: Do you think the training grounds that are established at Aldershot and Salisbury will give a fair chance of training the men in what you would like to see them trained to, field work and the irregularities of the country? Is the extent of the country sufficient, and are the surroundings sufficient to enable the men to be trained as you would like to see them trained in individual action, scouting, and so on?—Unfortunately a policy has gradually been adopted of filling up the training grounds at Aldershot and Salisbury, with barracks, and I must say myself, I regret it. I think any strange ground, except it is quite flat, would give the opportunity for training, but if a regiment lives in a place they learn at once each tactical point, and the whole thing is a race for a point, and therefore the training on any ground, however good, is very much lessened by the troops having the opportunity of really knowing it well. I should like to see much more outdoor work done, and much less attention paid to the actual dinner-hour in barracks, wherever barracks are. I am sure you could train men very well at a very small expense in their own barracks, and we have of late years by small manoeuvres in the different

stations done a great deal to perfect the lower class training of the men, and then let the regiment go—supposing it only went once in three years it is a training for the officers—to some large place like Salisbury Plain.

15593. It has been suggested here that the only way to get a really good sound training with a large number of soldiers is to send a large Division to South Africa or to Canada?—I do not believe it. I at one time had the honour of belonging to what was then said to be the best trained regiment in the British Army, and they were trained by the colonel almost entirely in their own barrack rooms.

15594. At any rate you may hope for really efficient training if attention is given to the training in the places where they are now quartered?—I believe so; I believe if you were to start a really efficient system of training, and to follow it up by a really efficient system of inspection to see that the idea of the training was thoroughly appreciated and thoroughly understood throughout the different districts, you would in a very few years have as good a system of training as you require, given a certain quantity of open ground; but piling a large number of troops for four days at a time in the most uncomfortable positions upon open ground and asking them to manoeuvre under impossible conditions is not training, neither do you give them the time; they ought to go over the whole thing and be taught how to do it. It is teaching, a time for teaching, and insistence on teaching that we want.

15595. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Does that involve more money?—I really do not think so; I do not think it would involve quite so much. It is the old story we want a system—systematic teaching.

15596. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Have you any fault to find with the plan by which the officers of companies get a very few of their men for drilling at a time as we have heard that the troops have duties of all sorts which so occupy the men that they never can get half a company together?—That is quite true, but it can be met; it was met at Aldershot, and for many years long before I went there, by a system of keeping certain units off duty, and then those units have to keep certain companies off duty, and so you can get them up to full strength, but I think myself that the weak point of our present training is that we try to train off the barrack square too small units—each company is too small.

15597. Have you any views as to the Commanding Officers of Companies paying money, and having general charge of the accounts in the field?—Yes, I have written a long paper on the subject which, I believe, is in print in the War Office, but, speaking generally, I wanted to give every officer commanding a company a small book in the field so that he could pay his men, and each man would sign for what he got, the whole of the accounts being kept behind at the base, which could easily be done.

15598. I daresay you know there have been many complaints of the breakdown of the system?—The system has always broken down for the very reason that it is no system. We pay in peace time on an enormous sheet that it is impossible to take in the field, and if you do you cannot keep it up because the whole thing is paid in one account. I suppose at the Cape we had very nearly as many camp attendants and camp followers, such as drivers and people of that kind, as we had soldiers; every man had his own book, and he was paid without trouble at all.

15599. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What time in each year is allotted to the soldiers' field work?—From about the middle of January to the middle of October generally.

15600. I thought there was only a short portion of that time allotted to each unit for field work?—That depends on where the unit is; if the unit is in a single barrack they have all that time, but if the unit is at Aldershot—

15601. Of course, in barrack, but I mean in the field; in training they entrench and so forth?—They are taught at their barracks; we cannot dig up ground unless it is ground of our own which we have to dig up.

* The document was subsequently sent in. Vide Appendix page 641 post.

15602. Have they no ground in barracks to dig up?—They cannot go into another man's garden and dig it; you have to come to your own ground to dig upon.

15603. You must go to your training ground for that?—Not necessarily, because you teach them how to dig in one place, and you teach them where to dig in another. You would always have to do that.

15604. How would you train the officers to entrench?—They are taught first of all the profile of the entrenchment they have to create, and they know the shape of the thing they have to dig, and then they are taken out on the ground, and are taught the conditions which regulate the position in which they would put that entrenchment if they had to dig in that particular spot.

15605. Are the officers actually taken out with the men, and then the men under their supervision throw up entrenchments?—Yes, the men dig.

15606. That is what I want to know. What time is allotted for such purpose?—The actual training in the year for digging is about a week.

15607. Do you consider that sufficient?—Yes, I think so.

15608. To train the officer and the men?—The officer is not trained at that time; the officer is usually taught at Sandhurst, but at any rate if he is a young officer he is with the men at that time, and having been once taught to dig he is not taught again.

15609. But in training the men he trains himself?—When he first joins he is trained with the men; after that he is supposed to know, and he then is a trainer.

15610. Have you seen a German Regiment at that sort of work?—I have seen them; I was never with them.

15611. Have you noticed that there the young officer goes out constantly with different units of men—the same young officer—for the purpose not only of training himself under certain circumstances but of training the men under those circumstances to entrench?—Our officers train different units of men. I do not think our training is bad. I do not know that I quite follow the point you want me to answer.

15612. The point is whether there is sufficient time devoted to the purpose of enabling the officer to train the men and enabling the officer himself to learn by teaching his men?—Yes, I think so. I think looking to the number of things we have to teach in the year there is enough time allotted to digging, because there is an enormous difference between learning to dig a trench and learning to know where a trench should be dug, and that is a thing you have to teach the officer, and you have not to teach the men at all.

15613. There is no difficulty, perhaps, in teaching a man how to dig a trench, but the thing is to know how to place that trench?—That he does not want the men for.

15614. If he has not the men to dig the trench he cannot do it?—You need not dig the trench to teach that.

15615. However, you think a week in the year enough for that purpose?—For digging, yes.

15616. With regard to shooting, what time in the year is allotted for training the men in shooting?—A good deal now; it practically goes on throughout the year. We do not, to my mind, allot enough, but we allot as much as we have range accommodation for.

15617. Take Company A in a certain regiment, what time is allotted to teach that company shooting in the year?—I think the recruits of that company take rather more than a month, practically the best part of six weeks; I cannot say off hand, but it is rather more than a month in the case of the recruits, because they do a double course.

15618. What about the men who are not recruits?—The course lasts about a fortnight, but they shoot besides that, that is the teaching course, and they then have practices which go on throughout the year as occasion offers.

15619. Then it is not the case that men are given a certain amount of ammunition, say, for about a fort-

night, and they fire away that ammunition in the fortnight and never fire another shot during the whole year?—No, I do not think that is at all a fair way to put it: the amount of ammunition that is allowed to a regiment regulates the amount of firing that is done, and that firing is spread over the year according as the officers think they can best expend it for the training of the men. If a man is a bad shot he fires more ammunition than a man who is a good one.

15620. Do you think the time allotted for training the men in shooting is sufficient?—I was satisfied in South Africa with the result.

15621. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did you select your own staff when you went out to South Africa?—No, I did not, they were selected for me.

15622. Do you think that a desirable thing, that the General Officer Commanding, or the Commander-in-Chief, should not be allowed to select his own General as well as his personal staff? I know the system, but I want to know what you think about it?—Personally I have got a grievance about it, and I do not want to air a grievance.

15623. Take it as a general principle?—I think an officer who is going to command should be made to submit a list of his own staff, and if they cannot be appointed he should go on submitting names until one has been found that suits the authorities, because he may select men that it is impossible to spare from other duties, but I do not think he should be handed over a staff and told to take that lot.

15624. Is the General Officer in command of the First Army Corps under existing circumstances allowed to choose his general staff? He is not in point of fact, is he?—I should say he is consulted.

15625. Do you think that is sufficient?—Well, I think it is very difficult to avoid it. I think in peace time you might want, for example, to train a particular man under a particular General; it is all very well for the General to say, "I want somebody else," but it is for the advantage of the Army that the man should go to that particular place, and therefore you cannot lay down hard and fast rules that a man should choose his own staff, but when it comes to war and the General has to go alone and stand on his own feet these conditions should be over-ruled and he should be allowed to select his own staff.

15626. Do you think the number of trained Staff Officers is sufficient under normal conditions—this South African War was abnormal?—My complaint is that there are so very few trained Staff Officers; they are not trained.

15627. When you say they are not trained what do you consider the best training for a Staff Officer in time of peace?—The best training in time of peace for a Staff Officer is to be a regimental Adjutant, to go to the Staff College, and to be employed on various Staff appointments.

15628. Of course, the Staff College takes a very limited number of officers under existing conditions?—Yes, I think it has been increased, but I think they are longer in now than they need be.

15629. You think the course might be reduced by perhaps a year?—I think so; my own idea is that I would require from all officers to whom I meant seriously to think of giving Staff appointments a knowledge equal to that which is required by the entrance examination of the Staff College.

15630. Do you approve of the system of examining officers on going into the Staff College?—Yes, I approve of the system of examinations altogether.

15631. You think it is the only way of selecting officers for the Staff College, by examination?—Yes, but I do not approve of the system of selecting officers by competition for the Staff College, I would have every officer who goes to the Staff College nominated, and I would not allow the nomination of any officer to go to the Staff College unless he had been an Adjutant or Acting Adjutant, or had held some sort of Staff appointment somewhere, and had acquired an elementary knowledge of military subjects.

15632. You would not allow him to qualify by ex-

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

General The
Right Hon.
Sir Redvers
Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

amination for the Staff College?—No, I would make him qualify by some sort of service.

15633. Do you not think that all the theoretical training, as apart from practical, could be easily obtained at the Staff College within one year?—I do most distinctly.

15634. If he is an intelligent man whom you would think of employing as either a Quartermaster General or Adjutant General?—Yes, we want a staff Officer with a certain amount of all-round knowledge, but we do not want him to be an expert in all things.

15635. In that way of course you double the capacity of the Staff College?—Yes, and I think you might do so; but, above all things, you want an Inspection Staff for military education in the ranks and everywhere. You want to see that you have a system of instruction, and that it is being properly carried out in the different garrisons. All generals are not equal, and they ought all to have help; it is extraordinary what you can do in our Army by inspection if you can once get the generals and officers to understand that you do not mean to interfere with them but to help them.

15636. There is only one other question I want to ask. Supposing that you were to hold the office of Secretary of State for War, what would be the very first administrative act which you would do in the War Office to commence your series of reforms? Have you ever thought of that?—Yes, I have often.

15637. Not in general terms; what would be your first specific act?—I should send for the Commander-in-Chief, and I should say, "Look here, your business is to command the Army and to see that the sums I allot you under the Estimates are not wasted; that is your business, and I will support you as far as ever I can. I shall expect you, if any question of criticism arises, to be able to explain it to my satisfaction, and as long as you can do that you may rely on my most cordial support. With regard to the policy of the Army I shall consult you in every way. You will be a member of my Advisory Board, but your main duties will be to keep the Army, that I tell you I want, efficient." That would be the first thing I would do.

15638. You used the expression "Advisory Board." Would you, as Secretary of State, think you were in a stronger position at the War Office if you had an Advisory Board on the lines of the Board of Admiralty?—Not exactly on the lines of the Board of Admiralty. What I should like to see would be a small Board in the office of the Secretary of State, and it should have somebody, preferably a military officer, as its permanent head, and a clerk or two to keep records. That board should consist of about six people, three of whom would have to be Parliamentary men and three would be soldiers, the Commander-in-Chief being one of them, and they should study any proposals put forward, and should endeavour to arrive at two things. One the lines along which what I may call the social expenditure of the Army should go,—because an enormous amount of the Army expenditure is fixed entirely by the question of numbers,—the lines along which the social expenditure and expenditure for comforts and that sort of thing should go. The other to tell the Commander-in-Chief what really is the Army that he is to maintain, and for what purposes that Army is required. I was 25 years in the War Office, and every year we asked that last question and we never succeeded in getting it answered, except once, and then it was answered wrong.

15639. You would not propose that the Secretary of State himself should preside over that Board?—Not at all. He could come there and have the right to be there whenever he liked; it would be his office; he would have the right to join in the discussion if he liked, he would expect the Board to give him an opinion, and he would be perfectly justified, in fact it would be his duty, to ask anybody else he liked in the Cabinet or elsewhere as to their opinion, but he would always have a record of all the different proposals that were made. That would be the duty of his secretary, the man who in Lord Hartington's Commission was called the Chief of the Staff; it was a very unfortunate name, but the principle, in my opinion, is perfectly sound.

15640. Why I asked you whether it would be an

advantage to the Secretary of State to have his Board round him was that you must recollect that one of the drawbacks to which the Secretary of State is subjected is that he is constantly in the position of having one of his principal officers coming and telling him in his private room one thing and another coming and telling him exactly the opposite?—Latterly that has been more so than ever.

15641. It has always been the practice at the War Office. Has it not occurred to you that if he met his Board, and publicly discussed these questions with them, as is the practice at the Admiralty, it would be an advantage?—It has not always been the practice at the War Office, but we need not discuss that. I quite think that if there is a big question, and probably every year before he compiled his annual estimates, he would discuss the matter not as he does now with individual men, but with his Advisory Board, and he would then call in his Commander-in-Chief or whoever the great official was whose estimates they were discussing, and cross-examine him, and he would be in a position to do it, but at the present moment the Secretary of State has no information whatever. The late Secretary of State, if I may say so, tried to meet this difficulty, in my opinion, in entirely the wrong way. He reduced the power of the Commander-in-Chief, and divided all the great officials into separate heads, so that he never had a chance of getting at a military opinion that was the combined opinion of them all. He formed the Army Board to do that, but as long as I was in the War Office, the Army Board was not allowed to consider any question except a question submitted to them by the Secretary of State.

15642. And in that way it ceased to be of practical use?—It was no use, and I fear I might go further. This Committee that has just been indicated by Mr. Balfour, will have exactly the same end, because it is the wrong thing. What is wanted is not a Committee of the Cabinet to control or to inspire the Secretary of State, but an office in the War Office to assist him. Except the one telegram to me, of which I do not impute to them the slightest knowledge, where in all your enquiry have you found the least proof of the work of the so-called Committee of Public Defence. Are they wanted? No! If the Cabinet does its duty, they have no occupation. If the Cabinet neglects its duty, they have no power. What is the use of giving them an office?

15643. (Chairman.) You want the collective opinion of the military officials at the War Office?—Yes, I want the collective opinion of the Army officials to be given in and to be reconsidered by an authority that will sift it properly, but that is not the case at present.

15644. Are you aware that throughout the War the Army Board did meet and did give a collective opinion?—I am aware of that but it was a scratch pack; it was not a Board that was according to the Regulations of the War Office at the time.

15645. It was an institution of the War Office, only it seems to have had a spasmodic existence. It used occasionally to come into operation, but throughout the War, from June, 1899, onwards, it was in active existence?—I do not know whether you would like to put it down, but I should rather like to contradict that statement. What really happened was this: I came up from Aldershot early in July, and I told the Under Secretary of State for War that, if the War Office telegrams were published hereafter, he would be hanged. I said, "Every head of every Department of the War Office is sending out telegrams on the same subject, but in a different sense, to that poor unfortunate General at the Cape, and you will drive him mad"; he asked me, "What would you do to remedy it?" and I said, "The remedy is to assemble the old Adjutant-General's meeting, which is now called the Commander-in-Chief's meeting, and which was originally dispersed by Lord Lansdowne's order." He agreed with me, and it was done, and the Commander-in-Chief's meeting which really was the meeting of the military chiefs, was recreated, and began to do very good work; and all these different military Departments were thrown into line through meeting at the Commander-in-Chief's meeting. I think the one mistake they made—

they did not want it to be known at the time that they were meeting, because it was rather contrary to the Regulations of the War Office—is that I should have attended as Commander-in-Chief designate, but that is a detail. After the Permanent Under Secretary of the War Office returned from leave he found out that this was going on, and he then added to that Commander-in-Chief's meeting either himself or his Deputy and the Accountant-General, and that was afterwards called the Army Board; but it was in a false position, and if you will turn to an old Army List you will see that an Army Board has always been provided for War up till now, but its constitution has been different. It has been called the Mobilisation Committee, and the Mobilisation Committee is really the sort of Committee that ought to be assembled in every war, as it brings together the Departments of the Army as well as the Military Chiefs. A Mobilisation Committee, to the best of my belief, was never assembled. If it had been I do not think there would have been half the trouble that there was.

15646. We have seen the Minutes of the Army Board, and that was in full work from June or July, 1899, through the War?—Yes, it did a great deal of good. Sir Frederick Stopford was the Secretary, I think, and he will agree that my history of it is correct. I think it was started somewhere about the 10th July. When it was started it omitted some officers who are usually summoned to the Mobilisation Committee, and the expedition suffered through that. The doctor was not called; he never joined the Army Board, and he ought to have been on it because the only way in which you can know numbers and details in a big office like the War Office is by a meeting at which every head attends and knows what is going on.

15647. I was not putting forward the idea that the Army Board as then constituted was perfect, but I say there was an institution like that, and an institution like that possibly with the additions you propose would

give a collective military opinion, and that is what you would desire to see?—Yes, that is exactly it. I was only saying what happened to the Army Board to show that it was not as complete as I would have liked it to be.

15648. (*Viscount Esher.*) Yes, but we must not get a confusion here; there is a great distinction between the Mobilisation Committee in time of war and what you were talking about just now as an Advisory Board in time of peace?—Yes, a great distinction. I propose the Advisory Board for the assistance of the Secretary of State. The Mobilisation Committee is merely a wheel in the machinery of the Commander-in-Chief.

15649. I am afraid that someone reading the evidence might get confused between the two, whereas the two things are absolutely distinct?—I would like to draw this distinction particularly, that the Advisory Board is the Secretary of State's office and the Mobilisation Committee is in the Commander-in-Chief's office.

15650. It was to an Army Board consisting of six members such as you have described just now, that you would specially look to give advice upon all important questions to the Secretary of State?—Yes. an Advisory Committee—an intellectual equipment. To put it as shortly as I can it would be this:—I do not think the Secretary of State in case of a war has fair play, and the reason he has not fair play is because he has no assistance. The final decision must rest with the Cabinet. If the Secretary of State does not agree with the Commander-in-Chief he is now alone in opposition, but if the matter has been thrashed out by the Advisory Board, of which the Commander-in-Chief is a member, and that Board supports the Secretary of State, he will be powerfully assisted in the formation of the views which he has to present to the Cabinet.

15651. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to add?—No.

General The Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller,
V.C., G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G.

18 Feb. 1903.

THIRTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Thursday, 19th February 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B.,
K.C.V.O.

The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA AND
MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD
TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary.*)

Lieutenant-General Sir CHARLES WARREN, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., called and examined.

15652. (*Chairman.*) You went to South Africa at what date?—I left England on the 26th November, and I arrived at the Cape on the 13th December, 1899.

15653. You were in command of the 5th Division?—Yes.

15654. And you expected at that time to be employed in Cape Colony, I think?—Until arrival I did not know what the proposal would be, and on arrival at Cape Town they were uncertain what would be done with the Division. I was first ordered up to De Aar. I left Cape Town for De Aar on the 16th December, and when I arrived at De Aar I received orders to return at once, leaving part of my Division at De Aar, the 2nd Battalion of the Warwickshire Regiment. I arrived at Cape Town on the 21st, and then the question arose whether I should be sent to the east of the Cape Colony. A telegram arrived from Sir Redvers Buller stating that my Division was to start at once for Natal, and I left on the 21st December in the "Mohawk," and arrived at Durban on the 25th December.

15655. And you served through all the operations in Natal?—Until 15th April, 1900.

15656. At the request of Sir Redvers Buller we sent you yesterday, on the first opportunity we had of doing it, the statement which he had submitted to us with regard to the events of the 17th to 27th January, 1900; that you have had before you?—I received that last night. I had scarcely more than time to look through it, and I have written the following letter to the Secretary to the Commission, if I may submit it:—"Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 18th containing a statement made yesterday by General Sir Redvers Buller. I have read over this statement; it appears to me to be very incorrect and very misleading, and I ask that I may have facilities and opportunities of refuting it. I beg to call attention to the correspondence between Field-Marshal Lord Roberts and the Secretary of State for War and myself on the subject of General Sir Redvers Buller's charges. I would also ask for the telegrams to be produced which

Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren,
G.C.M.G.
K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
Charles
Warren,
G.C.M.G.,
K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

passed to and from Spion Kop on 24th January, 1900, and the staff reports of 15th January to 28th February, 1900, of 5th Division. I point out the following as salient mistakes in Sir Redvers Buller's statement:—(1) All baggage was left behind at Springfield. The contents of wagons I passed over Trichard's Drift consisted of artillery and ammunition, machine guns and ammunition, warlike stores, ambulances, great coats, cooking utensils. (2) Of the two days which Sir Redvers Buller states I wasted in passing over baggage, he was with me all one day, viz., 17th January, and wrote me a letter in the evening altering his orders somewhat" (I have a copy of that letter here). (3) There is a statement of the waters to be met with" (a copy of which I have here), "which clearly indicates the route Sir Redvers Buller wished me to take. (4) Sir Redvers Buller has never yet stated definitely what his orders were intended to convey to me. I have to ask that he may be called on definitely to state the line of action he intended should be taken according to his present views. All the facts, I maintain, go to show that I carried out my instructions so far as they were then understood. (5) I beg to state unhesitatingly that the system I adopted of demoralising the enemy with artillery fire was the only one that could be carried out with our small force, that it effected its object, and would have been entirely successful in relieving Ladysmith had not Sir Redvers Buller interfered constantly with my operations, and finally withdrawn the force in the hour of success, i.e., when the Boers were absolutely demoralised after Spion Kop."

15657. I am sure, Sir Charles, we quite recognise you could not, in the time you have had, prepare any statement such as you would wish to submit, and we are quite willing that you should prepare and submit to us any statement as to your conduct on that occasion; that is an opportunity which we should wish to give to any officer whose conduct is impugned, while at the same time we cannot pass judgment with regard to strategy and tactics if those are involved, but if you will prepare and submit to us a statement on that subject that will be the best way of dealing with it?—Would it be opportune at the present moment to put in copies of these two letters, or to read them—one with regard to the waters showing the line to be taken, and the other the letter Sir Redvers Buller wrote me on the eve of the 17th?

15658. I should think it would be better to keep it all in one statement?—Very well.*

15659. You have been good enough to give us a *précis* of the evidence which you have prepared on the memorandum which we sent out to you?—Yes.

15660. The first point was as to the adequacy, in point of strength, of the forces in the field at different dates to the work they had to do?—This question hinges in a great measure on the efficiency of the troops on either side, on their power of concentration, on their handling, on the strategy adopted, and on the freedom of action of the General in chief command, and, to a certain extent, on the comparative freedom of action of the Generals in independent command. I am quite satisfied that if adequate methods had been adopted the large number of 250,000 men would never have been required. Inadequate arrangements, however, existed from the very beginning, and accumulated so rapidly from the defective organisation of our Army, that it was very soon apparent that a far larger force was required than had been originally anticipated. With an effective organisation of our Army, with efficient troops, and with adequate handling of them (strategically as well as tactically), 150,000 ought to have been more than sufficient (including burghers) for all purposes, and the raid into the Cape Colony would never have been practicable. It is useless to discuss the question whether an advance should have been made only from the western side. The British troops were not in South Africa to do it, and the Boers had invaded Natal before we had sufficient troops ready to resist them. The question as to why we had no troops ready for all emergencies is outside military considerations, it is a State question. The subject, from the military point of view, commences with the Boer invasion of Natal on 12th October, 1899.

Natal.

With the small force in Natal in October, 1899, it was impracticable to occupy Newcastle (or even Ladysmith efficiently) without first securing the mountain passes by which vehicles could enter Natal along the western

and north-western borders, viz., Besuidenhout's, Tintway, Van Reenen's, De Beers, Sunday's River, Muller's and Botha's passes. Ladysmith had been condemned as a military station from its unhealthy condition some two years before, and was quite unfit, on that account, to stand a siege, but if our cavalry had been fit for their work and properly armed Ladysmith could not have been thoroughly invested at the very beginning, and some of the principal hills in the neighbourhood should have been held by our troops. The following points were either ignored or unknown at the beginning of the war: (1) The comparative immobility of our infantry as compared with mounted Boers, and the impracticability of working them efficiently except in long lines of about 20 miles in open country and 10 miles in hilly country. (2) The great mobility of the Boers as compared with our cavalry and mounted troops. (3) The power of the Boers to bring long range guns of heavy calibre into the field, and our own inability to do so at first. (4) The clearness of the atmosphere, enabling artillery to engage at 10,000 yards range in hilly country. (5) The accuracy and long range rifle shooting of the Boers. (6) The change in system of attack caused by the introduction of smokeless powder. (7) The inexperience of officers and soldiers in action against troops (Boers) who were individual marksmen. (8) The general inefficiency of both officers and men for the kind of warfare forced on them by the Boers. (9) The defects of the Drill Book, which led regimental officers into great error, resulting in considerable loss of life. (10) The ignorance of all as to the necessity for long lines of attack (necessitated by long range and accurate fire) to avoid enfilade fire. Had all these points been recognised and provided for by the Army at large, I am satisfied that at the beginning 10,000 efficient infantry would have been equal to 20,000 to 30,000 of the infantry we commenced with, and 1,000 efficient cavalry would have been equal to 5,000 of those we had with us. It required hard fighting and severe losses before the necessary lessons were learnt. On landing in Natal at the end of December, 1899, I calculated that it would take four divisions, or about 45,000 of our inexperienced men, to relieve Ladysmith with a moderate loss, and that the three divisions we had with us could only advance with success by means of a considerable artillery preparation, as the Boers had entrenchments all along the north bank of the Tugela. With four divisions we would have had a sufficiently long line to prevent great loss from enfilade fire. Three divisions, however, would have been sufficient had our troops been experienced and efficient, i.e., our three divisions as they arrived at Newcastle in May or June, 1900, would have been equal to quite twice the number they were equal to in January, 1900, on the Tugela, on account of the experience gained by both officers and men. I lay stress that they *all* were wanting in efficiency in the beginning. In January, 1900, I considered that with our Army, as it was then, it would have taken 90,000 men to have swept out Natal of Boers with little loss, but with such a force no troops would have been required north of the Orange River on the west, as in securing the passes of Natal and the Majuba heights we possessed the key to Pretoria. Had our troops (officers and men) been efficient from the beginning, I consider that 45,000 men could have swept out Natal with very little loss.

Western Side.

It is impossible for anyone to say whether our advance should have been by the West or by Natal. I was originally entirely in favour of the western route, but then I thought of effecting it in my own way. Circumstances forced our hands. To my mind, the question hinges upon whether the Boers could have occupied Durban. If they could have done so, I think that the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa was bound to transfer the bulk of the troops to Natal to prevent such a disaster. The occupation of one of our seaports and harbours by the Boers would have complicated matters, and would have been a real disaster. I leave this question alone. When I landed at Cape Town in December, 1899, I was requested by Sir A. Milner to suggest how I would occupy the Cape Colony, and I proposed that districts of command should be established in rear of the advancing fighting line—that the three railway lines from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London, should be the central lines of each district, commanded by general officers, who should be distinct from the officer commanding the line of communications. I proposed that the burgher forces should be called out, and

* Sir Charles Warren subsequently sent a statement to the Commission. Vide Appendix page 643, post.

hat, in addition, a homestead force should be established to defend the homesteads, and not for work in the field. Had this been done then, and had the suspected burghers been disarmed and sent to their homes, the raids on Cape Colony could never have taken place. These burghers would have been equal to 50,000 men in the Cape Colony, and would have greatly relieved our Imperial troops. On the whole, I consider that the troops we had in the field were enormously in excess of what we should have required had they been really efficient. I consider that 90,000 efficient troops would have been sufficient; but the number of cavalry would have had to be increased far beyond that laid down in our regulations for an army in the field; and an entirely different system of warfare to that adopted would have been necessary.

15661. I understand that you are satisfied that if the methods had been adequate, 250,000 men would not have been required at all?—Quite so.

15662. And that that arises from the defective organisation of the Army itself?—Yes.

15663. What exactly do you mean by that? What do you point at as the defective organisation in the Army?—The officers and men were absolutely untrained for that kind of warfare; they were unable to use their eyes, they did not know how to use their rifles, they did not know how to take cover; in every possible way they were unfitted for that kind of work, but they very rapidly acquired the powers.

15664. Is that a defect which is inseparable from the training of an Army in peace time?—Not in the least.

15665. How would you meet the difficulties?—It arises because our soldiers are drilled too much on the barrack square, they are not taught to use their eyes, when they go route marching as a rule there is no fictitious enemy, and there is nothing for them to look for. The training is extremely defective in that respect, or was.

15666. But you think it could be rectified?—Entirely.

15667. And as to numbers at the time of the outbreak of the war, there were not sufficient troops in Natal to resist the Boers?—No.

15668. Have you formed any estimate of the number of troops that would have been required to resist the Boers at that time?—It all depended whether we could have taken possession of the heads of the passes; if we had had possession of the heads of the passes it would have required a much smaller number than if we could not do so, because the passes into Natal are the keys of the position. I should think about 40,000 of efficient troops would have been required at the time the Boers put the whole of their force into Natal.

15669. To defend the passes against an invasion?—And to keep them out.

15670. For defence alone?—Yes.

15671. You are not speaking of any question of an advance?—I consider that 90,000 troops in South Africa would have been sufficient to have got up to Pretoria if the burghers in addition had been called out early in the Cape Colony, and that the greater number of those troops might have been placed in Natal. I should have preferred the advance by the western route, but owing to the Boers having invaded Natal, the necessity arose for an advance through Natal.

15672. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) By the western route, do you mean through the Orange Free State or through Bechuanaland?—Through the Orange Free State.

15673. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) What do you mean exactly by calling out the burghers?—Under the Burgher Law in the Cape Colony every man has to turn out and fight for the defence of the Colony, and if Cape Colony had called out the burghers they could have disarmed those who were suspected, and the remainder would have been an efficient corps; and if they had been kept under control by districts, the centre of each district being along each line of railway (that is to say, if there had been three districts), the whole of the Cape Colony would have been entirely under control and kept in order by the burghers.

15674. I think we had evidence that there was great difficulty in keeping spies and disloyal people out of our local levies which were raised?—Yes, of course there were a certain number of men who were uncertain, but most of the men were known absolutely as being loyal

or disloyal; there were very marked lines between the loyal and disloyals in the Cape Colony. Of course it would be very difficult at any time to prevent spies.

15675. (*Chairman.*) But the burghers could not have been called out without the co-operation of the local Government?—No, they could not.

15676. And the local Government I think at that time objected?—I am under the impression that that was the case, but I do not know.

15677. But with the force actually in Natal, you think it was impracticable to occupy even Ladysmith efficiently?—Yes, inefficient as they were; if they had been efficient it would have been different—if the cavalry could have worked as mounted infantry it would have been quite a different matter.

15678. How would that have affected the occupation of Ladysmith?—Because instead of Ladysmith being occupied as a very small centre, we might have had our troops occupying a very large area.

15679. Around Ladysmith?—Around Ladysmith, yes.

15680. You said that "Ladysmith had been condemned as a military station from its unhealthy condition;" where did you get that?—I have always heard that; I have got no documents to show it, but I have been told that it had been condemned.

15681. Ladysmith had been selected as one post for the defence under the local schemes; were you aware of that?—I was told that batteries had been sent away from Ladysmith previously on account of the unhealthy condition, but I have no more ground for saying it than what I heard on all sides on the subject.

15682. You have stated ten different points which you think were either ignored or unknown at the beginning of the war; a good many of those arose out of the characteristics of South African warfare, I think?—Yes.

15683. Were they matters which you think had been brought to the knowledge of military men sufficiently to have been taken into account?—Oh, yes, many of them; for instance, in the Bechuanaland Expedition I had arranged with the War Office before I went out that the officers were to be dressed like the men, with distinctions, so that they could not be seen at a distance, and that the officers were to be armed with rifles. That was in 1884. I always looked upon our difficulties at Majuba as arising from our officers not being instructed to use their rifles, and not being able to instruct the men to put down their sights; that is only an impression, but I was so impressed with it that when I had command of the Bechuanaland Expedition I requested the War Office to allow the officers to be armed with the rifle.

15684. And were those reports submitted by you at that time to the Government?—Oh, yes; they were allowed by the Mobilisation Committee.

15685. Are they on record in the War Office?—Oh, yes, they are on record. They will be found under the head of the proceedings of the Mobilisation Committee during October, 1884, I think, but, at any rate, during the time arrangements were made for the Bechuanaland Expedition.

15686. But there was no evidence that they had been taken into account in the preparations made for this war?—No, I do not think they were; they seemed to have been quite lost sight of.

15687. Also the Drill Book, as it then existed, was inefficient?—Yes, the Drill Book advocates an attack from one particular point, and now an advance along the whole line, and that creates a great difficulty, because a small body of men, a small line attacking, is thus subject (with the long rifle fire) to enfilade, whereas if the whole line attacks, the Boers (I may say the Boers because this is really pertinent to the Boer warfare) are obliged to retire as the whole line advances, and the troops are not subject in the same way to enfilade fire.

15688. That defect in the Drill Book applies chiefly to Boer warfare, and might not apply to European warfare?—It would apply to European warfare if the European troops are taught to fire at long ranges. Prince Kraft, in his "Letter on Infantry," speaks upon that very subject after the Franco-Prussian War, so that there is no doubt it was looked into.

15689. So that the lessons which you say were learnt after hard fighting would, you think, not be thrown away in the case of European wars hereafter?—No, the

Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
Charles
Warren,
G.C.M.G.
K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

lessons learnt in South Africa are of the utmost use for European warfare. They ought to make our troops the best troops in the world for fighting provided they are made use of, but if they are thrown on one side, as so many lessons have been thrown on one side, they would be useless.

15690. You say that your calculation at the end of December was that you ought to have had four Divisions in Natal to properly relieve Ladysmith?—Yes.

15691. With three Divisions you could not get a long enough line?—Yes.

15692. But still you insist that they must have been efficient troops?—Yes. I think four Divisions could have advanced to the relief of Ladysmith; with their divisions as they were we were just short, and I mentioned that to Lord Roberts in my telegram of the 12th February, that we required more guns to assist us, that we were just not strong enough to be able to advance unless we had more guns of position, which were sent up, and enabled us to advance after 12th February.

15693. (Sir Henry Norman.) They greatly improved in efficiency after a few months?—The troops?

15694. Yes?—The troops changed almost completely after they had been under fire. It was a most remarkable thing that they could not at first be persuaded to take cover, but when they lost very heavily, then they took cover at once individually. Of course, as to the use of their eyesight it took a considerable time before they acquired practice and could see the Boers.

15695. (Sir John Jackson.) You stated that the cavalry were not fit for their work—in what particular way was that?—They had not been accustomed to work as mounted infantry at all, and they did not understand the scouting or reconnoitring for that class of work, and their shooting weapons were many of them supposed to be good weapons, but as far as I could make out, they could not shoot well beyond 1,200 yards; they shot fairly well up to 1,200 yards; but the Boers fought at long ranges, very often at 2,000 yards, and the result was that when the cavalry went (in a mountainous country) up a valley—they could not go along the sides—the Boers had only to get round them at a distance, and they enclosed them.

15696. So that it was mainly due to the special nature of the Boers' fighting and the nature of the country there?—And to the nature of the country, but they were not accustomed to use their eyes.

15697. (Chairman.) Then the second head is the quality of the men of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces?—Shooting Capacity: Infantry—Collective firing very good. Individual firing, fair. Judging distances, very defective for want of practice and experience. Eyesight good enough, but nearly useless for want of practice in looking for an enemy. Cavalry—Almost useless at first for want of practice, for want of a good weapon, for want of training as mounted infantry. Auxiliaries—Some very good, some very bad; on the whole, fair.

Marching: Infantry—Excellent. Volunteers—Uncertain, for want of practice. Marching on Horseback—Bad, for want of both horsemanship and horsemaster-ship.

Horsemanship: Cavalry—Good for real cavalry work, but very indifferent for mounted infantry work. Horses quite untrained for such work. Mounted infantry—Very indifferent. Auxiliaries—Some excellent, some bad.

Horsemastership: Bad generally, amongst officers and men, except in the Royal Artillery. The artillery horsemastership, though not always adapted to the country, was characterised by good judgment and discretion. They saved their horses in a wonderful manner by their care of them.

Intrenchments and Cover: Most defective at first in all branches, except the Royal Navy. It was impossible to convince either officers or men of the necessity of taking cover until they learned it by sad experience in severe losses. The whole traditions of the Army are against taking cover. It is a very honourable view, but it does not suit modern warfare, unless there is a preponderating force; then it can afford to neglect cover. As soon as experience was gained the soldiers commenced taking cover of their own accord, and learned to do it very well, but it was done by the men from the lessons they learnt. Most of our severe losses were due to the want of practice in this respect of the individual.

General Physique: General physique and morale very good. Endurance most pronounced. Good spirits of the troops, under the most trying circumstances, most remarkable. Intelligence only defective because it has not been developed in peace; it is there. The improvement in officers and men after they had once been in action was most remarkable. A soldier after six months' fighting was equal to ten of what he had been at first, and a battalion was at least double its value.

15698. You have already amplified your statement with regard to the shooting; as a whole do you think our shooting compared well with that of the Boers?—I have often tested the shooting of our men with Boer standards of shooting when I have inspected regiments. I put up six bottles together at 100 yards and got men from companies to pick them off, and I generally found six men per company could pick off the six bottles in six shots, and the Boers used to consider that really good shooting; so that you may consider that 6 per cent. of our men (as far as I can judge, probably in every battalion) were equal to first class Boers in shooting. I should consider that the shooting of our men in that way was good, but the eyesight, the picking out of the Boer, was very inferior, as they had not acquired any power of picking up objects. With the exception of the Navy we had no people who could use their eyes at first.

15699. The class from which the recruits come would probably never be practised in anything of the kind?—Quite so; my opinion is that they ought to be taught to use their eyes a good deal more than they do, and when they join the Service they ought to be taught to use their eyes. Only last year I saw a Volunteer regiment marching through Scotland simply in column; they went, I think, a three days' march, and they never looked about them; there was nothing for them to observe, they simply marched through the country. To my mind, except for testing their marching qualities, the march was absolutely useless, and yet it could have been made of the greatest use if an enemy had been placed on the hills and they had been taught to observe them, how they looked under different circumstances in the heather or among rocks, but nothing of that kind was done, and that, to my mind, is the great defect in our Army.

15700. How would you have made them observe the enemy? How would you have got at the private soldier in a matter of that kind marching through the country?—I have always found them most keen directly we put an enemy out. It is a matter I have done constantly. I have had a fictitious enemy out, and the men were always most keen to spot them.

15701. Did you question the men?—Oh, yes, and if necessary I would give them prizes for the best observers; it all comes into judging of distances. What I have frequently done is to have ambuscades, and I told the men they were to be surprised somewhere, and they are all on the *qui vive*, and they are as smart as possible using their eyesight and looking in every direction.

15702. You say among the auxiliaries some were very good and some very bad?—Yes, it is impossible to give any average account of them, because some of them were most excellent, both from Canada and Australia and from our own country; men like gamekeepers and that class of men were most excellent, but some of them from all countries were useless.

15703. What auxiliaries did you have practical knowledge of?—Canadians and South Africans.

15704. Not Australians?—No. I came across some Australians.

15705. The Canadians were good?—The Canadians were very good when they came from the country, but I do not think the town men from Australia or Canada were better than our own men.

15706. (Sir Frederick Duxley.) There were very few town men from Australia?—Yes; I cannot say about the Australians.

15707. (Chairman.) And do you say the same of the South Africans?—Yes, very much so; some of the South Africans were absolutely useless, although most of them were very expert. It depended on how they were brought up.

15708. (Sir John Edge.) On the question of picking up objects, a good deal depends on the knowledge of the man with the rifle in his hands of the nature of the

object he wants to pick up and how it looks in different situations?—Yes.

15709. Does not a great deal also depend even almost more than that on his knowledge of what appearance other objects will present on the field, or in the deer forest, or wherever it may be?—Yes, of course, it requires a certain time spent in the country.

15710. That is what I am coming to: you might be able to pick up objects very well on a moor or in a deer forest in Scotland, and be unable for some time to pick them up in South Africa?—Yes, but if you could once pick them up under one set of circumstances you would very soon acquire the habit of picking them up under another.

15711. I do not see exactly how you could train a man at home to be immediately efficient in picking up objects in South Africa?—I think that if our men had been trained on the waste lands in Scotland, Ireland, and parts of England they would not have found any very great difficulty in picking up objects.

15712. In acquiring the knowledge of what objects were like at a distance?—Yes, and then under different circumstances they would be able to acquire it quickly in South Africa; but at the same time one must acknowledge that with smokeless powder, even with trained men, it is most difficult to pick out a body of men, especially considering the wiles the Boers resorted to of throwing the earth from the trenches in front or behind, or in different places, so as to give the semblance of earthworks thrown up in a different direction, and matters of that kind.

15713. My reason for asking this is that a man I know, who was capable of picking up objects at home in the Highlands very quickly, found very great difficulty in the Himalayas for some time owing to his not knowing how small shrubs and rocks and all that kind of thing would look at a distance in the land he was in?—Quite so, but I think he probably acquired it much more quickly than a man who had had no education at all.

(*Sir John Edge.*) I grant that.

15714. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Did you find the air much clearer?—Very much clearer—quite different; you could see easily at 10,000 yards.

15715. Certainly much clearer than in Scotland?—Yes.

15716. (*Sir John Edge.*) There again there would be the difficulty of judging distances?—Yes, that was the very great difficulty.

15717. May I ask you another question: I suppose you have had a good deal of practical experience in matters of judging distance?—Yes.

15718. Do you find that there is a greater difficulty in judging distance across valleys than there is on the flat?—Oh, yes; each feature of the ground presents a different difficulty, but then men must acquire power of differentiating whether they are looking over a hill or across a valley or down a valley.

15719. At any rate on that point you say our troops at home ought to be practised in judging distances not only on the flat but on undulating ground and the hill-sides?—I think so, most decidedly.

15720. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You say the marching of the infantry was excellent; had they long marches to make?—In Natal they had no long marches, but on the western side they had long marches.

15721. And from the first were they excellent in marching, or was it after practice?—They were very superior to what they were in 1878—quite different men.

15722. From the first?—From the first; they were absolutely different to what they were in former days, since the recent orders for continuous route marching had come in.

15723. The volunteers were uncertain for want of practice?—Yes, a good number of volunteers fell out; some were very good men at marching, and others fell out more than the infantry did, because they had not had route marching.

15724. And it was very difficult to get the men and officers to take up cover?—They could not be persuaded to do so at all.

15725. Until they were shot at?—That is so; it was the only thing that would drive it into them. I have

spoken to a brigade, and I have told the officers and men that if they did not take cover they would lose half their force, and yet it was impossible to get them to do it. I made them go through the same manoeuvres two or three times in order to try to get them to take cover, but I could not get them to take it up intelligently, and yet the moment they were subject to severe losses the men immediately learnt individually how to take cover.

15726. It is very satisfactory that you are able to say that the general physique and morale were very good, and the endurance most pronounced?—It was perfectly marvellous.

15727. They had also good spirits under trying circumstances?—Some of it is due to the climate of South Africa, but, in spite of that, to me it was the most marvellous thing to see how our men were able to get through the work they did, wet night after night. When they first crossed the Tugela we had no blankets, and the men were in their wet khaki night after night, and yet they did not suffer.

15728. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What season of the year was that?—The beginning of summer; at the same time it was very cold up in the hills.

15729. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Those are some excellent qualities which they possessed as soldiers?—Oh, yes.

15730. In fact, they only wanted instruction?—It appears to me that what they wanted was instruction.

15731. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I did not notice at the moment what you said about the Canadians you had seen. I think you said that those from the country were good, but that those from the towns were not equally serviceable?—Yes.

15732. What particular contingent of Canadians had you?—I had with me a battery of artillery.

15733. Canadian artillery?—Yes.

15734. Mounted men?—Yes, mounted men.

15735. Did you consider them good serviceable men?—Yes. I should say they were very good; some of them were very rough men, but I consider them very good. Now and again difficulties occurred, and I generally found the men who got into difficulties were the townmen. I used to inquire about it.

15736. The discipline was not very good, then, was it?—Well, I heard that the battery with me had got into difficulties at Prieska, but while with me they behaved exceedingly well. I spoke to them when they first came, and they behaved very well indeed; but I had heard a bad account of them down at Prieska.

15737. It happened, I think, that most of the Canadians were from the country, and a great many of them from the north-west of Canada?—Yes.

15738. That portion of it which more nearly resembles South Africa—at least the Free State portion—than any other. Had you the opportunity of seeing many of the men from the north-west of Canada?—No I met some lumberers who had been doing lumbering work, and I do not know whether those are from the north-west or not.

15739. Of course, they are from the country altogether?—Yes, those were all excellent men.

15740. (*Chairman.*) Then the next head is deductions from the experience of the war in connection with the training and duties of regimental and staff officers?—This is too big a subject to make a summary of, for a total reorganisation is necessary for efficiency. I make one or two suggestions: (1) The regulations of Home, India, and the Colonies require to be on one basis. At present officers spend half their service in learning and unlearning regulations which ought to be second nature to them, and require no thought. It is impossible that the Army can never be efficient with such an element of disintegration. (2) Staff officers require a great deal to learn. If on every fourth or fifth field day regimental officers were called on to criticise the staff it would do some good. The staff are constantly doing executive duties and omitting their staff duties. The headquarters staff nurse the generals of division, the divisional staff nurse the brigadiers, the brigade staff nurse the battalion commanders, and the adjutants nurse the captains. The whole system is most defective. (3) The captains of companies require more authority. If there is to be selection for promotion, the whole of each rank in the Army (for each branch) must be on one roster. The seconds in command should be assured

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of promotion if they do not fail in their duty, otherwise for four years they do nothing.

15741. You do not profess in the remarks you have submitted to us to deal comprehensively with so big a subject?—I think it is an extremely large subject, and I found it very difficult to summarise, because I do not like the present system.

15742. Of course, what you have given us is just one or two suggestions; I do not know if you wish in any way to amplify the first one, in which you say that the regulations of Home, India, and the Colonies require to be on one basis?—I think that is a very important matter, because I have had battalions coming to me from India who not only did not know any of our regulations, but seemed to think that the Indian regulations were far the best, and that they should stick to them. I had great difficulty in bringing them round to take up our regulations.

15743. Are you speaking of regimental or staff officers?—I am talking of regiments—battalions.

15744. Do the regulations in India with regard to a British regiment differ distinctly from the regulations at home?—The internal regulations are quite different.

15745. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Is not that almost necessary considering the conditions of climate and so on?—I think they ought to be differentiated for the different climates. It is absolutely necessary, but I think the groundwork, the basis, should be the same. In India I believe they have an excellent code, but we have nothing laid down; we have so much that is matter of custom, and it is most difficult for a commanding officer to get hold of these customs after having been away from England a great number of years; there is nothing to refer to, and then the tradition is lost. They come back, and they do not know how to get hold of the system we have at home. We want a code of regulations for all the internal barrack work, because there is so much of the time of officers and men taken up with the learning the ordinary work in barracks when they arrive.

15746. "The captains of companies require more authority," you said. In what direction do you think they ought to have more authority?—I think they should have more responsibility with regard to the men of their companies; in fact, a great deal of the work that the general has been doing hitherto in supervising the regiment I think should be delegated to the colonel of the regiment, and the captain should have a good deal of the work that the colonel has occupied himself in. To give you an instance, when I was commanding the Thames District I had all the reports of the captains of companies of every battalion to look through, and it was impossible that I could carefully look through the whole of these company reports. Each colonel should be qualified to look through the reports of the companies, and give a report to the general officer, and the general officer should supervise generally to see how the colonel of the regiment is doing his work. The company training that we have at the present time is a most excellent improvement on what it was in former days; it has made our young officers.

15747. You mean the companies being taken off all duty?—Yes, and given a certain training. It is most excellent.

15748. I do not quite understand what is meant by "If there is to be selection for promotion, the whole of each rank in the Army for each branch must be on one roster"?—I mean this, that supposing promotion were to go in regiments as it does at the present time, by an officer being selected for promotion (as was recommended by the Committee on Military Education), and if he is promoted in that regiment the position would be unbearable, he could not get on with the rest of the officers, and it is necessary that he should move. I have spoken upon that subject often to German officers, and they say it is quite impossible that we should work it in battalions; they say that we must have it on one roster as they have. I do not mean but one roster for the whole kingdom; it might be worked by Army Corps, or if that is too bulky it might be arranged in divisions of some kind. What I mean is that if an officer is selected for promotion in a battalion he should not remain in that battalion or in that regiment.

15749. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You mean he should not be promoted in his own regiment?—That is so.

15750. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Over the heads of

others I presume you mean?—I mean over the heads of others.

15751. But as to ordinary promotion in which a man is not specially selected, would you not have that in the regiment, or do you assume that all men should be selected?—I assumed that the Military Education Committee proposed that it should be as in the Navy, entirely by selection.

15752. It is rather different in the Navy, is it not; a man remains three years or so in a ship, and then goes to another one, while a man remains in a regiment for life practically?—I am not advocating promotion by selection; I am only saying that if it is by selection then they should be on one roster. I do not advocate promotion by selection at all, and I think there are very great difficulties connected with it.

15753. You really only mean that when a man is selected for promotion he should go to another regiment?—That is so.

15754. And not go over the heads of his brother officers?—Yes.

15755. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is not that generally the case, that when a man is selected for promotion he is passed into another regiment?—Yes, but selection is not the rule at present; I meant if it was to be made the rule according to the proposal of the Military Education Committee. It is the exception now.

15756. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You said "The seconds in command should be assured of promotion if they do not fail in their duty, otherwise for four years they do nothing." Is it your experience they have nothing to do?—My experience is they do comparatively nothing. I have known an officer when he has served his time as second in command ask that he might be transferred to the other battalion on promotion (when two seconds in command have come at the same time). The answer of the War Office has been that there is no certainty whatever that he will have any promotion at all, as he may be passed over. That is most deterring to them; they are in the condition that they do not know in the least what will happen to them.

15757. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I thought perhaps you meant by "The captains of companies require more authority," the training of captains of companies to take the initiative; in other words, to be capable of taking command of a unit under certain circumstances?—They ought to be able to do it because in an advance a captain is obliged to take the initiative, and they ought to be accustomed to that. That I look upon as a necessity with regard to the drill. I meant that they required more authority in the internal discipline.

15758. Do you not think our captains ought to be trained to take the initiative?—Yes, I think it is part of the ordinary training.

15759. Are they now trained?—Not sufficiently. There are no grounds to train them in.

15760. And sometimes not sufficient men to train?—That is the very great difficulty, we cannot get our men.

15761. Are you aware that in the German Army it is part of the training of a captain to take the initiative?—Yes, but the training in the German Army is so very different, because they get them altogether by divisions and by Army Corps, whereas a great deal of our training goes on at isolated stations where there is a regiment by itself—take Hong Kong, for instance, or Singapore, or Bermuda.

15762. (*Sir John Edge.*) In the German Army are the Army Corps arranged territorially?—I believe so.

15763. That is not the rule followed in this country?—No.

15764. How would you apply the general roster for officers?—I was not proposing it; I was only saying that if selection is made the rule then a general roster would be necessary.

15765. I quite understand that, but how would you apply it?—You could not apply it by Army Corps, because the Army Corps this year may be composed of absolutely different regiments from what the Army Corps may be composed of next year?—It could be arranged by a certain number of regiments being grouped together just as the artillery do.

15766. That would be a limited roster, of course?—Yes.

15767. And the limited roster would not carry out the principle of selection really because the men could only

be promoted on the limited roster when there were vacancies?—Yes.

15768. If there were one general roster for the Army a man would go up to a vacancy as it occurred, but if you had limited rosters you would come back to the regimental system extended?—You have that in Germany, because each State has its own Army, I suppose, so that you come to the same thing.

15769. I do not see how it is to be done here. I do not know, and I merely ask you to give me the information. Another result of having a roster of that kind appears to me to follow, and that is that you might have regiments officered by men who had little or no experience of the regiment?—Yes.

15770. Would that be an advantage or a disadvantage?—I think there would be both advantages and disadvantages; there would be new ideas coming into the regiment.

15771. (Chairman.) Taking the next head of your *précis*, will you state your views on the supplies of ammunition, equipment, food and forage?—(a) Ammunition.—No observation. (b) Equipment.—The knapsack and ("and" was altered to "or"; see Question 15791) valise of the soldier on service in South Africa is an absurdity. The pouch belts shed their ammunition. (c) Food.—The food was, on the whole, excellent. In January, 1900, in Natal there was a defect. Troops were not allowed to have fresh meat when they could get it; they were ordered to eat tinned meat. Tinned meat is very heating, and upsets the stomach of most men after a few days, and coming on top of a long sea voyage it induced intolerable thirst. It was this artificial thirst, and not thirst for want of water that was principally felt on Spion Kop. The 2lb. tins gave out early in January, 1900, and troops were served out with 7lb. or 8lb. tins, which had to be carried by the men, as the soft meat could not be carried in the haversack. The result was that the men threw tins away. On one occasion, on the march I ordered these tins of meat to be put in a wagon, as they were found in the road, and a large number were collected. Horses.—Many of the horses sent out from Austria, England, Argentina were not worth their salt. They were sent up to the front too soon after landing, and worked before they were fit, and with defective horsemanship they gave out in a few days. The waste of horse flesh was quite appalling. The Cape horses were out and out the best for riding, but too light for draught.

15772. As to supplies, I think your general view is that they were well done?—As far as I came across them I think the food was very good indeed; some of the best meat I have ever tasted was some of the frozen meat that came up to Orange River.

15773. What about the tinned meat?—It was as good as it could be, but tinned meat is very bad for a soldier to work upon. Many of our men threw it away; they could not eat it, as it affected their stomachs.

15774. We had some statements about the large tins which were sent at a certain time; you say you saw a good many of them thrown away?—The men would not carry them; the only way I got over it was that I gave them two days' meat in one day, and then one day they had none. That was the only way we could manage it, so that they should be able to eat their full ration.

15775. Where did that take place, in Natal?—In Natal.

15776. Did you see any large accumulations of half-used tins anywhere?—No, but I have seen men in the railway trains throwing the tins out of the windows, and the kaffirs running and picking up the tins, and salaaming to them, thanking them, so that there was evidently food in the tins. I have seen that all the way up on the railway trains, where troops have been moving.

15777. Statements have been made that there were vast accumulations of putrid meat from tins in Natal; you did not see anything of that kind?—No, I saw nothing of that kind. I do not think there was anything more than the men could eat, but the tinned meat became so repulsive to the stomach after a time that they threw it away.

15778. As to horses, I think you agree with what we have had a good deal of evidence about, namely, that they were sent too soon to the front?—Oh, yes.

15779. That was a cause, or one of the chief causes, of the waste of horse flesh?—Yes, and the want of knowledge of horsemanship. I think the officers of all ranks are not sufficiently taught about horses, and I think if

every officer could shoe a horse, and know something about the ways of a horse, things would be much better.

15780. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You say that many of the horses sent out from Austria, England, and the Argentina were not worth their salt?—When they arrived.

15781. Do you consider that the condition of the camp at Green Point, where a great number of the horses were sent, was satisfactory? I did not see sufficient of that to say, but I think there was a great want of care generally in looking after horses. It was not realised in the least that horses are so delicate; I do not think it has ever been brought before officers that horses in their habits are quite as delicate as human beings, and require the greatest care. On one occasion when I had special tanks with water for the horses in Natal several officers came to me and said it was utterly unnecessary. The horses had been brought into the dams, and they churned up the mud with their feet, and then drank that stuff, and, of course, they were all sick. Horses require pure water as much as human beings, but that is not brought before the minds of officers, and they do not realise the importance in a campaign of horses having good water. Directly you give them good water the horses begin to mend. On several occasions I have been told the horses are off their feed, and I have said, "Well, we must see about their water"; and when we have arranged about the water, and given them good, clean water, they have picked up at once. It was not the fault of the food.

15782. After the Cape horse which do you consider were the best of the others?—I should think the Irish horse, but I am not at all certain, as it is so difficult to know where the horses came from.

15783. By the Irish horse I suppose you mean horses from England or the United Kingdom generally?—Yes. The great difficulty about the horses from this country is that they lose their feet upon the slippery soil; the Cape soil is often hard and slippery, and they have not got accustomed to it, and lose their legs, and come down so frequently. They are not certain like the Cape horse; the Cape horses from habit know exactly when they put their feet down what they are to meet with, but the English horses do not, and may not acquire that knowledge for a year.

15784. As to the South American horses, do you consider them fairly good?—The South American horses we had in 1884 were excellent, but those we had on this occasion that I came across were not good. They had no staying power, they were very fat, and we could not get them into condition for a long time.

15785. Then as to those from the outside Colonies, such as Australia and Canada, what do you say of them?—The only Canadian horses I saw were those in the gun carriages, and they were very fairly good, but they very soon ran down with the food; they could not at first eat the food of the Cape Colony, and that was one great difficulty. It took them a long time to get accustomed to a great deal of the food we had for rations.

15786. It is your experience that tinned meat causes greater thirst than the ordinary fresh meat?—Oh, yes.

15787. You speak of an artificial thirst; is that experienced to any very great extent?—I will give you an instance. When I arrived in Cape Colony in 1884, and went up to Orange River, I had to march a certain distance with some troops in order to secure the position of Langford, and when we arrived there we were all dead thirsty—we did not know what to do for thirst; we went down to the Orange River and filled ourselves. I drank myself quite full, and all through the night I was intolerably thirsty, although I was full of water. I went and drank more water, but I was full of water and intolerably thirsty the whole time. Two days after that I was quite fit, and I had nothing more to bother myself about with regard to thirst, and never thought of thirst in the least; it was simply travelling from England, and going straight up in that different atmosphere under the different sun on this march. In Natal our troops for the first fortnight after landing were intolerably thirsty, and it just happened that the troops engaged across the Tugela at Spion Kop had only recently landed, and had this intolerable thirst, whereas the troops on the next ridge to Spion Kop, the Rifle Brigade and another regiment, got up to the same height; they had more climbing, and they were just the same time occupied, but did not feel thirsty at all, as they had been in the country three or four months.

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15788. You therefore from that consider that it is always a very great advantage to have fresh meat where it is possible to obtain it?—Absolutely necessary, I think. I wrote upon the subject before I crossed the Tugela, but my butchering instruments were taken from me and sent to Potgeiter's Drift; I was told not to kill, and I had no means of killing, and we were obliged to eat the tinned meat. It was some Army Service Corps question; they thought that the wood required for kindling fires would be heavier than the tinned meat, and it was a question of a quarter of a pound per man, or something of that sort.

15789. (Sir Henry Norman.) I see you say that the pouch belts shed thier ammunition. We have seen a great deal in the newspapers about the immense quantities of ammunition which were lost all over the country, and I suppose that accounts for the immense expenditure upon ammunition: was it not known beforehand that the pouch belts were not suitable?—Yes, every field day we had, the pouch belts shed thier ammunition, whenever a man doubled, and it was constantly being reported upon.

15790. And nothing was done?—I do not know; the reports went forward. It is a very difficult thing for the pouches to be made so that they will not shed their ammunition when they get a little slack, when they cave in. It is a very difficult matter to make a pouch that will hold its ammunition, because you may have it half full or nearly empty, and if the sides cave in the ends will probably bulge out, and the cover does not cover it properly, and the ammunition jumps out through the ends. I suppose some way could be devised, but nothing has been devised yet, apparently.

15791. You said "The knapsack and valise of the soldier on service in South Africa is an absurdity;" did they carry knapsacks?—No, I had intended to put "knapsack or valise;" I used the word "knapsack," which was the old article.

15792. They carried a valise?—Yes.

15793. Would there be any other means of carrying it without a considerable addition to the transport?—What I allude to is the shape of the valise, and the pressure it puts upon the man; for the sake of carrying about 7 lbs. there are about 40 lbs. put on the man with the tightness of the belts. On one occasion I was asked about it, and I said, "It is much better to have the men simply with what they have got in their breeches pockets than to put such a valise on their backs, because for the sake of carrying this very small number of pounds you have the man all tied up when he is marching, and most uncomfortable." It was a badly-made valise. I marched with the valise in the New Forest manoeuvres, and I know what it is.

15794. You think that the valise is badly constructed?—Entirely.

15795. Has anything been done?—I have seen something about a valise with a hook on each shoulder, so that the weight comes on the shoulder with no pressure, and anything of that kind would be of very great advantage. I think it very important that the men should take something with them, and the officers, too; the officers should carry their clothes with them when they march.

15796. (Sir Frederick Darley.) As to the pouch belts, if the ammunition was in clips of five, as the the Boers had it, would that save the ammunition?—Yes, that would prevent it jumping out.

15797. Would that prevent the loss you speak of?—It would prevent the very great loss; of course, when the clip is broken a little might jump out, but the bulk would be saved, and it would be a very great advantage.

15798. Would you suggest that—the ammunition should be in clips?—I think it would be a very good suggestion.

15799. (Chairman.) Will you now give your views on the next head of your *précis*, which is land transport?

—(a) Railways: I have no special observations to make, except to say that if the military had had the repair of the railway in Natal instead of the Colony, the work, in my opinion, would have been carried through in less than half the time, and at little more cost. (b) Ox and Mule Transport: In Natal there were two sets of conductors, one on the part of the War Office and one on the part of the contractors. On the western side there were only conductors on the part of the contractors. This was, in my opinion a great mistake, though a small saving was effected, very small compared with the

expensive method of contract. For example, wagons were secured at 25s. to 30s. per diem, and handed over to the contractor, who charged 60s. per diem. I looked upon this system as most extravagant. The contractor must have made millions over it. The mule transport was only useful within certain limits, on account of feeding the mules with grain. There should have been mule transport for infantry, say one battalion per division, for work with mounted troops. (c) The traction engines did very well on macadamised roads, or on very hard even ground, but in the latter case were useless where there was wet weather, or where the ground was cut up by sluits.

15800. I do not quite understand your observations on the ox and mule transport; you say that in Natal there were two sets of conductors, and on the western side only one; do you mean that the western side was the best way?—No, the eastern side was the best way, because we had our own conductors, and we could look to them for the condition of the animals, and so forth, whereas the contractor had not at all the same views as we had.

15801. Then you go on to speak of the expensive method of contract; I suppose you do not mean by your example that the increase was simply caused by the extra set of conductors?—Oh, no. It is simply this: that there was a contract with Weil and some other contractor to pay them £3 each per diem for the wagons, so I understand, but we could get the wagons for 25s. a day, and we were forced to hand them over to the contractors at the 25s. or 30s., or somewhere about that, and the contractor supplied an extra wheel and something else and the conductor, and he took the difference. It seemed to me that there was a very great waste in that respect.

15802. When you say "we could get the wagons at 25s. or 30s.," what do you mean by that?—The officers on the spot; for instance, when I arrived at the Orange River, when I was made Governor of Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, there was no transport, and I was told to impress any transport I could find, and I sent round and found out all the wagons; instead of pressing them I asked them what they would be content to take, and their terms were all from 25s. to 30s.

15803. But you had your powers of impressment behind you?—Yes. Then I proposed that there should be a certain percentage put on, and I was told no, that the £3 must be charged, and the wagons must be handed over to the contractors. Of course, it simplified matters very much in the general accounts, but the difference was enormous.

15804. You do not know the details of the contract with Weil, I suppose?—No, I knew nothing more than that—that there was the difference I have mentioned between the price at which we obtained them from the people and the price the contractors charged.

15805. But the contract with Weil was a standing contract made before the war? I do not know.

15806. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You had no efficient means of conducting the transport without handing it over to the contractors?—We could have done it through the Army Service Corps, but we were not allowed to do it.

15807. Could you have done it efficiently?—Certainly. I do not know whether it was considered advisable to do it or not, but we have done it.

15808. (Sir John Hopkins.) In your experience of transport, had you the transport that was organised on the Cape side, which was a general transport, or the regimental transport?—On the Natal side at first we had the regimental transport system, and it was also on the eastern side to a certain date, when it was changed to general.

15809. What is your opinion of the change to general?—The change for the general officers was most disastrous, whereas before we had everybody most keen to do their work, we suddenly found everybody listless and nobody taking any interest in the transport. On the other hand, they were able to make use of many wagons which were otherwise idle, and I think on the west certainly there might have been advantages. On the east I could not see any advantage whatever. On the west there were advantages, because I suppose there were wagons lying idle. On the east we had an arrangement that supposing regimental wagons were not employed for two or three days, the regimental officer sent in to say "Our wagons are available," and then they were used with the general transport service until the time came when the

regiments were engaged to march, and then they reverted again to the regiments.

15810. If you were a general officer commanding a division, for instance, in a future war, which system would you prefer—a mixture of the two?—I should prefer the regimental system tempered with discretion—that is to say, that whenever wagons are not required regimentally, they are not to be kept idle, but are to be put at the disposal of the Army Service Corps. At the same time an arrangement ought to be made that the Army Service Corps are not to work them up to the moment the regiment has to march, because on several occasions the wagons were sent to us to march with when they had been used the same day by the transport service, and, of course, the oxen were unfit for the work, but if used with discretion I think the regimental system is by far the best, because everybody is so keen and anxious to do the work. I have known men working all through the night, night and day, under the regimental system.

15811. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) There is just one point about the railways. I presume the railways really belonged to the Colonies in both cases—Natal and Cape Colony?—Yes.

15812. And it was on that account that they undertook the repairs?—Yes.

15813. (*Chairman.*) Will you now state your views as to the adequacy of the Medical and Engineer Services?—Medical Services.—(a) From the purely medical point of view, the skill, zeal, and devotion to duty of our medical officers during the war is beyond all praise. (b) From the sanitation point of view there is much to be desired. It never seems to be clear whether a camp is located according to strategic requirements or not, or to what extent the question of sanitation is to be considered. The result is there were grave defects in the position of many of our camps. The duties of medical officers ought to be more clearly defined and their responsibilities laid down. It is possible that sanitation is not yet clearly understood, and that scientific and medical opinions are not in unison. On the following points, however, there can be little doubt:—(1) Sufficient attention was not paid to the necessity for preventing men washing so close to drinking water as to allow of the dirty water running back into reservoir or stream. (2) This is particularly the case with regard to wells. In all cases wells ought to have their mouths raised, so that it is impossible that dirty water can run back into them. (3) Water should be drawn off by taps and cocks, and not by dipping buckets, whose bottoms are often very dirty. (4) The camps require sweeping up constantly. Dirty straw and refuse should not be allowed to lie about, or be thrown into corners, but ought to be burnt. (5) Men should not be camped or bivouacked where horses have been picketed. There was an entire absence of regard to such considerations in camps hastily formed. In the open plains the mounted troops frequently occupied the best ground before the infantry came up, and the infantry were bivouacked where horses had been. I have always found that in such cases there is sickness. I am convinced that typhoid fever does not belong of necessity to an army in the field; its presence is usually a sign of neglect of some kind. Wherever real sanitary precautions are taken typhoid fever is at once reduced to a minimum. If there had been efficient sanitary regulations in our Army, and if they had been attended to, I think that three-fourths or four-fifths of our losses from typhoid fever would have been avoided. I consider that our regulations have been retrograde in late years. It is impossible that a Provost-Marshal can look after such matters. His duty ought to be to look after others, and see that they do their duty, and not do the duty himself. The whole sanitary service requires recasting. It ought to be automatic, so that on starting a camp or bivouac anywhere things should go straight. Wherever troops halt on a march the temporary latrine should be pointed out, instead of allowing men to go anywhere. The only safe expedient is to establish a rule that whenever a case of typhoid fever occurs the medical officer and Royal Engineer officer will be liable to be tried by court-martial unless they can show that they have adopted all precautions. This will force the general staff to attend to the matter.

Engineer Services.—(a) All the services at which the Royal Engineers had had due practice before the war were admirably carried out. Nothing can exceed the efficiency of the telegraph service and the pontoon train. (b) On the other hand, the field companies Royal Engi-

neers were not efficient, for want of practice and experience. They have no regulations as to their duties, and no drill. I brought this matter to the notice of the War Office in 1895-6, in the Thames District, and was told that a Committee would consider the subject. It is essential that field companies should work and manoeuvre with troops in peace and do real work, so as to get experience. (c) The sanitation of camps and bivouacs should be jointly in the hands of the medical officers and Royal Engineers, and their responsibility should be clearly defined. This is a matter of life and death, and the officers concerned should be liable to be tried by court-martial if they cannot show that they have taken efficient precautions, whether in peace time or in war. Of course, this means additional expenditure by the State. The usual defect is that the State will not spend the necessary money on the services required. But if responsibility were thrown on the medical and Engineer officers, and a court-martial brought out where the responsibility lay, it would force the War Office into spending the necessary money where it is required. (d) One of the most retrograde steps taken in recent times was to remove the Commanding Royal Engineer of a division from his position on the staff of the Divisional General. The result has been chaos in many directions. How is it possible for a general officer to have his arrangements made in advance for crossing rivers, telegraph services, engineer services generally, if his Commanding Royal Engineer is cut off from him and reduced to the position of the officer commanding a battalion? I do not hesitate to say that much of the early confusion during the war is likely to have resulted from all responsibility being taken from the Royal Engineer in looking into the future. There is exactly the same reason for the Commanding Royal Engineer being on the General Staff as there is for the Assistant Adjutant-General or the Assistant Quartermaster General or the staff officer for transport and supplies. It is impossible that a Division can ever work in a satisfactory manner if the Commanding Royal Engineer and the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery communicate with the General Officer through the Assistant Adjutant-General instead of directly as the General's staff officers.

15814. With regard to the Medical Service, you have no criticisms upon it as a medical service, but from the sanitation point of view you think there is much to be desired?—Yes.

15815. You think it ought to be under a distinct sanitary officer?—Or Sanitary Committee. The great difficulty in our service is that so many of our Staff officers are doing executive business instead of supervising and seeing that the work is done, and if we had a Sanitary Committee that was looked after by somebody else, then I think the Sanitary Committee would be the proper persons to carry out that kind of work, and to point out what is required. The first point to consider is—is a camp placed in a certain position for strategical purposes or for ordinary purposes? If for strategical purposes, then those considerations must be considered more important than anything else, but, as a rule, there is a little latitude, and the position where troops can be placed may be in a healthy place, or it may be in an unhealthy place, and I think that the sanitary officers ought always to have a voice in the matter, and to point out that such and such a place is unhealthy.

15816. Who selects the site of the camp now?—A medical officer goes forward and reports, but he is not in any way responsible; he goes forward with the staff officers. There is no general rule about that; some staff officers are sent forward to select the site, and generally the medical officer goes with them, but there is no defined responsibility.

15817. But is there no officer on the staff whose business it is to select the site of a camp?—Not that I know of. I wrote in the very strongest terms of the position we were placed in after the relief of Ladysmith near Ladysmith. I pointed out that it was a place which was supposed to be a typhoid fever ground, and our men in a fortnight were down with typhoid fever. Of course they might have had it just the same whether they had been placed there or not, but there are my reports upon the subject, and of the medical officer of my Division, saying most strongly that we should not be encamped upon that particular spot of ground.

15818. Still you were encamped there?—Yes, we were,

Lieut.-
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Warren,
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19 Feb. 1903.

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19 Feb. 1903.

and very shortly afterwards the whole of my Division was subject to typhoid fever.

15819. Was it for strategical reasons that you were placed there?—I do not know; I was not told.

15820. If you were advancing, and had to select a camp for the next night, what staff officer would you, as a rule, send on to do that duty?—I should send a Quartermaster-General, an Engineer, and a medical officer.

15821. That would be your practice?—Yes.

15822. Is that what you mean by a Committee?—That is the class of committee I should propose.

15823. You propose that it should be a recognised rule that from the staff of the General there should be a committee in whose hands the selection of the site of a camp should be placed?—Yes.

15824. Of course that would leave it to the General in any case for strategical reasons to inform his committee?—Certainly.

15825. But you do not advocate the distinct appointment of a sanitary officer in charge of all the sanitary conditions?—No; I do not know what class of officer should be appointed.

15826. I think what was suggested here was that instead of its being the duty of the Principal Medical Officer there should be a sanitary branch of the medical service?—If the medical officers are trained to the work then no doubt they could do it, but at present they are not trained to the work.

15827. If there was a branch of the medical service which was trained in sanitary work, and an officer from that branch set aside for that service, would that be an improvement?—I think it would, but what I want to lay stress upon is that somebody should be held responsible, there is nobody responsible at the present time, and the result is that these cases of typhoid fever seem, to my mind, to be allowed to occur when they should not. In my opinion if the sanitary regulations had been attended to properly three-fourths or four-fifths of our losses from typhoid fever would have been avoided.

15828. You put it rather drastically, that "the only safe expedient is to establish a rule that whenever a case of typhoid fever occurs the medical officer and Royal Engineer officer will be liable to be tried by court martial unless they can show that they have adopted all precautions"?—Yes; I was taking the home and active service together there, and I was thinking at that moment more of the home service, where the Engineer officer and the medical officer are the two officers nominally responsible. I should add in the Quartermaster-General also for active service.

15829. In home service those two officers are responsible?—Yes.

15830. But not when it comes to active service?—No. At the present time the Engineer builds the barracks and keeps them in repair, and the medical officer goes round to see that things are in a sanitary condition, so that they are the responsible officers in peace, but there is no real responsibility attached to them, and the result is that they may year after year make proposals, and in the Estimates proposals may be made for alterations which may be cut out by the War Office, and nothing may be done, whereas if real responsibility was fixed to them it could then appear before a court that they had done what they could, and the responsibility would then lie where it should.

15831. You would not make them responsible for its being cut out of the Estimates?—No, but somebody else would be responsible then.

15832. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Is it not competent for the General in Command to give such instructions with regard to sanitary matters as may appear to him necessary, and to insist that they shall be attended to?—You mean on active service?

15833. Yes?—Certainly; but how is every officer all over the country to know of an order brought out by a General Officer when he first goes out on active service? All those things ought to be cut and dried, and a matter of habit.

15834. But you consider that in many cases sufficient precautions were not taken from the sanitary point of view—such as were possible under the circumstances of the moment?—That is my opinion.

15835. Such as could readily have been carried out

at the time?—Yes. I have mentioned that wherever I had the opportunity I used to have the mouths of the wells bricked up or turfed up till they were 2ft. or 3ft. above the surrounding ground, so that it was quite impossible that water would go back. That was one of the first things I did whenever I went to a place, and that ought to be a rule of the Service.

15836. And that was not done?—That was not done.

15837. (Sir Henry Norman.) I notice that you say that the Commanding Royal Engineer of a division has been removed from his position on the staff of the Divisional General; when was that done?—I do not know when it was done. The first intimation I had of it, although I had just been commanding a district (so that it must have been done about 1898) was when I was going out to South Africa, and I was told that the Commanding Engineer was to go with his company in another ship. I said: "I want to talk to the Commanding Engineer and the officer commanding artillery about our work on the way; I want to have war games, and I want to have the whole of my staff"; and then the intimation came down to say that the Commander of Royal Artillery and the Commanding Royal Engineer were not staff officers, but only regimental officers. Eventually the Commanding Engineer was allowed to come in my ship, but the officer commanding the Artillery Division was not allowed, and went with the artillery.

15838. This Engineer officer was commanding a company of Engineers?—No, he was to go with the company; there was one company with the division, and he was to go with that company. There was a Major commanding the company, so that there was no necessity for him to go.

15839. There was no arrangement like that which prevailed in India, that there should be a Field Engineer on the staff of the General Commanding a Division?—The change is quite new.

15840. But it is a very old custom in India to have a Field Engineer, usually a Captain, attached to every General Officer and Assistant Field Engineers to Brigades, and so on?—Yes, it always has been in the British Service until 1898; in fact, it was down in the Regulations that the senior Engineer was the Staff Officer to the General Officer.

15841. And you think that alteration having been made is a mistake?—I think most terrible blunders resulted from it, because it then ceased to be the duty of the Commanding Engineer to look forward at all and find out whether bridges were wanted, and all those innumerable services required for troops on the advance.

15842. (Sir Frederick Darley.) It has been suggested by witnesses here that there ought to be appointed to the staff of each General Officer a skilled sanitary officer, probably a medical man, so as to advise him with respect to the site of a camp?—I think I have replied to that question.

15843. Would you advise that there should be such an officer?—I do not think the medical officers at the present moment are qualified, but if they were trained they would be.

15844. I am speaking of a new departure—a trained sanitary officer, probably a medical officer?—I think there would be a very great advantage in it.

15845. Have you found anything of this sort? It is a description given by a gentleman who was a witness here, himself a medical man; speaking of the principal medical officers, he said: "All the senior officers, from the principal medical officer downwards, are impressed with a sort of feeling, first of all, that their service is looked at askance, that their branch is secondary; and, next, that they must not approach any General Commanding Officer, and certainly not if he has got a title, without their knees chattering together with alarm and fright: they must not think of advising him that it really would be for the good of the Army if a camp was not pitched on a certain proposed site, because it is covered by stinking horses in various degrees of decomposition"?—I could not agree with that at all.

15846. You think that the medical officers could approach the generals?—I look upon that as an impossible set of circumstances. The medical officer is on the staff of the general and is always with the general.

15847. And you think he would not be looked at askance if he gave advice of that description?—I think

it depends very much on the general officer; some generals may consider that they know these matters with regard to sanitation better than the medical officer, and others may take their advice; but as to looking at them askance, I do not know—I think it depends on the individual general officer. The medical officer has every opportunity of going to the general officer and speaking to him, and I cannot imagine any medical officer who knew what was wanted not doing so. I am sure they are so filled with a sense of their duty that they would do so.

15848. It was also suggested by the same witness that combatant officers should be taught the general principles of sanitation?—I think that is absolutely necessary. I think every officer should understand sanitation because a great deal of the work is done in advance, and a great deal of our difficulties arose from the mounted troops in advance spoiling our camping ground, not knowing anything about sanitation and putting horses in all the best places.

15849. So that you think every combatant officer should understand sanitation?—I do. It is a very simple matter—only common sense.

15850. (Chairman.) Would you next state your views about the effective range of the guns, rifles, and other armament used?—Artillery.—A distinction must always be made between the use of guns in an open country with isolated hills, like that of Western South Africa, and the mountain country of Natal. Bearing that difference in mind, I have observations to make on the following points: (a) The 15-pounder field gun was exceedingly defective in 1900 in Natal, because the limit of effective burst of its shrapnel shell was only about 3,500 yards, very little above the limit of Boer long range rifle fire; the result was that there was no space available for manoeuvre for the guns, and they could not be properly covered by infantry without the latter getting too near the Boer fire. This will account for some of the casualties among the infantry, which would have been avoided had there been a longer range for the burst of shell. This limit has, I hear, been increased to 5,500 yards, and if this is so the guns would now be quite effective. The absence of common shell when the gun was brought against earthworks and gun emplacements was sometimes felt. (b) The range of the 5-inch howitzer at 5,000 yards was quite insufficient. If it could be increased to 6,000 yards without increasing the weight of the gun, its effectiveness would be enormously increased; but the projectile cannot be diminished in size without diminishing the quantity of lyddite too much. Possibly this gun has sufficient range for European warfare, and its defect was due to the clear atmosphere of the Cape and the abnormally long range fire of the Boers. I considered that the effect of the lyddite shells on the Boers was most pronounced, and I look upon their statements that they did not mind them to be mere fiction. (c) The semi-mobile 4.7-in. and 5-in. position guns were at the last moment brought into the field at the beginning of the war to meet the heavy long range Boer guns. On account of their flat trajectory they cannot effectively be used under 5,000 to 6,000 yards, and they may be said to be very useful guns from 6,000 to 9,000 yards. They were more than a match for the long range Boer guns. They should form part of the equipment of the service manned by the garrison artillery. They can readily be drawn by oxen, can march as fast as the troops, and there is no difficulty in bringing them into action. There was a marked difference between the working of these guns by Royal Navy and Royal Artillery. The Royal Navy were superior in use of their perceptive faculties in practice and experience. The Royal Navy were expert in taking cover, both for themselves and their guns, and devised expedients readily. The Artillery manned their guns in the open, as with field artillery, until ordered to take cover, and were not very ready at first in doing so. On the other hand, the fire discipline of the Royal Artillery was greatly superior to that of the Royal Navy, and when they did see their objective their shooting was better. In fact, where intelligence was the first requisite, the artillery fire discipline was superior, because its responsibility rests with the officers, but where the use of the perceptive faculties was the first requisite the Royal Naval system was superior. As a case in point, on 24th January, 1900, the naval guns were called on to assist the troops on Spion Kop at about 10,000 yards range by firing at the Boers advancing from the north-east. This was a case where the hill top of Spion Kop could be plainly seen, and

intelligence was chiefly required in discriminating between friend and foe. It is possible that the naval officers sighted the guns on this occasion. I only give it as an example in the abstract, and not to point a moral. The following is a summary of general observations on the artillery:—The whole system of artillery tactics has been revolutionised by our recent experience in South Africa owing to our meeting with a foe untrammelled by time-honoured tradition, as well as by our first experience of smokeless powder. There are, however, no lessons derived from artillery duels or coming into action under fire, because the Boers were always playing for safety with their guns, and seldom engaged our artillery unless they had an advantage of range. The Boers were skilful and shrewd in placing their guns in good defensive positions, but they were not skilful artillerists, their shooting was defective, and their projectiles untrustworthy. The small percentage of artillery killed and wounded, as compared with infantry, points to the defects of the Boer guns, projectiles, and skill. Concealment of guns both on attack and defence is now a matter of primary importance, and in defence can be brought to such perfection that it is almost impossible to locate them. Shelter for the gun detachment of position guns is an absolute necessity. Artillery preparation before an infantry attack is quite as necessary as ever, but is required at a different epoch. The trenches require to be searched with howitzers, and a continuous bombardment goes far to shake the nerves of the occupants of trenches when they have been enclosed there day after day, as the Boers were without relief. The principal use of the artillery in action in the advance was found to consist in sealing the trenches at the time of an advance in order to keep down the rifle fire of the enemy. This had to be done in such thorough unison with the commander of the attacking infantry that the firing continues until the troops are close up to the trenches, and must go on with increased range when the troops take the trenches. If this is cleverly done the enemy will be caught in the trenches or subject to shrapnel fire in the open when retreating. To carry this out well the infantry must have great confidence in the artillery; but well-trained infantry will prefer the risk of a chance shell from friends to the unchecked rifle fire of the foe. The advance on Pieters with the 11th Brigade is a case in point. In this advance 50 Boers were captured in one trench, our artillery fire preventing their escape. Common shell are of little use against trenches, but may be of the greatest service in knocking to pieces gun emplacements. If common shell had been available in the attack on the Rangworthy hills, 19th to 25th January, 1900, the pom-poms might have been knocked to pieces. The great artillery controversy—concentration of guns versus dispersion—still rages fiercely, but it seems to be generally admitted that in the advance it is impossible to conceal guns if a large number are massed together. There is much more to be said in favour of dispersion than in former days, but each case must be settled on its own merits. Rifles, etc.—The infantry rifle (Lee-Metford) was found to be a fairly good weapon, but requires improving up to date. The cavalry rifle or carbine, though supposed to be equal to that of the infantry, was very inefficient at long ranges. Up to 1,200 yards it was probably equal to the infantry rifle, but beyond that it rapidly tails off, and consequently the cavalry when armed with it were at a great disadvantage in meeting Boers. The Boers had only to keep at 2,000 yards from our cavalry in the hills, and they could shoot them down with impunity or surround them. Practically it may be said that no advance could be made through a hilly country by cavalry armed with this weapon. After the relief of Ladysmith I believe that all the cavalry were served out with infantry rifles, and this made an enormous difference in their efficiency. Before that they were practically useless in hilly country, and could not do the duties of cavalry or mounted infantry. When the history of the war is written it will be found that the cavalry were unable to exercise their real functions in the hilly country of Natal until after they had been served out with the infantry rifle.

15851. I do not know that I have any further questions to ask upon that point; have you anything to add to your statement?—No, I have no further observations.

15852. You have made certain suggestions as to the future of our Army; will you state them?—This is far too extensive a subject for a summary. It would require a volume, for I consider that the Army requires

Lieut.
General Sir
Charles
Warren,
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K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903

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K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903

reorganisation throughout. I give, however, here some of the most important points:—(a) The education of the youth of the country (boys and girls), from the earliest age, requires to be put on a different footing, so as to call out their individuality, their perceptive faculties, and their intelligence. Everything at present is tending to make them as stupid and inane as a flock of sheep. The recent changes in inspection of schools, under which the inspectors are not permitted to examine the children, is most disastrous. (b) The recent report of the Committee on Education and Training of the Army contains most excellent suggestions, but it stops short at the most important age in the life of the officer or soldier; it does not consider the schooling of the lad. It could not well do so, as there were schoolmasters on the Committee. A further report is now required from a committee appointed to consider the early training of youth from infancy. (c) Officers should be taught their duties as soldiers before they learn their duties as officers. Every officer ought to know what it is to march in the ranks, to do sentry duty on guard at night, to live upon soldier's rations, etc., so that he may realise what the soldier has to go through. (d) All regulations should be on one basis, differentiated for different climates, peoples, etc. The present difference between British and Indian regulations should be abolished, as officers are engaged in learning and unlearning regulations through their service. Acting to regulations should be a matter of habit. (e) There should be fixed regulations for guards and sentries on service duties or active service; without it there must be constant confusion and loss of stores, prisoners, etc. (f) Responsibility should be decentralised. Captains should have more power, and battalion commanders should exercise more supervision, and, at the same time, give a freer hand to their subordinates. Everything at present is done in such a way as to cause as little expenditure of thought as possible, whereas officers and soldiers should devote a great deal of thought to their profession. At present most of the time of officers and men is frittered away in little questions of regulation, because the regulations are so ill-defined and vary so greatly and unreasonably in different commands. (g) Officers should be treated as gentlemen, and the regulations as to confidential reports should be adhered to. The opening of officers' letters on active service by the censor has introduced a feeling of distrust into the Army which it will be difficult to eradicate. The secret reports made against officers in the field, without acquainting them of it, are contrary to the King's Regulations, and most injurious to the welfare of the Army at large. (h) If officers are to be selected for promotion, they will all have to be placed on one or more rosters by rank, as is done in the Navy. It would be impracticable to promote an officer of a regiment over the heads of his comrades, and leave him in the same battalion. (i) The second in command of a battalion should be assured of his promotion if he does well. At present every second in command "lies low," and in four years becomes nearly unfit for promotion. (j) Commands in the field should be territorial as well as personal, i.e., an officer in command should be given a distinct front for which he is responsible, and his duties should be defined. The absence of any rules on this subject has led to disaster on several occasions. (k) The duties of lieutenant-generals commanding divisions in the field should be defined. It is an urgent necessity. (l) The bulk of our troops should not be placed in unhealthy places as they are at present; they should live more under canvas. The recent changes of the Governor of Malta in keeping troops away from the towns and under canvas during manoeuvres have resulted in much good. Troops must be occupied and interested wherever they are. (m) Troops should reach India in a fit condition to stand the climate. With this in view, they should be marched via South Africa, landing at Cape Town and marching to East London or Durban. The latter march they could easily do in six months, manoeuvring on the way. They would then arrive in India as real soldiers, instead of unhealthy boys. (n) Troops leaving India should march back from Durban to Cape Town, manoeuvring with the troops marching to India. In six months they would be fit to return to England, but might have the option of settling in South Africa. (o) The battalions, batteries, etc., on foreign service should remain there permanently, the officers and men changing after so many years. (p) At Hong Kong, for example, the battalions and batteries should never change, but their officers and men should be drafted on to other stations as required. This would reduce Army work to about one-quarter of what it is at present, as tradition would not be lost, as it is now every day. (q) Reconnaissance work requires entire

revival and reorganisation. I do not think it has ever been at so low an ebb as it is at present. As a surveyor and instructor in reconnaissance, I must give my opinion that the present condition of the Army in this respect is deplorable. (r) The chaos and confusion in the Army in the field in South Africa at the beginning was most remarkable, and was due to want of adequate regulations defining duties and responsibilities when troops were massed in large numbers. It never seems to have struck anybody that for large bodies special regulations are required, and that the organisation for 10,000 men was not sufficient for 100,000 men. (s) I must lay stress upon one point. The discipline of the Army of 1900 as compared with that of 1878 was most splendid. In 1878 I considered it to be bad. I think that the gymnastic course, the precision in the gymnasium under the new regulations, has had much to do with this. I must emphasise this by giving my opinion that as the individual intelligence of the soldier is developed, as he acts more by himself, he requires more careful training also in drill in the gymnasium. I strongly deprecate the new orders permitting soldiers to remain out of barracks at night without leave; it will end in confusion.

15853. The matter you have just dealt with is one which I understand you cannot go into completely, but you begin pretty early; you begin with the education of the youth of the country?—Yes, I think it is on a very imperfect footing at the present time, and insufficient to draw out their intelligence, and make them use their eyesight, etc.

15854. Of course we are not inquiring into primary education here, but as to the training of the Army. You have stated under these heads the general way in which you think that the officers should be selected and should be trained?—I have said, "If officers are to be selected for promotion"; I have not given an opinion upon that, because I think it is a very difficult matter to select junior officers. It can be done in the Navy, of course, because you have means in the Navy of finding the qualifications of an officer from the constant warring with the elements; but in the Army it is a very much more difficult matter to find out what is in an officer. A man may be an excellent barrack-service man, but he may not be a good man out in the field, so that it is a very difficult matter to be able to say whether they should be selected or not. I think there should be only a certain amount of selection.

15855. Would you not select the senior officers of a regiment, for instance, for promotion?—I think that the system of always keeping to the senior is far better than anything else we have brought out as yet; under the old system, where the officers had almost a vested right in their positions, they kept their individuality in a way they do not now, and the change has made a vast difference in our Army. The insecurity has made officers afraid of giving their opinions when they think that if they give opinions it might affect their future promotion.

15856. On the other hand, would it not encourage an energetic officer to give his opinion?—Yes, but it encourages a great many unsoldierlike qualities; it encourages one officer putting himself before another, and it has done away very much with the old good comradeship there used to be in the Service. I think it has done incalculable harm. It may have done good in certain ways, but if you compare the condition of regiments now with what they used to be in former days: to my mind an immense amount of harm is done to the feeling of good comradeship that used to exist among the officers.

15857. Was it not the experience of the war that it was necessary to make a selection of officers for commands—for regimental commands, I was thinking of particularly?—I am only saying that the effect of the change has been very bad in a certain direction. I do not know that on the whole it may not be better, but it has destroyed, I think, the good feeling that used to exist in the regiment.

15858. (Sir John Jackson.) Do you consider there is as good feeling between the officers and men now as there was in the old times?—Well, it is very difficult to say, because as the men have short service there has not been time for them to grow together, so that there could not be the same good feeling.

15859. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Would you be satisfied with a system of rejection of the unfit officers?—Yes, I think that is an excellent system, and that is quite a different matter.

15860. And, subject to that, maintain the system of seniority?—Yes, I think so. I think that you must preserve individuality: what you want is men who have sufficient nerve when they go on service to be able to carry out what they think they ought to do, but I think the present system takes away the nerves of officers at a very early age.

15861. (*Chairman.*) When you speak of good feeling in the Service, is that what is alluded to in Sub-section G of your statement?—No, I was not thinking of that at all. I was, in Sub-section G., thinking of the way in which officers have been treated in recent years with regard to confidential reports made against them, and their not having been told, and the opening of their letters on service.

15862. Will you explain what you mean with regard to that, as I do not quite understand it?—Under the King's Regulations an officer who is reported upon adversely by a general officer has to be told by the general officer of what has occurred, and he has read out everything that has been said against him, but in recent years many cases have occurred where officers on active service have been reported on without their being told. I know of one or two cases that have occurred in Natal where officers have been reported on adversely, and have not been told about it, and have only found it out subsequently. Officers have written to me upon the subject.

15863. Do you represent that what was done was contrary to the Regulations?—Yes, and they have written to the War Office upon the subject.

15864. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Are there instances of officers' letters having been opened by the censor?—I suppose so; I have known of several, and every letter that I wrote from Natal was subject to being opened, so far as I knew.

15865. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You mean your private letters?—Yes.

15866. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) It was habitual?—I have seen officers' letters after they have arrived home with the mark "Opened by the Censor" on them.

15867. Showing a want of confidence in them?—Yes, I think it has a most disastrous effect upon officers, and I have seen letters from officers saying, "I cannot mention anything on this subject as my letters are opened."

15868. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Would those be letters to their own families?—Yes.

15869. (*Sir John Edge.*) But I suppose there are great varieties of officers in the Service, and men even unintentionally might disclose matters in their private letters which would be better not disclosed?—They could not disclose more matters than a war correspondent.

15870. I do not argue that point, but what I have said might happen that unintentionally an officer writing to his family might disclose matters which would be very awkward if disclosed at the time, and the family, not seeing the importance of the disclosure, might send it to the papers for information. How would you deal with that risk?—They cannot open every letter that goes through.

15871-2. How would you deal with that risk? As general officer, if you were in command in South Africa, or in any war, would not one of your objects be to prevent information getting round to the enemy anyhow? In these days of telegraphic communication some information might come home in a private letter, the family might show the letter to somebody, or send it to a paper (and I have seen such letters printed in the papers) for general information, and that information might be telegraphed out to the other side within six hours of its arrival in England. How would you propose to deal with that risk?—I think it would be better to let the matter alone, and not open the letters, and run the risk, rather than affect the feeling right through the Army. It has had a very serious effect.

15873. Do you think there is a general feeling in the Army on that subject? Do you not think that officers, if they think of the subject at all, must see that there is some necessity for controlling the information that comes home?—No, I do not think so.

15874. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You would run the risk?—I would certainly run the risk. I think the great point is to breed up officers with a certain manliness of mind, and I think some of those changes that

have taken place lately are most injurious to the mental condition of the officer.

15875. I am not imputing anything to the officer who sends home the information. Say he is writing to his wife, his sister, his father, or mother, and he gives them a piece of information it does not strike him what may happen to it, nor does it strike him that there is any impropriety in sending it home; how would you deal with that case?—I should prefer to run the risk, and to let it be known that officers are trusted not to write anything that may be made use of.

15876. (*Chairman.*) That might be a very serious risk, might it not?—It took at least a month for a letter to get home from South Africa, and it seems to me a very small risk to run. It might be a greater risk on other occasions.

15877. Letters would not always have so far to come, and if you laid it down as a principle you might have a case where the letters might go to the recipient in a week or a few days?—Yes, but it has only happened lately. I do not think it has ever been done before. It is a new regulation.

15878. But has it not naturally grown up, as Sir John Edge says, from the growth of the telegraphic system all over the world?—That has made it a very much more serious risk than in the old days, when it took a long time for a letter to reach its destination.

15879. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Perhaps you would stop the telegrams if the censor thought they were objectionable?—Telegrams must be under the censor, there is no question about that.

15880. (*Chairman.*) The telegram is a telegram coming back; the letter may go out, and, as Sir John Edge described, the contents might be divulged in this country, and then telegraphed back to the enemy?—Of course the telegrams could be stopped going back, but I think the papers could be relied upon if they were asked not to publish such things.

15881. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What would be done with an officer's letter if there were found in it anything that should not be published? Is it deleted?—I do not know. I do not know any case.

15882. (*Chairman.*) You do not know any case in which a letter was either stopped or altered?—No, I do not think one would know if it was stopped.

15883. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Perhaps they might return the letter to the officer?—I do not know at all.

15884. (*Sir John Jackson.*) In Russia, if you get a letter with anything in it the censor does not approve of, you receive the letter with the particular portion of it blacked out?—I do not know what system is adopted.

15885. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I suppose, in your experience the ordinary officer in a regiment has not generally any very important secrets to reveal; what is important not to be revealed is some plan of campaign, or something of that kind?—I should say, as a rule, the junior officer comparatively knows nothing of what is going on, and could give no information of any value. The signalling officer might, and a few officers might, but those are all officers of special intelligence, and specially selected, and not likely to give information.

15886. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Information which they might give would be as to the state of the Army; if the Army were in a very bad state at the time, or in a deficient state, they might know that, and give that information?—Yes, but a general statement has very little effect; it is where details are mentioned that they have any effect.

15887. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) As a matter of fact, the war correspondents always did manage to get their letters home one way or another?—Yes, they managed it.

—So that the information given by officers could not possibly exceed that?—Just so.

15888. (*Chairman.*) At any rate you have said you do not know of any case in which a letter was never returned or not forwarded?—That is so.

15889. So that the grievance surely must be a restricted one.

15890. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Do you think it is only the letters of those officers who have been reported against in any way that are opened, or is it general as to all letters?—I have not thought about that. I would not like to give a thought upon such a thing as that happening.

Lieut.-
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19 Feb. 1908.

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15891. You would not say that all letters from officers comes under the supervision of the censor?—Yes, that is what I mean—all letters. I would not think of any difference being made among officers.

15892. (Sir John Jackson.) The censor would not know from whom the letter came?—I simply mean that the letters from officers are opened by the censor, or are subject to being opened by the censor.

15893. (Chairman.) Then you put forward the proposition that all troops going to India should go *via* South Africa?—Yes.

15894. With the object, as I understand it, of marching them from Cape Town to Durban?—To get them fit, so that by the time they arrived in India they would be fit for their duties. You could send boys who wanted six months or nine months of being fit for India to South Africa to be marched through, and by the time they had marched through they would have arrived at a fit age for India, and at the same time they would have rendered themselves fit in their marching, they would have got hard, and would be able to stand the climate very much better than if they went straight from England.

15895. How would you deal with drafts going out to regiments?—The drafts would have to be made up into provisional battalions and marched through.

15896. It would be a little complicated, would it not?—It would be complicated, but I do not see any difficulty about it. They have to be commanded by somebody on board ship, and it is only carrying out the same system.

15897. Do you think the advantage would compensate for the additional trouble and expense also?—It would not be a very great difference in expense, and for a great many years to come it would solve one of the difficulties we will have in South Africa, because we should always have a large force there, and we could withdraw a great many of the battalions we otherwise keep in South Africa.

15898. You would rely upon these immature soldiers in South Africa?—Yes, but then what I propose is that the men coming back from India should also march back, and get toughened up for our cold climate, because we lose a great many men who come back from India who are unfit for work for a year or two on suddenly being brought back into our cold barracks.

15899. (Sir Henry Norman.) Could this be done at all times of the year in South Africa?—I think so, at all times.

15900. (Sir John Edge.) How long would you propose to take for the march across from Cape Town to Durban.

15901. Take a relief going out to India, how long would you keep it in South Africa on its way?—About six months.

15902. And the troops coming home?—About six months.

15903. Then you would permanently increase the number of our troops on foreign service?—Yes, but then we could withdraw an equivalent number of battalions doing duty at the Cape.

15904. Your system would really increase the number of men on foreign service, unless you counted them as part of the garrison of the Cape?—I mean them to be part of the garrison at the Cape.

15905. Would that be a wise military system, to treat as part of the garrison of the Cape a portion of the garrison required in India?—I think we require the garrison of the Cape more from its moral effect than from its physical effect from day to day.

15906. I will put it in this way: they would not know in India for instance, when they were to get the reliefs; anything might happen at the Cape, and these men might be detained there?—Then we should send out the troops required for the Cape.

15907. To relieve these men at the Cape, and send them on to India?—Yes.

15908. The garrison of India is established on what they consider just sufficient and no more.

15909. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I understand you do not propose to diminish the garrison of India at all?—No.

15910. The only thing is that a certain number of men would be marching through the Cape forming part of the garrison of the Cape, corresponding to the number of

men who would probably be sitting down at the Cape?—Yes.

15911. (Sir John Edge.) It would increase the expense to India, would it not?—No.

15912. Why not? Say that a man goes out to serve six or seven years in India, instead of serving six he would only serve five under your system?—These immature boys are kept in England at the present time until they are old enough to go to India.

15913. The individual man in India serves six years under the present system, but under your system that individual man would only serve five years in India?—No, I should not consider the Cape as foreign service in that respect.

15914. But he would only serve five years; the individual man is sent out at the beginning of his service, and instead of going direct to India he is kept at the Cape for six months, and at the end of his service in India he is kept six months at the Cape. Would it not come to this, that he had only served five years in India?—But if he is kept six months in England until he becomes mature?

15915-6. But they do not send out immature men?—No, but they are kept at home until they become mature.

(Sir John Edge.) But I am speaking of the Army of occupation in India.

(Chairman.) I understand Sir Charles to mean that the period of the Cape at the beginning of his service at any rate would be a period which he otherwise would serve in England and not in India, and therefore it is not a deduction from the period of service in India.

(Sir John Edge.) Then there would be a deduction of six months at the end of his service in India when he was a time-expired man coming home?

(Witness.) That would be as an addition.

15917. But when he is a time-expired man coming home you would surely send him home six months before the time?—I think it would be very easily adjusted, because it is obviously for the welfare of the men that they should get hard before coming to our cold climate, and also there are the chances of their settling in the country, which many men look forward to very much. Many men who have been in India for a period of service are quite unfit to do work in our country, but they might at the Cape be able to take to it.

15918. (Sir Henry Norman.) That is your view?—That is my view.

15919. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) And your view does not contemplate any diminution of the time in India?—Not in the least.

15920. Whether it means a longer enlistment by six months or not, it does not mean any diminution of their time in India?—It does not affect India in the least, except that they get a better class of men there.

15921. (Chairman.) What do you mean by "the battalions, batteries, etc., on foreign service should remain there permanently, the officers and men changing after so many years" (that is sub-section O)?—There is very great difficulty at present about adjusting the amount of foreign service of officers. Take a battery of artillery for instance; officers go out to a battery of artillery, and they remain so many years with the battery, but the time comes when they are brought home—on promotion, for instance—they are brought out of that battery, and others are sent to replace them; then these officers who have been in India for five or six years or more arrive in England, and possibly immediately they come home their battery may be ordered out to India, the result being that a very large number of artillery officers spend most of their time on foreign service, and on the other hand a great many spend most of their time at home, whereas if the batteries were permanently kept in these different countries the men and officers could be drafted out, and a regular system could be followed out.

15922. By batteries do you mean the guns?—I mean the unit. A unit should be kept out altogether, and in the same way with a battalion. The second battalions might be kept out in India, Hong Kong, or Singapore permanently.

15923. But you would take all the men back at certain intervals?—The men would go out by drafts, and when they finished their service they would come home, and the officers in the same way. They would oscillate between the two battalions, and the result would be then that the regiment at the station where they are would keep up its traditions with regard to the station. It is

most detrimental to have a new regiment coming to a small place like Hong Kong: if it were to be suddenly attacked the officers would not know their positions at all. It takes them some time to acquire the knowledge, and if they happened to be attacked immediately after a change it would be a serious matter; for instance, some years ago the whole of the artillery at Gibraltar were changed at the Rock within a few months.

15924. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Under your system there would be a gradual change of officers and men instead of a sudden gap?—Yes, there is such a sudden gap at present. We know how the system I propose works, because it is done at present in the Engineers.

15925. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But it would entail certain regiments, say, the Gloucestershire, the Worcestershire, or the Lancashire Regiment, never being at home?—One battalion would never be at home, but the officers and men would have their share of home service.

(*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But one battalion of the regiment would be a foreign regiment.

15926. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Would not officers show a great disinclination to enter regiments stationed at places like Bermuda, for instance, which would give them a very limited opportunity for active service?—But the other battalion would have a chance of going on service.

15927. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But that particular regiment would never see service?—

15928. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) An officer at Hong Kong, judging by the past, would have very little opportunity of service?—The other battalion would have the opportunities.

15929. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But the other battalion would be a distinct regiment?—Yes, but the officers are always changing.

(*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I see your point, but it seems to me that there is a great deal in the name of a regiment—some old fighting regiment, for instance.

15930. (*Sir John Edge.*) How many years' foreign service would you allow in the case of the officers?—It is a matter of convenience of service.

15931. But you would not change them as often as you would change the men?—Yes, I think every six or eight years; there are many stations where it is not desirable that an officer should be more than six years.

15932. (*Chairman.*) You think that at the beginning of the war there was chaos and confusion?—Yes.

15933. And that was due to what you said at the beginning, the defective organisation of the Army?—Yes.

15934. But in one respect you were satisfied, and that was with regard to discipline?—The discipline was very good, I think.

15935. And a distinct improvement?—A marvellous improvement since 1878.

15936. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) To what do you attribute that great improvement?—I think one thing is the company training. The company training has had a most extraordinary effect on our Army, and another is the physical or gymnastic training in contra-distinction to the old barrack square training. The gymnastic training of the new kind makes a man a different person altogether. A soldier might be on the barrack square, and he would never become really smart, but put him in the gymnasium, and he becomes quite a different man, so smart and alert.

15937. In sub-section C of your statement you make some suggestions with regard to the training of officers: "Every officer ought to know what it is to march in the ranks" (that, I suppose, they do), "to do sentry duty on guard at night"; are they ever given that duty?—I do not think so. I do not think officers as a rule have to learn the duties of the men. I do not think the officers have sufficiently learnt the duties of the men so as to know what the men can endure. A great many officers do it. I have seen a great many officers on service carrying the rifles of the men and their valises, and I have also seen that on manoeuvres, but at the same time the officers have not been through the course, and they do not know what the men can endure. If every officer went through the same course as the men and knew what it was to be a sentry in a lonely place at night, he would have a much better idea what the men can endure.

15938. And live on the soldier's rations?—No, he cannot live on the soldier's rations.

15939. I thought you suggested that?—I think he ought to be put on it to know.

15940. You say in sub-section I. of your statement: "The second in command of a battalion should be assured of his promotion if he does well. At present every second in command 'lies low,' and in four years becomes nearly unfit for promotion." Has the second in command not certain specified duties?—No, he has not any real responsibility.

15941. The second in command is selected?—Yes; generally he looks after the canteen and matters of that kind.

15942. He does not gain much experience in any military duties?—No. I remember in former days it was said that the duty of the Major was to look after the effects of deceased officers.

15943. (*Sir John Edge.*) I want to understand about this question of confidential reports: are the Regulations with regard to the reports of a General Officer on his subordinates the same as the Regulations in force with regard to the Colonel commanding a battalion reporting on his officers?—Exactly the same; any officer who is animadverted upon is brought up before the General by the commanding officer, and whatever is against him is read out to him, and it has to be put on the confidential report that this has been done, and if it is not put on the confidential report it is returned to the General Officer.

15944. And that is printed on the face of the report?—Yes.

15945. You do not suggest that that Regulation is not complied with so far as the regimental report is concerned?—No, I am talking about reports made upon officers in the field which have not been communicated to them in any way, and they were quite unaware of their being found fault with until months afterwards.

15946. Do the cases you refer to arise on what is called the confidential report, or do they arise on a separate report made on a particular officer?—They may arise on a separate report, but the King's Regulations refer to all confidential reports—all reports.

15947. In connection with what are known as confidential reports—the ordinary confidential reports—you believe the King's Regulations are followed?—In peace time, yes.

15948. And you suggest not in war?—Not in war.

15949. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Seeing that troops can now be transported with all comfort from England to the Pacific by way of Canada in some 10 or 12 days, do you not think that it would be a desirable route to India as an alternative?—Do you mean for them to march through Canada, or to be taken by train?

15950. By train?—Simply one route against the other?

15951. Yes?—I should prefer to send them by Canada, because they would then miss the chance of malaria when crossing through the Suez Canal, then down the Red Sea and through the hot seas beyond this to India, whereas I do not know by the other route of any place where they could suffer. They certainly might suffer if they stopped at Hong Kong, and it would not be desirable that they should stop there, or Singapore, but otherwise I think the Canadian route is a very good route for soldiers, and I think it would be very desirable that it should be used, because by that means we should be able to keep up the good feeling between the Canadians and ourselves which we have lost ever since our troops were moved from Canada. I think that keeping our troops in Canada in former days did a great deal towards keeping alive good feeling between this country and Canada.

15952. You are aware that reliefs have frequently been sent out to the North Pacific—that is, to Vancouver?—Yes.

15953. By way of Canada?—Yes, I have been through that route, and I have been over the United States and Canada, and know about it.

15954. And you would consider it a good alternative route?—Yes, I think for a soldier it would be very desirable.

15955. You recommend their going by South Africa, but the Canada route, you think, as an alternative

Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

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19 Feb. 1903.

route, is desirable?—I lay so much stress on the men marching. I think if you marched them through Canada at the proper time of the year it would be excellent.

15956. It would be rather a long march?—Only a certain distance—600 or 800 miles.

15957. 3,000 miles through Canada would be rather a long march, but they could do it by train and with all comfort now from Halifax, let us say, in five days; in short, in 12 days from England they could be at Vancouver.

(Sir Henry Norman.) There is a very small garrison at Vancouver, and you would surely not advocate that soldiers going to India should go by the Pacific route?

15958. (Sir John Edge.) How many more thousand miles would you have to carry them?—I think it would take four or five days more.

15959. Is your suggestion with regard to men you would send to the Cape to march limited to immature men?—No; it is not to be limited to them, but we have such a vast number of these immature men.

15960. You would send all men whether they were fit to go to India or not?—Yes, I think it a very im-

portant matter that the soldiers should learn their duties on the march. They never can learn their duties on the barrack square, but they can do it on the march, and if you give them something to do they learn their duties in a quarter of the time.

15961. Speaking about malaria, there is no malaria in the Red Sea, I suppose?—Yes, I should think there is; if you pass by Suakin there might be malaria, and mosquitos might come on board, but I do not know.

15962. But you are a long way off Suakin; have you ever known the case of a man getting malaria merely from going down the Red Sea?—You would not know, because you pass through the Suez Canal, and you certainly could get it there, as there are plenty of mosquitos.

15963. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) In another couple of years they will be able to transport thousands of troops from London to Vancouver within nine days in case of emergency; that would greatly shorten the time to India?—Yes.

15964. (Chairman.) Have you anything you wish to add to this précis you have given us?—I do not think so.

(After a short adjournment.)

Major-General Sir H. J. T. HILDYARD, K.C.B., called and examined.

Major-
General
Sir H. J. T.
Hildyard,
K.C.B.

15965. (Chairman.) You went to South Africa in October, 1899, I think?—That is so.

15966. And you were in command of the 2nd Infantry Brigade to the 19th April?—Yes.

15967. And of the 5th Infantry Division after that date?—Yes, that is so.

15968. Until when?—Until September, 1901.

15969. And your first service was in Natal?—In Natal.

15970. And after that?—I remained in Natal with a command partly in the Transvaal and partly in the Orange River Colony.

15971. Under General Buller?—After General Buller went home I remained in command.

15972. You have been good enough to prepare a statement based on the memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575, post*) which we sent to you. Will you now proceed to read it?—Yes. The second brigade was composed of four battalions that had been under my command at where, Aldershot they had been through a course of company training, battalion training, and brigade training earlier in the year. This preparatory practical work on the ground, conducted as far as practicable in service conditions, proved subsequently in the field of the greatest possible value. The commanding officers of battalions were thoroughly known to me and to one another; they understood one another's characteristics and those of their company commanders. In the whole system of training the greatest importance had been attributed to the responsibility and initiative of the company commanders. The regiments comprising the 2nd Brigade were the 2nd Battalion Queen's West Surrey Regiment, 2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment, 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment. They were completed to war strength by the incorporation of Reserve men without any difficulty or friction, with the exception of the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment, the Reserve men of which were insufficient. A Brigade Bearer Company and Field Hospital were allotted, and the entire Brigade, including these units and the Brigade Staff, embarked on the 20th October on board three ships at Southampton, and sailed simultaneously. At this time it formed the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division, the destination of which was Cape Town. The divisional commander was to sail the following day, and anticipated arriving before the 2nd Brigade, and making the necessary arrangements for disembarkation and movement. The three ships did not keep company, and the "Roslin Castle," having on board the Brigade Staff, 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment, Bearer Company, and Field Hospital, arrived first, on the evening of the 8th November, at Cape Town. On the 9th, after taking the orders of the General Commanding, the vessel went on to Durban, where the troops were disembarked and sent up to Pietermaritzburg on the 12th November.

Strength.—The strength of the Brigade on embarkation was:—

117 officers,	4,214 other ranks	- 20th Oct., 1899.
112 "	3,705 "	- 28th Dec., 1899.
115 "	4,144 "	- 30th Jan., 1900.
109 "	3,814 "	- 24th March, 1900.

The strength, therefore, was fairly well maintained during the most arduous portion of the operations.

Shooting Capability.—Our men held their own very well in the matter of deliberate shooting. On various occasions when occupying ground opposite to Boer trenches I have found that the soldier held the Boer, and that the latter had a distinct respect for his fire. At long ranges the volley was found useful. I noticed that so long as deliberate fire was possible the soldier was very steady and keen to correct his aim and shoot up to the objective. But directly anything exciting or unexpected happens, the soldier's aim becomes very undependable. It is to remedy this that snap-shooting has been encouraged recently, and it can scarcely be overdone.

Marching.—The marching was satisfactory, owing to the use of ox-wagon transport. The rate and direction of the infantry marches were not generally excessive. But the heat and drought were most trying, and it required both stamina and pluck very often to keep men going. If men were to be brought along in a fit condition to fight, the rifle and 150 rounds of ammunition was found to be quite a sufficient load, and great coats had to be carried for them.

Horsemanship and Horsemastership.—My experience lay chiefly with the irregular regiments first formed on the Natal side—Bethune's and Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry and Byng's South African Light Horse. They were raised before the country-bred horse was exhausted, and they were all thoroughly well commanded and organised. Their methods were often rough and not neat, but they were a handy lot, and looked after their horses. They were thoroughly good value. There were a number of cavalry regiments that came under my notice from time to time. The horses brought out with them from England soon ran down, and I take it comparatively few of them regained condition. Directly oats got short, even temporarily, it affected the big horses. There was often great difficulty, too, in regard to regular watering. It is possible, had the English horse had a quiet time after being landed, in which to become acclimatised, he might have done well; in any case, that he did not do so was not, I think primarily, or perhaps, even chiefly due to an absence of good horsemastership. There was a company of Mounted Infantry mounted on country-bred horses at the beginning of the war that a year later, after continuous hard work before the enemy, had 36 of them still fit.

Entrenchment and Cover.—It repeatedly happened that the Boers occupied a position, having in advance of it a crest line forming a false position, and commanded by gun and rifle fire. It was consequently desirable to minimise losses by rapidly throwing up

cover. But this was difficult to do, for the entrenching tool carried by a proportion of the men was ill-adapted for the hard, stony ground, and frequently it was not practicable to get the tool-cart with picks and shovels up. At first men were inclined to economise their labour and scamp the work they had to do, and officers were too easily satisfied. But after they had been once properly shelled they realised what it meant, and there was no further incentive required to work. Where in this war the necessity for artificial or improved cover from fire was especially noticeable was as a protection against concentric fire arising from the long-range arms, the wide fronts, and against attacks made at night and by surprise. All-round entrenchment even was no sufficient safeguard in all cases from losses, for the enemy's all-round fire against these defences reached the reverse of the defenders, and had a very demoralising effect. To be in effect secure, paradocs were required in certain situations when defences were to be occupied for any length of time.

Physique and Morale.—The physique of the men who disembarked with their regiments was excellent, and left nothing to be desired. Generally the Militia Reserve men and the Volunteer Service companies were satisfactory, though some men were sent out who were quite unfit for arduous service such as they had to perform; the drafts of young soldiers who came later were soft and unformed, and a great many went into the hospitals. The men belonging to Section D of the Army Reserve who were sent out were not thought to have been so well up to the work as others—not for some time, at any rate. It was noticed a considerable number of Army Reserve men of one of the brigades that contained a large proportion of miners were deaf in varying degrees, often sufficiently so to constitute a serious disability for night sentry duties. The morale of the non-commissioned officers and men was very satisfactory; they kept up their spirits in a remarkable way in most discouraging conditions often. Their degree of intelligence was that of their class; it is not to be expected that men who join, as a proportion do, absolutely illiterate, will develop into very intelligent soldiers. But there is generally a fair proportion, and in some regiments a large number, who are sharp and intelligent, and can be counted on as leaders. Careful, intelligent, and untiring individual training on the part of the officers is the best preparation of the soldier for his duties in war. But to admit of this being effectively done it is essential that officers shall not be taken away from their legitimate duties, and that soldiers should not be employed on work that withdraws them from their companies. The individual training and teaching in every detail concerning the use of ground and of the rifle must be followed by the equally careful training of the squad and section. The subordinate commanders must be taught how to lead their commands, and in what conditions they will have to act on their own responsibility; their sense of initiative must be fostered in every possible way. It must be impressed on them until it becomes a second nature that every commander, however subordinate, is responsible for his own flanks. Explanation and demonstration on ground should be the earliest and most continuous lesson to the soldier, whatever his rank. The difficulties in the way of having a thoroughly efficient and well-trained body of non-commissioned officers are enormous. There are no training schools for them, as there are in Continental armies, and except during the period of annual training, and by no means always then, they have no facilities for practising on ground with men the subordinate commands they have to exercise in war. That they did so well in the South African War in spite of the disadvantages in the way of efficient training and inherent in the voluntary system of Army service, is altogether to their credit.

Deductions, Training, and Duties of Officers.—**Regimental Officers.**—They were excellent whether in looking after the welfare of their men in every situation of service or in leading them in action. They were ready to take responsibility and to act on their own initiative when the occasion required. The example they set to their men was past all praise. If any distinction is to be drawn, it would be in favour of the officers of those units that had been through field training at stations where ground was available for carrying out this training in its entirety as directed by the regulations in force previous to the war. It was, however, only exceptionally at stations at home that this could be done, on account of the want of ground for training purposes. For the efficient training of regimental officers for war it is essential facilities should be given for working over

ground in service conditions. This means that sufficiently large areas should be made available for the practice of exercises illustrative of war; and Army Corps commanders should be given powers to utilise such ground in the areas of their commands as may be required for the purpose. Another necessary requirement for the efficient training of regimental officers is that during the whole of the training season squadrons, batteries, and companies should be kept complete, with their full complement of both officers and men. If this be done, the responsibility of their commanders can be made a reality, and they can be tested as regards their efficiency by the results they attain in the training of their officers and men.

Staff Officers.—In those commands the general staff officers of which had gone through a practical course of instruction in all branches of staff duties as practised in the field, the results were satisfactory. At the Staff College the course of instruction had for some years been arranged to meet the requirements of modern war, and its most distinctive feature was the large proportion of the teaching and practice done on varied ground and under various suppositions. Some of the officers who did most valuable work in South Africa, not only as general staff officers but as column commanders, received their instruction in knowledge of ground and operations in war at the Staff College. The teaching followed the system laid down for the administration of the staff of the Army. The underlying principle—first aimed at in 1871 by the amalgamation of the two titles in the lower grades of Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General—was the unification of the staff and the allotment of the several sections of duties by General Officers Commanding to the officers of their staffs best fitted in their opinion to perform them. The arrangement by which, in 1889, the administrative duties of supply and transport were brought within the scope of general staff duties, and allotted with other existing staff duties, as a separate branch, was tested practically for the first time in the South African War. It never had a fair chance, for the Army Service Corps officers appointed to administer these duties had, with very rare exceptions, not been trained in general staff duties in war. It consequently became necessary in some cases to re-allot the duties to a certain extent, but this was within the province of the General Officer concerned, and, within my own experience, no difficulty resulted. The orders, both daily and for operations, the arrangements for distribution, movement, security, and halting were executed with promptitude and precision, and I was well satisfied with the results. The administrative duties of supply, convoys, and transport were the business of the Army Service Corps officer on the general staff, and their administration gave him plenty to do.

Supplies of Ammunition, Equipment, Food, and Forage.—The force in Natal was supplied with regimental transport, and thoroughly equipped with ammunition columns and parks, and was seldom far removed from the railway, which was brought on as the force advanced. (a) **Method and Sufficiency.**—It is probably seldom that a force in the field has been so well supplied with most things required to maintain its efficiency. With the exception of clothing, which was at the time of the relief of Ladysmith in a very bad condition, the men not only had all they required, but the rations were supplemented by a field force canteen, that sent up miscellaneous goods, tobacco, milk, etc. It was probably due to this that the men maintained their health and spirits during a very trying period. The chief defects in equipment were the great coats, which could not be carried by the men, both on account of their conspicuous colour and of their weight; the ammunition pouches, which led to a lamentable waste of ammunition; and the portable entrenching tool, which was not sufficiently strong for the rough, rocky ground in which it was required. (b) **Quality.**—The food was generally very good. Certain brands of tinned meat were bad, and had to be condemned. The want was felt of a really portable field ration, of which two or three complete in themselves could be carried by mounted men and infantry without over-weighting the horses or men. (c) **Delay or failure on the part of contractors.**—No observations. The same remark is applicable to forage. (d) **Number and Quality of Horses.**—There was always practically a shortness of horses, and those arriving from over-sea had to be sent up country frequently before they had time to recover from the voyage. But even when kept for a time at depôts there were no sufficient means of conditioning them, and though they looked perhaps well, they rapidly succumbed to hard work from not having been acclima-

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19 Feb. 1903.

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tised. The country-bred was far and away the hardest stamp of horse.

Land Transport on Railways.—The Natal railway was invaluable in the earlier period of the war in supplying the Natal Field Force, and later on in supplying the forces based on Johannesburg and Pretoria. It was worked throughout within the limits of Natal by the Natal Government Railway Service, by which the larger works of restoring the railway and bridges destroyed by the enemy were most satisfactorily performed. Railway Staff Officers were appointed at the principal stations for military purposes, but they did not interfere with the working of the railway service, which continued in the hands of the station-masters. The works at the immediate front, the diversions necessary for temporary bridges, the restoration of culverts and many other services were executed by the Royal Engineers, or under their direction, very efficiently.

Ox and Mule Transport.—The whole of the transport, regimental and general, was ox and mule with the Natal Field Force. The fact of having ox transport hampered the force enormously in the matter of mobility; on the other hand, it secured absolutely the supply of the force. The arrangements in regard to both ox and mule transport were excellent; civilian conductors were in charge of the sections allotted to different services, and were invaluable in controlling the Kafir drivers and looking after the grazing and welfare of the animals. The Kafir drivers did good service, and were as a body most satisfactory. Had it been found practicable to work entirely with mule transport, the mobility would have been largely increased, though it is doubtful whether it could have got along as the ox transport did when the country was deep and the roads or tracks were cut up.

Traction Trains.—No knowledge.

Medical and Engineer Services.—The Medical Services were excellent, and except when pressure was great from the number of enteric and dysentery patients in the field hospitals, they were adequate. Such exceptional periods can hardly be provided for, for the sickness that overcrowds the hospitals also claims its proportion of officers and men of the Medical Service. The pressure in these instances was met in some degree by civilians from the Bearer Service organised in Natal. The Engineer Service was adequate and highly efficient.

Effectiveness of Guns, Rifles, and other Armament used.—The effectiveness of the field guns when a target could be obtained within their effective range was all that could be desired. The difficulty was that such a target was most rare, for the positions occupied by the enemy generally gave command of view and fire from much longer ranges, and their longer-ranging guns were effective before our field guns could touch them, even had their position been detected, as was seldom the case. It was quite sound, therefore, to move the field guns within their effective range before opening fire. When this was done the enemy were unable to fire from their position so long as it was kept under fire, but the losses inflicted were small, for the enemy were secure in their deep trenches from shrapnel fire.

The effectiveness of the fire from the howitzers was greater, though this effect depended on the shells actually falling into the enemy's trenches, which seldom happened. The naval 12-pounders and 4.7 guns, while ranging to considerable distances, were not as effective as they might have been expected to be on account of the impossibility of accurate ranging and observation of target, and also of the unevenness in the propelling power of the charges. The Lyddite shell seems to have caused much nervousness, particularly at first, but I could not ascertain that it caused much actual damage. The Lee-Metford rifle was an excellent arm, taken altogether, though the Mauser had an advantage in the clip-loading and the sighting. The machine guns did very good service on many occasions, especially in defence and in outpost positions. The mounting on a heavy wheeled carriage with horse draught was cumbersome, made concealment impossible when in movement, and made access to many positions in which they would have been useful impossible. The tripod mounting subsequently introduced was a great improvement.

General Remarks.—It is dangerous to base specific conclusions in regard to the use of the several arms upon a series of operations that were from the outset abnormal, both on account of the peculiar physical conditions of the country in which operations took place, as also by reason of the peculiarities of the organisation and mode of warfare adopted by the enemy. As regards cavalry as cavalry, in a war in which from the outset no regular cavalry was opposed

to it, the lessons can be only incomplete. The experiences gained point to the necessity for lightening the weight carried by the horse, to providing the cavalryman with the most effective rifle obtainable, and to training both officers and men to the efficient use of it in service conditions. There is probably a great rôle open in certain conditions for the strategic use in future wars of large bodies of mounted men with guns. There is really nothing new in this, for the increased power of the rifle was well known before, and its value claimed as adding to the independent power of bodies of cavalry. The war brought out, no doubt, strongly the great value in certain conditions of mounted troops other than regular cavalry, and every effort should be made to organise and train such troops, whether at home or in other parts of the Empire. Such troops, whether operating in concert with the cavalry in carrying out independent movements, or with the infantry in guarding the flanks or executing wide flanking movements, will be of increased value in future wars.

Artillery.—The employment of the artillery must depend in some degree on the nature of the war, but the general use of each class of gun has been in some degree defined by our experiences in South Africa. The effective range of the field gun for shrapnel has already been augmented, and will have to be still further increased; equipment and weight on the horses reduced; observation and locating of hostile guns constantly practised in new ground. The value of field howitzers for searching out occupied and prepared positions has been recognised. The employment of heavy long-ranging guns has been lately approved, and they now find a place with corps artillery. Perhaps the greatest difficulty before the artillery is to locate carefully-hidden objectives, whether these be hostile guns or riflemen hidden in carefully prepared trenches. Once these targets are recognised fire will usually be concentrated on them; whether for this purpose the guns be dispersed and the fire concentric, or the guns concentrated, must depend upon ground and space and time. There can be no absolute rule for guidance.

In regard to infantry, some considerations are the use of broad fronts, the gaining of successive fire positions towards the main objective, the further advance covered by fire from such positions, and the pushing in of the attack at all costs, at the point or points it has been determined to capture. More than was ever the case before officers and men require to be thoroughly trained in the use of the rifle and in the employment of ground. This can only be effectively done by the instruction and practice taking place in every variety of ground, and for this the commanders responsible for the training must have access much more freely than in the past to private property.

15973. I understand that you had one advantage in the brigade under your command from the fact that it had been under your command at Aldershot?—Yes, I look upon it as the very greatest possible advantage. I believe it to have been the only brigade that went from the United Kingdom as a brigade, and that had been trained as a brigade under its own commander before its embarkation, and, from that having been the case, during the whole time they were with me in South Africa I looked upon it that I derived the greatest possible advantage from the fact of knowing the commanding officers, knowing the company officers, and practically knowing each regiment in detail, and knowing exactly what I could expect of them. On the other hand, they knew my ways, and we did practically in war what we had done in peace time when we were training under service conditions at Aldershot.

15974. Did you keep the brigade together the whole time?—Almost the whole time; practically the whole time. One regiment was taken away.

15975. And that you consider is the proper way in which an army ought to be organised?—I think it is the only way for efficiency.

15976. Were you able at Aldershot to give them training which was practically useful in war?—Yes, most useful. With that brigade we had gone through, two years in succession, a period of company training under the company officers superintended by their commanding officers and by myself; a period equally of battalion training with each battalion with all its men in the ranks going through the period of training under its colonel and under my supervision; and after that again we went through a period of brigade training under canvas. We went to Woolmer and other places not actually on the spot, and there we practised

every possible operation that we were likely to perform in war.

15977. Is the area sufficient at Aldershot to give the training that is necessary?—Not for a large body of troops; of course, it is better to get them away elsewhere if you can. And if I might say so, that was one of our great difficulties in the training of our troops and in the training of our staff, and in the training of our officers: that we had never had really practical manoeuvres in England, and very seldom we had manoeuvres at all. We tried very hard at Aldershot, when Sir Evelyn Wood was commanding one year, I remember, to arrange manoeuvres by mutual agreement; the landlords were willing and the occupiers; that is to say, the farmers were most anxious to see us, but there were people called shooting tenants and shooting syndicates, which absolutely stood in our way, and we were unable to get the ground; and unless the country will give us the power to work over ground under service conditions, with compensation, of course, for all damages, but to go everywhere except into private houses and private parks and places of that kind—unless that full power is given to us I do not see how we shall ever get the Army trained for war.

15978. In England?—In England.

15979. Because of the enclosed nature of the country?—Yes, and on account of the partridges, too, because it applies equally to the open country.

15980. Even Salisbury Plain is not big enough?—Salisbury Plain is big enough, but we could not get Salisbury Plain except under the Act, and having used it under the Act five years ago, we cannot use it again this year because under our Manoeuvres Act we are not allowed to use the same area unless five years have elapsed since we used it last.

15981. And the sort of training for which you require these extended areas is, in your opinion, essential to get an army such as is required under modern conditions of warfare?—It is absolutely essential.

15982. You have entered into the various points mentioned in our memorandum. As to shooting, do you think that our men held their own with the Boers?—I found on many occasions, when one was able to know, that they held their own; of course, it was a very difficult thing to prove. Where really they held their own, and where one knew that they held their own, was when one got the Boers lying opposite to our men, and each was protecting himself in the best possible way. Then you had access afterwards to the Boer defences, and you saw really what the effect had been, and the Boers told you. There was one commando the 2nd Brigade laid opposite to for several days and nights, and for a portion of the time we were at the nearest point within about 250 yards of them. We compared notes afterwards, and they had felt our fire enormously; they had been absolutely unable to leave their trenches for any purpose whatever.

15983. I see you advocate volley firing under certain conditions?—They disliked it; they said really that the volley firing and machine gun firing was what they could not put up with, because it seemed to search them out; it came everywhere at once. But that is only at long ranges.

15984. As a rule, I suppose, it is individual firing that has to be trained for?—Certainly.

15985. And is it not individual firing in which our men, under present conditions, are less effectually trained?—Of course, they are less effectually trained, because you take a man really who has never seen a gun, and you give him a gun which is quite a strange thing to him, and it takes him a long time to get accustomed to use it at all. It is not as if all our population were accustomed to handle guns before they joined the Army.

15986. I understand you to say that one of the difficulties in the marching, which was otherwise satisfactory, was the weight the men had to carry?—Yes, that is so; we had to lighten them very much. That was particularly so, of course, with the mounted troops; but, talking about the Second Brigade, as I am doing now, what we found was that they got along somehow, but it was very hard. The heat was intense, and they got along somehow if we did not overweight them, but directly they got overweighted they broke down, and they were not fitted to fight; if we had encountered the enemy we would not have been able to attack his men. That was climatic.

15987. The greatcoats were a difficulty?—The greatcoats were very heavy, and also, when rolled, the Boers made a target of the greatcoat, because when a man lay down the greatcoat showed, and the Boer laid his rifle on the greatcoat, and directly the man moved he shot; directly he saw the thing move he shot, and that is the way he got his man.

15988. What is your suggestion with regard to greatcoats?—I think they cannot be carried.

15989. That is rather hard upon the men at night, is it not?—Yes, you have to put up with it. Eventually the blanket and waterproof sheet were carried, but no greatcoat. When they could be carried with the men in wagons it was done, but, of course, it is a very ponderous way of doing it.

15990. Are a blanket and a waterproof sheet more easily carried than a greatcoat?—Yes, they are lighter, and particularly if you are having wet weather the waterproof sheet is indispensable really.

15991. And it does not become subject to the same disadvantage about giving a target?—No, it is khaki colour.

15992. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Could the man not unstrap his coat and put it under him, for instance?—Yes, he could do that, but then he would never get away with his coat if he was in a hurry; you cannot use your arm and carry an unfolded coat too.

15993. (Chairman.) You had not so much to do with the irregular regiments—mounted infantry?—No, I had Thorneycroft's and Bethune's. They were both raised with me and under me, and they were with me a long time afterwards, and also Byng's, the South African Horse; those I had under my command a great deal, and I saw a great deal of them, but not of the Colonial regiments.

15994. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Not the oversea Colonials?—No.

15995. (Chairman.) You found difficulties with the horses that came from England?—There were difficulties in acclimatising the horse; I think that was really the main difficulty.

15996. It took some time?—It took some time to do.

15997. And there was not time to do it in?—No.

15998. But there was some want of good horsemastership besides?—Of course, there was that, and there always will be that. The watering and the feeding of course, are the two great things, and both were necessarily very irregular indeed, but we had a dépôt at Durban, and we had a lot of Hungarian horses there, and when we had kept them for really a very short time indeed they got quite fat and sleek, in excellent condition. They went up to the front, and they were not hard; they had had their sea voyage, and had been in this hot stewpan, where they throve, but they were not hard, and they all broke down.

15999. Because they were not acclimatised?—Yes.

16000. Did you form any opinion about the Hungarian horse generally?—I think it was too light for the work there—certainly too light.

16001. Are you speaking of the cobs?—Of the cobs, yes. They were horses that were light boned, and I think they were too light for the rough work they had to do. Of course, if you look after a horse, and use really good horsemastership, put it into the stable and have a man to look after it, and do nothing else, a horse like that will do a great deal, but what I found myself (I had one or two of them) was that as long as they had ordinary work to do—I mean an ordinary day's work—they were all right, but directly you overtaxed them they broke down, from want of stamina, I think. Some years ago, when I was at the Austrian manoeuvres, I was told that the Hungarian Cavalry were not mounted on pure-bred Hungarian horses because they were so light, and I believe that was the fact at the time; whether it is so now I do not know.

16002. Regarding entrenchment and cover, you say that the tool that was carried was not well adapted to its purpose?—No, it was a small, light tool. Personally I was always glad to have some of the tools; they got very rare in the end, but the British soldier and the company officers would have none of them. The Boers never omitted to pick one up if it was about, and to my mind it was really better than nothing. We were in a great many places where the tool carts could not get up—they were upset—and then personally I was pleased

Major-General
Sir H. J. 1
Hildyard,
K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
Hildyard,
K. C. B.

19 Feb. 1903.

that we had this tool; but it was not a good one, and, of course, it was an extra thing for the men to carry.

16003. What was it; a light pick?—A light spade; a small heart-shaped spade almost, no pick, so that it was not any good for really heavy work; and I admit it was universally condemned by the company officers and the men. My own opinion is that the only practical way is to carry a certain proportion of spades and picks on mules—to have mule transport for them.

16004. Really good implements?—Yes. It was a curious thing that in the Boer trenches we found any number of picks and shovels, and the pick was of very much better tempered metal than ours was, and our men always got hold of it when they could.

16005. Are you speaking of the picks that were served out as good tools to our men when you say that they were badly tempered metal?—Yes, the entrenching tools; they were not so good as those of the Boers; they did not grip so well.

16006. The men, I think you agree with other evidence which we have heard, found the necessity of cover as soon as they came under fire?—Yes, that is so, very quickly.

16007. Were they able to make proper cover for themselves under those circumstances?—No, they were very bad at first, and I think that was due to their not being able really to practice making proper cover in the field training at home, because you can go over ground, but you cannot dig trenches, and the consequence is that we get very little practice in it. I tried very hard when I was at Aldershot (I was commanding there for a time) to get some ground for the purpose of digging practical trenches in, but really it is so hard, because any ground that you dig on you cannot have your cavalry moving about on afterwards.

16008. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) What practice do you think the Boers had prior to the war in entrenching?—They had very little, but they had the Kaffirs to dig for them. During the war most of the trenches were dug by the Kaffirs.

16009. Did not we employ natives for that purpose?—Yes, we did.

16010. Later?—When we had the natives with us. But, of course, the Boer was stationary; he went to a place and meant to stay there; we moved up to a place during one operation, and we could not carry about any numbers of Kaffirs on purpose to dig, but eventually we organised them to a certain extent.

16011. But you would not say that the Boer was stationary when he went from Laing's Nek to Colenso?—Almost stationary. Every place they dug on they meant to stay on, and if they left it they meant to leave everything they had there, and they left all these picks and shovels, and any amount of ammunition; they took nothing with them. If they were off they were off, and they left the whole thing. But their system of trenches was most intricate.

16012. They brought the natives with them from the Transvaal?—From all round; they got them from all the kraals. But, of course, we wanted every native we could get for drivers.

16013. We had the same supply of natives to call upon as they had to fall back upon?—No, not quite, because where we were operating, as a rule, the natives, or most of them, quitted when the fighting began, others we removed bodily. Then, in Natal, really, we had to pay for them all; we had to act under the law there; there was no law under which we could make them work for nothing, like the Boer does. It is a different system.

16014. Had you not martial law in Natal at that time?—Yes, we had martial law, but we always thought it better to pay the Kaffir for what he did.

16015. That is really the point, that we paid the Kaffir and they impressed him?—Yes; but, of course, apart from that I can think of several occasions on which we had a heavy march and a stiff climb, and then directly we got to the top under fire, we wanted to make our trenches, and I do not think any system of Kaffir labour would have helped us there. It did afterwards when we wanted to make deliberate trenches, and then we organised them, and used them in gangs.

16016. That is just my point. Did not the Boers do the same thing; did they not have long climbs and then make trenches?—No, I do not think so.

16017. (Chairman.) You are satisfied with the discipline of the troops as a whole?—Yes, perfectly.

16018. Considering the amount of intelligence of their class?—Yes. Of course they vary very much. In certain regiments we have plenty of men, for instance, with sufficient intelligence to make good non-commissioned officers, but there are others where it is a most difficult thing to get sufficient good non-commissioned officers. We have not got the men to find them, and it depends on the sources from which the recruits for those particular regiments are drawn.

16019. Do you think that a smaller army with more intelligent men would be more effective than a larger army of the present recruits?—Of course, it depends; you have to define the size of your army. The difficulty of our Army is that we get it so young, that the waste is enormous, and the consequence is that we have to get a very large number of recruits, and you cannot, amongst that number, expect to get the best intelligence of the country. I think if in any moderate degree you reduced the numbers it would not practically have much effect, but whatever army we have, if we cannot have a large one, it ought to be as perfect as it is possible to make it in the matter of training.

16020. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But if you reduced the number you could get better men?—Yes.

16021. You could pay more?—You would go a long way before it was really sensible. After a time, of course, you would feel it. Incidentally, if you had an army like Cromwell's, who paid his men 2s. 6d. a day in the currency of the day, if I remember right, that would get a very fine army, but that would mean a great deal more now.

16022. (Chairman.) Under the present system the only thing is to look to the intelligent training by the officers and non-commissioned officers?—I think so, with proper supervision, of course.

16023. The non-commissioned officer is a difficulty?—Yes, he is a difficulty. They are a very fine body, but in some regiments there is a difficulty in getting enough of them.

16024. Have you any suggestion to make with regard to meeting that difficulty?—No, I think it is local. I think that in some parts of the country the men are not perhaps very intelligent in the very class you want to get, the agricultural class, and I do not see how you are to remedy it.

16025. Then we come to the heading of which I suppose you would speak with great authority—about the training and duties of officers?—Yes. I have only given my own views with regard to that, and I only speak of my own experience, of course.

16026. As regards the regimental officer, you say he needs to be trained in taking responsibility?—Yes, and that, of course, is a very great difficulty—to give duties which will be of a responsible nature.

16027. Is not that difficulty increased very much when the regiments at home are depleted, either for other duties or for other causes?—Yes. Unless you have your regiment kept complete you cannot get responsible work for the officers.

16028. And that is the case now?—That is the case now. There are so many employed men that we have not got enough men to work practically on the ground, particularly after the heavy annual drafts to India and the Colonies.

16029. Then, as to staff, what have you to say?—So far as I had to do with the staff the staff did admirable work. Of course, the system of the staff which had been changed was on its trial, and the allotment of the staff and the officers who had been appointed to it led to some officers doing staff duties who had never been trained in them—I mean the Army Service Corps officers who were appointed to the staff—and that was a defect and a drawback no doubt.

16030. What was the change you mean that had been made?—The change made was that an Army Service Corps officer was appointed as one of the General's staff with a division, and his duties were altogether administrative. He had nothing to do with the Army Service Corps troops, but he looked after supply and transport and contracts in peace, and in war he looked after the camping and water, and those duties which have been rather Quartermaster-General's duties. He had had no training in that; he had not been to the Staff College, and he had no knowledge of it; and it was a weakness. But it is in the power of the General to

arrange his staff in what he thinks best for the Service, and I found no practical disadvantage, because I told off another officer who had been trained to do that portion of the duties, and the Army Service Corps officer was confined to his Army Service Corps duties.

16031. Is it intended that the Army Service Corps officer should go to the Staff College in future?—The system has been changed. Lord Roberts, since he has been Commander-in-Chief, has appointed Quartermaster-General officers, and the Army Service Corps officer is not on the General's staff now.

16032. It has been altered again?—Yes.

16033. And you consider it necessary for an officer to serve on the staff that he should have been through the Staff College?—Yes, I think absolutely. I mean that he will have a very much better knowledge of his work if he has been through it. There is a great deal taught there which is of great value to any officer, and if a good officer goes there he is better for having been. He knows more about staff duties, and what they do in foreign countries, and he has a great deal of practical working in staff duties.

16034. Do you think it is desirable that an officer who serves on the staff should revert to his regiment?—Yes, I think it is good.

16035. That he should not have continuous service on the staff?—No.

16036. That it is desirable both on his own account and also for the regiment?—Yes, I think so, and for the Service at large I think it is good value for him to go back. He comes from his regiment thinking of nothing but his regiment, and that being his principal interest he goes back to it thinking of the Service as a whole. I think that does a great deal of good.

16037. You think it should be the rule that an officer should go back?—Yes.

16038. It has been suggested that he should go back with promotion. Is that necessary?—I do not think you could do that. I think it would cause an enormous amount of jealousy on the part of his brother officers to do that. It is the custom in some foreign armies. I do not think it would do.

16039. It ought to be sufficient for him that he has had his turn on the staff, and then he should go back to his regimental duties?—Yes, because if he is of any value on the staff, when he has done his tour of regimental duties, he will be appointed to the staff again. He gets the advantage probably of going on service whenever there is any campaign of any size, and altogether he gets many advantages from it. I think that it is invaluable for the staff officer to go back and command his regiment, both for the regiment and for the staff as a body.

16040. Speaking generally, were you satisfied with the staff officers?—Yes, the staff officers whom I had with me, and whom I saw, were all men who went out with the first formations, and who had been selected for their capacity in staff duty. Of course, later on, when there were 300,000 men in the country, the staff officers, a great many of them, had not been really specially trained, and it took them time to pick up their duties at all, but with the formations that went out first I think the staff was good.

16041. But if we had to look forward to a war of the same dimensions, we must make some arrangements for having well trained staff officers?—Yes, I think you must. I think the accommodation should be increased at the Staff College, so as to accommodate more. That really is the difficulty now.

16042. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Then, will the number of instructors have to be increased too?—Yes, but not to a great degree.

16043. Could the time be shortened at all?—That, of course, has been recommended very often as an alternative.

16044. Or both combined?—Yes, or combined. Personally, I have not been in favour of it, because I have seen so much good result from officers of different branches of the Service being together for the two years. If they are there a shorter time they will never settle down; then either they have just come or are just going away, and they do not get settled. With the two years they get settled; they get their horses and they settle down and get to know one another thoroughly; and at the end of the two years a man who had come in perhaps with a very fine opinion of himself quite recognises the fact

that a man in another regiment is a more capable man than himself. I think it is of great value.

16045. Subject to the money question, would you like to see the number doubled?—We have 80 there now. The proper number is 60, I think, but we have 80, and I hope we shall be able to keep 80 there. I think it ought certainly to be increased to 80 now, and that would give 40 a year; 40 men a year soon runs up the numbers.

16046. Would you be in favour of selecting men for the A work and the B work at an early stage, so as to put the men on the A work through a shorter course?—Of course, one has rather to enter into the whole constitution of the staff to answer that. In 1871 the idea was first formed, I think, of unifying the staff, having it all one staff. They have got it all one staff in Germany, the general staff, but really that is only the operations staff. The idea was to follow that, and that the General should have a certain number of staff officers all trained in the same way, and that then he should allot them. He says to one man: "You are to look after the water and the bivouacs, the outposts, and security, and the reconnaissance," and another man is to look after the orders of the operations department, and so on, and he allots them as he wishes, and he finds them all up to a certain point trained in all the different things. That is the idea, and that is what I think was aimed at in 1871. At that time we had an Adjutant-General's Branch and a Quartermaster-General's Branch, and it was rather found, I think, that in stations at home, in small stations, and fortresses, and such places, and equally at Aldershot, there was not room for the two. The one branch I mean was always grabbing all the duties, was more active than the other, and the other was left not doing a great deal and still they were in separate departments. So they were put into one. They were appointed after that in the lower grades with a double title, as Deputy Assistant-Adjutant and Quartermaster-General. That went on for many years, till 1888, and then this further development was made, which I have referred to already, when the Army Service Corps officer was brought in to perform the duties classed as B.

16047. But the B officer takes much longer to train, does he not, than the A; he has much more complicated duties to learn—knowledge of ground, selection of camps, etc.?—That is the point, you see; the A officer did that latterly.

16048. As well?—In the war my A officers did the whole of that; they had been trained in those duties.

16049. That is not usual, is it?—Under this system it is the only way you can work it.

16050. Do you approve of the system?—I approve of unifying the staff, or to put it on the system they have in Germany, which is that the general staff is the operations staff. But in Germany, besides the general staff officer, there are three other branches not forming part of the general staff, the intendant's branch, which deals with supply, the auditor's branch, which has to do with law, and the adjutant's branch, which deals with returns and Adjutant-General's duties. They are all the staff, but they do not belong to the general staff at all.

16051. But in India the theory is, is it not, to draw a broader distinction between A and B than we draw here?—That has always been done, but Sir Henry Norman would tell you, I am sure, that there the B, the Quartermaster-General, takes up all the more important things, and the A, the Adjutant-General, has the less important ones, in regard to operations and all those things, and it was so with us once.

16052. The question really that I was asking is whether it is not good to train men for the various branches separately, whether a man could not learn at the Staff College the A duties in a much less time than he would learn the B duties?—Then you have to think which the country will get best value for: taking, we will say, 60 men to the Staff College and training them in the duties that will enable them to do useful staff work in any situation on service, or training only half to do that and the other half for the minor duties, which, after all, are not perhaps so important. I think that is how I look at it. When I knew the Staff College we had a really practical course which did, I think, cover all the staff duties, and covered them from a practical point of view. We went into the country and went over very varied ground, the greater part of the South and East of England, during the time that they

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
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19 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
Huddyard,
K.C.B.
19 Feb. 1903.

were there, and they worked out schemes of every kind and description: Quartermaster-General's schemes, supply schemes, railway schemes, and everything that they could, I think, really be asked to do on service. They had to think about all these things from a practical point of view, and I am sure when they were in a position of responsibility in the field (and many of them have told me so since), they found that their teaching was of the greatest possible value to them.

16053. Some men are not fitted for that kind of work; they have not got an eye for country; and yet they may be excellent people in an office for Adjutant-General's work?—Still, you would be surprised to find how much they will improve if you recognise that they are not very good at it, and take the trouble to make them learn, and if you take them over country and over ground where they can learn. I was very much struck with that when I was at the Staff College. There were weak men—I mean men whom you recognised as weak as soon as you got them, men perhaps not of great character or of great capacity; you warned them, you told them that they were weak in their work, that there were certain things that they must do, and that if they did not do them they would have to leave the college. And, really, some of those men at the end of the term, so far as knowledge and instruction went, were excellent, very good indeed, they improved enormously. Of course, you cannot alter character. If you get a man who has not a very strong character you cannot give him character, but you can teach him a great deal.

16054. But if the man who had not an eye for country could be passed through their examinations for the A work, and pass a shorter time there, you could put so many more men through the Staff College?—Yes, you could do that.

16055. That is really the question I am aiming at?—Then I should almost be inclined to wonder whether it is worth while sending them there at all.

16056. How can you tell till they get there?—You have the Adjutant-General's duties and Quartermaster-General's duties; and now we have got one Quartermaster-General's officer at Aldershot who will do the duties, I take it, that have always been done by the Quartermaster-General's branch of the Army. That means that the Adjutant-General's branch has got no duties that want a great deal of instruction; they are duties of returns and duties of parades and duties of military law which you can learn anywhere. But what I feel in my own mind is, that when you come to get on service, and you want the Adjutant-General's officers to do the work, because your Quartermaster-General's officer has gone sick, or been shot, or something has befallen him, then it will be a pity that they should not have had the same training; and, therefore, I would put them all through the same course whether they were going to be Adjutant-General's officers or Quartermaster-General's officers.

16057. Would not that difficulty be met also by passing more men through the Staff College, because you would probably have a second man then as a substitute who had gone through the Quartermaster-General's work and could take it up?—Well, they run down very quickly, I think, in war.

16058. But instead of having an Adjutant-General's man who had not really proved himself competent to do the B work, you would have a second and competent Quartermaster-General's man to do it?—Yes, that, I think, is the intention now; the one would do a portion of the work, that is the field intelligence work, and the reconnaissance work, and that kind of thing; and the other would do the rest of the Quartermaster-General's work. But if you have a campaign of any duration the probability is that one, or possibly both, will want replacing, or it may happen anyhow, and the lower you get the more you feel it. I remember in Egypt in 1882 there were two of us who were Deputy-Assistant-Adjutant and Quartermaster-Generals (as they were called in those days), with a division, and the division was detached. Then we had to divide our duties. It was very hard for one to do all the legitimate duties he had to do, because it was more really than he could do, and the other had rather less; so we arranged that we did about equal on the day's work. But we had not hard and fast lines for the duties.

16059. But what you call the Adjutant-General turn of mind is not the same class of mind as the mind that takes up the Quartermaster-General's work, is it?—

It is a little difficult when you get to that, I think. I have found that really where you have got a good capable staff officer who was a good rider, a quick intelligent man, and had a good eye for country and so on, whether he was of one branch or the other, he was a thoroughly good staff officer.

16060. That I would quite agree with?—But I think that is what you want; that is what is indispensable.

16061. That is rather what I am suggesting, that the men who are found at the Staff College after six months not to have that general capacity, but are perfectly well qualified for questions of military law and discipline (which are similar questions) should be passed out of the Staff College so as to leave more room for the practical men, the men who could ride well, and have a good knowledge of country and show a general capacity for B work?—Of course, then, you have the difficulty of putting the A man in an inferior position.

16062-3. Quite so?—That is the difficulty. Here at home in our Army possibly at times the B man has been put in an inferior position, but that had a bad effect on the B man, as it must have, directly you exalted one at the expense of the other. And really I think the more men you can have trained thoroughly the more you can employ them afterwards; the man who is best at the B duties can be employed in the B duties in war, but I would have them all trained the same.

16064. Which is more important in war, the B man or the A man?—It depends, of course, practically upon who does the operations.

16065. That is the B man practically?—He does not now.

16066. I beg your pardon. I do not mean who does it now, but under the system such as the Commander-in-Chief is introducing it would be the B man who would take up all those things?—Absolutely.

16067. Therefore he is really the man in war who is the more important?—He would be.

16068. Questions of military law, discipline, and so on, are less important than a knowledge of country?—Yes, and it is a question whether they ought to be staff duties at all. But it is a very difficult question; if you once get one branch of the staff which is above the other, the other must deteriorate very much, as I am sure you will understand.

16069. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Do you not think that it is more expedient that all officers should enter the Staff College on the same footing and work through till they came out at the end, and that there should be no distinction?—I think so.

16070. When you have got the men passed out you (supposing you were Commandant of the Staff College) would recommend that they should be employed in such and such positions for which you thought they were most fit?—Yes.

16071. It seems to me it would be a fatal thing to have half the officers A and half the officers B; it would be sure to cause jealousy?—I do not think you would get the best value out of it. I think it is much better to train them all thoroughly, and then, if you have weak ones, some of them you get rid of, and some at the end of the time you say are useful if there are no better men available, and the rest of them you would take according to their characteristics and their qualifications, and put them into whatever suits them best.

16072. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) To what extent, if any, is the instruction at Sandhurst a preparation for the Staff College?—It is a preparation only in so far as it teaches the cadet the first rudiments of the military art, nothing more.

16073. So that you think it would be just as well that they should enter from the Universities as from Sandhurst, so far as the training of the Staff College is concerned?—To the Army, yes. It would not have really very much influence on that, I think.

16074. (*Viscount Esher.*) But at the present time, of course, there is competition. You admit to the Staff College by a system of competition?—Yes.

16075. Do you approve of that; do you think that is the best system?—I think it is the best system as a system.

16076. How do you test for entrance into the College such qualities as riding and having an eye to country, and so on?—The Commanding Officer, to begin with, has to be responsible absolutely that a man is calculated

to make a good staff officer, and that he has the qualifications, that he is a good rider, that he is a thoroughly good regimental officer.

16077. But do you mark all those things in the competition?—No.

16078. Then do you not see that the effect of your principle of competition is that you may very likely pass in a man who happens to be superior in book work, who possesses those qualities, and who is possibly inferior in the other qualities which you say are essential in the Staff College?—That is so. But he is in the riding school the day after he joins.

16079. But it is conceivable under the present system of competition that you may reject a man who possesses the very highest qualities that you require in a Staff Officer; is not that so?—I think it seldom happens. There have been cases where it has been mooted that an officer should be rejected, and in the cases that have come to my notice the Commanding Officer has always said, "Well, this officer has certain qualifications for the Staff; he is a very capable man, and will be of good value on the Staff."

16080. But have you ever considered whether any other system of admission is practicable?—Of course, the other system now is nomination.

16081. Yes, I know that?—Well, nomination is excellent so long as it is not carried too far. Directly you begin to nominate too many people you get a lower standard.

16082. But would it not be possible to have a system of nomination plus a qualifying examination? Have you ever considered that as a possibility?—Yes, they have to do that; that really is the system now.

16083. And do you think that such a system as that, if it was carried through in its entirety, would not be superior to a competitive system?—I am afraid not. I think that up to a certain point the nomination system is good. When you have to look round and seek to get men for nomination, then I do not know that it is. But the plan I have thought of, and I am rather inclined to do it (which would in a sense be the same thing), is that there should be no certificates, but that the Commanding Officer should be called upon to select his best officer, who has the most likely qualifications for the Staff, and send him to the Staff College. I think possibly you might do that.

16084. I suppose you would admit that the larger number of regimental officers that you can pass through the Staff College the better?—Yes, I think so.

16085. Then under present conditions if you were to attempt to increase the Staff College accommodation it would cost a very large sum of money. It has been considered, and it has been rejected on that ground?—Yes.

16086. Have you ever thought of any other means of increasing the number of officers to go through the Staff College; would it not be possible, for example, to shorten the course?—I am satisfied with this, that if you shorten the course you will lose a very valuable part of the present course of instruction. I am quite satisfied that the longer course makes for the formation of a more thoroughly trained open-minded Staff Officer. That is my own opinion. Of course, it might be for expediency necessary to do that, but you would be bringing it down to a lower standard.

16087. Are modern languages taught at the Staff College?—Not now. They were taught, and they are taught now, I think, voluntarily, but they are not obliged to take them.

16088. Is not that a waste of time at the Staff College—would it not be equally possible for officers to learn modern languages away from the Staff College?—Yes, it would. But you get great value from their learning them at the Staff College.

16089. Why?—A man is at home for a certain time, and gives his whole time to work, and it is an opportunity for learning languages.

16090. Would it not be possible to tempt an officer to learn modern languages without giving him that special instruction at the Staff College, by giving him some advantage either in pay or in some other way, if he qualified in a modern language?—Yes, if you gave him a substantial addition to his pay.

16091. That might be cheaper than doubling the numbers at the Staff College?—At the present time I forget the number of officers qualifying as interpreters in three languages only.

16092. But those are very difficult languages. What are they?—Russian, Turkish, and Arabic, and they were carefully selected on account of the very few officers we had who knew Russian in 1885, when, I think, they were introduced; there are not very many, and they have cost a great deal.

16093. I am only suggesting to you things the effect of which, if carried out, might possibly increase the capacity of the Staff College. Take what you call a practical course: is there not a great deal in that of practice in knowledge of ground, and so on, and could not officers be trained away from the Staff College cheaper than they are trained at the Staff College in those respects, say on Salisbury Plain or anywhere you like. You have courses now in musketry and courses in engineering, and all sorts of courses which take place at different places. Would it not be possible to have a course of practical instruction for Staff Officers, not necessarily at Camberley?—I think it would be quite possible if you make efficient schools at those places, but it means instructional staff, and it means quarters, and it means stabling, and it means establishments generally.

16094. But it does not mean necessarily theoretical teaching in the building?—But there is very little theoretical teaching in the building at the Staff College. They are out and about in every county of England half the year. The most valuable part of the teaching is done by the staff rides in Essex and in Sussex, and in every part of the country.

16095. But then if that is the case, why should it not be possible in those great camps like Aldershot and Salisbury Plain to have always a course going on?—We cannot do it in a course. We should have to have a regular school for it; it would not save money. We are constantly training in these places now in the form of staff rides. A staff ride is what educates the officers in ground, and the more of them we have the better; and from the Staff College, where we have the machinery and the selected men to go out with the officers on the ground, we can teach it better than we can anywhere else. Of course, if we detach those instructors, and can get equally good ones elsewhere, we can do it elsewhere. But we cannot. What does Sir Evelyn Wood do when he wants to have a good staff ride for instruction for his officers? He asks the Staff College to lend him officers of its instructions staff, because he knows that they will do the instruction in that work well and thoroughly, and the results will be good.

16096. Supposing, then, we admit that it is desirable to increase the number of officers who are training for the staff, do you think there is no solution except increasing the capacity of the Staff College?—I would not say that. I think it is possible that we might have men attached to a course at the Staff College, and let them take a partial course in training, so long as we do not interfere with the permanent training of the men we have there now; I think we might do that. I think they would learn a certain amount there.

16097. And you think that experience has shown that no course shorter than two years would really make an efficient staff officer; is that your opinion?—That is my opinion. Of course, the Staff College has not always been praised, but if you look to the record of the men in the war in South Africa who have been trained at the Staff College you will find it a very good one. You will find column commanders Staff College men; you will find the chief staff officers Staff College men; you will find commanders of regiments Staff College men, and mounted infantry commanders Staff College men; all doing good work. And I think when that is so it shows that the body of men trained at the Staff College is a good body, and that the results of the actual course there are good.

16098. (Chairman.) With regard to supplies, I do not think there is anything to be added to what you have said?—No, I do not think there is. We were very well off where I was, of course.

16099. Or with regard to transport, except that I should just like to ask you whether your transport was regimental transport as a whole?—Yes, it was.

16100. Are you in favour of regimental transport?—I am in favour of regimental transport whenever we can afford to have it. The difficulty is that we want so much transport; that if we have regimental transport as well as the general transport we want so much, but certainly with the Natal force the regimental transport had the effect of allowing the troops never to be without their food. I do not say it would have been so on every

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
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19 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
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19 Feb. 1903.

occasion; and when the time came that the regiments were more permanently located, and not moving about so much, then we took their regimental transport away from them.

16101. And used it as general transport?—And used it as general transport. Really it is very much the same in the end whether we have the regimental transport and on occasion use the regimental transport as general transport, or whether we have a larger general transport and use it for regimental transport whenever it is wanted. The regimental transport is the more luxurious of the two.

16102. With regard to the Medical and Engineer services, you do not wish to add anything?—No, I do not think so.

16103. Then as to guns, it is admitted, is it not now, that we must have longer range guns?—Yes, that is so; they are actually introduced really—the heavy batteries.

16104. But, subject to that observation, is there anything that you wish to say about the guns that were used in the war?—No, there is nothing further.

16105. You say that the naval guns, while they had longer range, were seldom effective on account of the impossibility of accurate ranging and observation of the target?—I would modify that rather. I would not say they were seldom effective, but that the result was very much modified by the difficulties of observation.

16106. What does that mean?—That the difficulties of observation led to the results not being as great as they might have been.

16107. But what was the difficulty of observation?—They never had a target.

16108. The Boers did not offer a target?—No, you never knew where they were.

16109. But the lyddite shell, you say, did not cause much actual damage?—No, the lyddite was a disappointment as a whole, I think; the Boers got accustomed to it.

16110. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What do you mean by "the unevenness in the propelling power of the charges"?—That was how they accounted for it, and particularly with the Navy, I think. I remember getting a gun up on one occasion in a hurry, and the first shot went right into the middle of what we wanted them to fire at, but they fired for half an hour afterwards without one shot going near the same spot.

16111. It did not range so far?—No, it ranged unevenly—the ammunition.

16112. Was that cordite?—Yes. I suppose it was climatic influence really.

16113. Do you know where that cordite came from?—I do not know.

16114. (*Chairman.*) You think it is dangerous to base specific conclusions on a war of the character of that in South Africa?—Yes, I think so.

16115. Especially with regard to Cavalry, because there was no regular Cavalry employed against us?—Yes.

16116. Still, mounted men will be required?—Yes, and cavalry will be required. What I would mean rather to say by that is, that we should not say that mounted men generically have taken the place of cavalry, and shown that they can take the place of cavalry in future, because I think even as it was the cavalry there did very good service indeed, but not having had any regular opposing cavalry, the necessity for their services was not so apparent as it would have been otherwise.

16117. But the importance of mounted troops has been shown quite enough to make it necessary to organise those troops in any part of the Empire where we can get them effectually?—Yes.

16118. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Had you much mounted infantry under you at any time?—We raised a good deal, and they did very good work, but they require some time to train. We had all the frontier to the east which we defended with mounted infantry, and they did excellent work.

16119. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were they taken from the regiments you already had?—Yes.

16120. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Could they ride fairly well?—They rode very pluckily, but, of course, the horses out there did not want much riding; there was not too much kick about them.

16121. (*Chairman.*) With regard to infantry you recommend the use of broad fronts?—Yes, I think that was the real lesson—the use of broad fronts.

16122. And that means greater training?—Yes.

16123. So that the men may act and the officers may act individually?—Yes.

16124. Is there anything else that you wish to add?—No, I think not.

16125. (*Viscount Esher.*) There is one question I want to ask you. You know the report of Mr. Akers Douglas's Committee (*the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army, Cd. 982, 1902*)?—Yes.

16126. I dare say you remember the paragraph in which the committee say by "no part of the evidence laid before them have the committee been more impressed than by that which shows in the clearest manner the prevalence among the junior commissioned ranks of a lack of technical knowledge and skill, and of any wish to study the science and master the art of their profession. Several causes appear to have combined to bring about this state of things, the gravity of which cannot be exaggerated. From the evidence laid before them the committee are driven to conclude that the dominant cause is that the promotion of the young officer is not dependent on the zeal and ability which he may show." Do you not think it might be desirable in the promotion of young officers to the rank of lieutenant or captain to take into consideration the work they have done by passing through the courses of different kinds—departing, in fact, at that stage of their career from promotion purely by seniority?—It is a dangerous thing to do. The British youth develops very slowly very often—that is our difficulty. We want to get them young, because they are more adaptable; we get them young, and then they take a long time to develop. We like a University candidate, because he has developed to a certain extent, and he comes and he gets a grip of whatever he has to do—he has got a broader mind, partly because he is older. I think myself that it is desirable to have a certain proportion anyhow who are older than those we get at the present time.

16127. But, you see, the words that they lay special stress on are "zeal and ability." Can you think of any particular way or method of improving them?—Yes, I can think of ways and methods; the difficulty is to say really whether your ways and methods will prove better than what has already been done. But what has led a great deal to all this examination. The young officer has to go up for certain examinations, and it is done really always outside the commanding officer. When a second lieutenant goes up for examination in what they call A and B, which is regimental duties and drill, he is examined by a board, with a couple of officers of another regiment. From my point of view the commanding officer is the man really to be responsible for those young officers' teaching. He is the man who is most interested in their knowing their drill, and the interior economy of the arm, and doing their duties properly; but by the examination he is deprived more or less of any authority in the matter. Therefore, I would say (under reservation so far as not having put it forward as a practical proposition) if you can abolish the examination, and if you can make the responsibility of the commanding officer real you will get the officer to know more about his work. That is my feeling with regard to A and B. Then when you get on to the examinations in the higher rank, the same thing applies equally with the reservations. You must have your company commander the real person—he must be there as the company commander whom you hold responsible for certain things, and he must teach his young officers, and he must see that they come up to the standard required by the commanding officer.

16128. And would you make their promotion dependent upon that?—Yes, certainly, and I would make it dependent upon the commanding officer putting them forward as fitted in every way for promotion, not to the rank of captain, but to the rank of company commander, to the command of a company in war, and then you can put whatever pressure you like, or inspection if you like, through the general officer of the brigade or the commanding officer, and through any machinery you choose to create, on the general officer. But that is the only way, to my mind, that you can get a real responsibility for the instruction of officers; you must have the officers with their companies, and you must have the men in the ranks.

16129. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Had you the 4·7 gun with you at all?—Yes, several.

16130. Were you satisfied, as a rule, with the firing from that gun where they could get at and see their object?—It was uneven, as I was saying. It was represented to me to be owing to the charge—that the ammunition rather deteriorated, or, at any rate, got unequal in strength.

16131. It is affected in various ways; it is affected even by the heat of the day; it will fire differently in the morning from what it does at noon, and so on?—Yes.

16132. But so far as you could judge from the circumstances of the case the firing was as good as you could expect, taking that into consideration?—Yes, I think so.

16133. And were the shells effective?—Yes.

16134. They had lyddite shells, I think?—Yes, and they fired an enormous quantity, but the difficulty was that you had to fire an enormous quantity before you were likely to get any result.

16135. Did you hear any complaints about the erosion of either the 4·7 or the 12-pounder gun?—No; during the time that they were with us they were all right.

16136. And did the 12-pounder turn out a serviceable gun?—Yes. I did not care much for the 12-pounder gun.

16137. It is supposed to have a very much better range, a range of 8,000 yards, against the field artillery range of 5,000 yards?—Yes, but it has not got the range for shrapnel, and that is the point.

16138. You wanted the shrapnel with the longer fuses really?—Yes, that is what we wanted.

16139. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount-Royal.*) Of the machine guns which did you consider the most serviceable—the Maxim or the Colt?—I think the Maxim is the best all round gun myself, though it is not so portable, of course, as the Colt. The Colt may be better with mounted troops.

16140. With regard to the so-called galloping gun, was it very useful?—Yes, it was of great value certainly.

16141. In many cases was it of greater value than those carried on tripods?—Yes, I think it was with cavalry.

16142. And more particularly, I suppose, in the Free State and such open country?—Yes, I dare say it was.

16143. (*Chairman.*) Is there any incident in connection with the military operations to which you wish to call attention?—There is one point that I see in the staff diary of the 2nd Brigade on which I think I was misled, and it is a point which has created a certain amount of interest, viz., as to the guns at Colenso, and the loss of the guns. I have put down in the Staff Diary that owing to the guns having come under heavy rifle fire at a distance of 400 yards they were put out of action. That was our impression at the time. Of course, we went back, and we left the guns where they were, and that was our impression. But, from my general knowledge afterwards, and going over the ground and talking to the Boers who had been there at the time, and so on, my impression now is that the fire that had put them out of action was 1,300 yards, and not 400. It is rather an interesting point.

16144. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) From where?—From what they called the Red Kopjes, on the other side of the river. I could not find cartridges or trenches or anything where we had supposed the Boers to be at 400 yards. But the effect of the fire was equally effective at 1,300 yards; it put them out of action. But that made it much more difficult, of course, to meet their fire.

16145. Those bushes were not lined?—Not at all.

16146. (*Viscount Esher.*) Not on the near side of the river?—No.

16147. Your impression was that the fire came from the near side of the river?—That is so.

16148. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were they firing from the near side?—I cannot find that they were; it is rather an interesting point.

(*Chairman.*) I think we had evidence just the other way the other day.

16149. (*Sir John Edge.*) How soon after this affair at Colenso did you go over the ground to look for cartridges?—It was not very long afterwards. Colenso was fought on the 15th December, and it was when we were going there again, when we went up and did get in; about a couple of months afterwards, I suppose.

16150. Did the Kaffirs carry away the cartridges?—No, and you know you find cartridges in the ground a long time afterwards.

16151. If they are not carried away, of course, you will?—Yes.

16152. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were there any trenches there?—No.

16153. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was the river fordable at that point?—It was fordable with difficulty.

16154. They would have had to swim?—They could have got across a drift there.

16155. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You saw no marks of men having been there for any time?—None.

16156. (*Sir John Edge.*) Do you know where the Boers came from to that donga where our men took refuge?—They came from the other side of the river. They had a bridge; it was broken down, but they had a footpath there where the men got across, and they came by that footpath down to the donga where our men were.

16157. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) How did they get the guns away; in what direction did they take them away?—Nearly due north.

16158. Was there any drift that they could get the guns across there?—Yes, there is a drift there, not very far from the bridge. I do not know whether they went over that drift or not, but there is a drift there.

16159. That they could get the guns across?—Yes.

16160. (*Chairman.*) Were you in command at that time?—I was in command of the 2nd Brigade.

16161. Was your brigade present at that particular spot?—At Colenso, do you mean?

16162. During those operations when the guns were taken?—Yes, it was at the battle of Colenso.

16163. And you were there?—Yes, we were there.

16164. Near the guns?—Yes, we covered the guns. I sent up the regiment to get between the railway and the guns, and cover the guns by their fire, which they did.

16165. And were you in a position to see these bushes at that time?—Yes.

16166. And you were under the impression that the fire did come from them?—Yes, we all thought that.

16167. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was the objective of your men's fire on that occasion?—The objective was at those kopjes on the other side of the river.

16168. 1,300 yards away?—Yes.

16169. That is what your men were firing at?—Yes.

16170. Was there any fire at the place where they thought the Boers were, on the south side of the river?—I did not see any.

16171. (*Chairman.*) Did none of our men fire at the bushes?—I do not think so. I should not be prepared to say that.

16172. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But the bulk of the fire was at the 1,300 yards' objective?—Yes, I believe it was almost all there.

16173. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Of course the Boers were using smokeless powder?—Yes, the Boers used smokeless powder that you could not see. But what really happened I think was this, that Colonel Long with his guns went forward to this position, and when they got into action, they swept the kopjes—those red kopjes—and the Boer was unable to fire. And then when he finished his ammunition he could not get up more ammunition, and the Boers got into action again, and put the guns out of action, but I believe, from all inquiries I made, that it was at 1,300 yards. It shows the efficiency of fire in that clear atmosphere where you have a clear target. Of course all these guns were lying out under the sight of the kopjes.

16174. Could they have got the guns away that night?—They could have got the guns away that night by remaining there till night in the positions they were in. The reason that was not done was that the Commander on the spot saw that the men were exhausted, and saw what they would have had to undergo, from want of

Major-General
Sir H. J. I.
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K.C.B.

19 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir H. J. T.
Hildyard,
K.C.B.
19 Feb. 1903.

water, the sun, and so on, if they had lain out there all day, and he ordered their withdrawal.

16175. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Would there have been much danger in remaining in that position?—Oh, we should have lost men. If we had not tried to move, I do not suppose the losses need necessarily have been very great, but the physical suffering, no doubt, would have been great, because it was a very exceptionally oppressive day, and, lying in the sand there was very trying work.

16176. (*Chairman.*) What I understand is that, so far as putting the guns out of action, the difference of range that the Boers fired at does not, in your opinion, make much difference?—It did not make any difference.

16177. It was just as effective?—Just as effective. The volume of fire that came from this place was extraordinary.

16178. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But, as regards removing the guns at night, that would make a difference; the Boers would have had to cross the river and come 1,300 yards?—Yes, if we had remained on the spot where we were, there is not the slightest doubt that the guns would have been removed that night. It is all a question of comparison as regards the evils, and, in the judgment of the man on the spot, which, after all, has to be made on the spot at the time, he thought that, in the interests of the men, it was better to withdraw them.

16179. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other incident in your experience that you would wish to mention?—I do not think there is, what I should call, a debatable incident like that.

16180. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Have you anything to say about Willow Grange?—It might be as well to say that, first of all, I left Southampton with the whole of the Brigade as forming a part of the First Division, which was to land at Cape Town, and until I got to Cape Town I supposed that that was the destination of the Brigade. When we got to Cape Town I went on shore and saw Sir Redvers Buller. He told me that Ladysmith had been invested (which we had not known), and that there was nobody in Natal to speak of, and that I had better go on with my Brigade to Natal. I would like to say here that before that, to my knowledge, the intention of Sir Redvers Buller was to move on the Orange Free State side, that is where he

meant to go forward, and Natal would have been a subsidiary business. However, this had happened in Natal, and he thought, in all the circumstances of the case, that he had better send my Brigade on to Natal, so I went there. He told me that he would reinforce me shortly, and General Clery was coming on at once. We got to Natal on the 12th of November, I think, and went straight up to Pietermaritzburg. My intention then was to concentrate at Maritzburg, but the other regiments of the brigade had not arrived; so I went up with the regiment with me, and eventually took it up to Estcourt, where there was a garrison under Colonel Wolfe Murray, who was commanding the communications. My intention then was to concentrate the rest at Maritzburg as they arrived, supply them with transport, and move the brigade up as a whole to Estcourt. I waited at Maritzburg till General Clery arrived there, and then I went up with the rest of the brigade, except one battalion, to Estcourt, and being at Estcourt, what I felt to be my position was that I must remain at Estcourt under all conditions, so as to hold out a hand to Ladysmith if Ladysmith got through; if they broke out of Ladysmith, I thought we ought to be on the spot at Estcourt, and at the same time at Estcourt we covered the concentration of the troops coming up behind. That was the situation. Then the Boers sent a force down under Joubert and avoiding Estcourt, came down to Mooi River. General Barton had got there, and had troops there which he was assembling; and what I hoped to do was to attack the Boers at the same time as General Barton did from Mooi River, and I tried to arrange that; however, it did not come off. But there was a gun and a laagar between him and me which I attacked, and we were very unfortunate in the weather; there was a terrible hail-storm which led to great difficulties in every way, physically and otherwise; the gun was removed, and the surprise was not as complete as we had hoped it would be. Looking to all the circumstances of the case, I thought then it was better, instead of remaining there between Estcourt and Willow Grange, to take the force back to Estcourt, so as to be concentrated there ready to move either way, and that was what I did. I would wish to say that the situation at this time was made more difficult by the absence of maps of any description of the country south of the Tugela and of any properly organised intelligence service. I do not think there is anything else I wish to mention.

THIRTY-NINTH DAY.

Friday, 20th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Honourable The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Honourable The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Honourable Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field-Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E.
The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, *Secretary.*

Major-General G. BARTON, C.B., C.M.G., called and examined.

Major-General G.
Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.
20 Feb. 1903.

16181. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to notes (*vide Appendix, page 657, post*), upon which I will ask you questions. You held a command in the South African War, I think?—Yes. I commanded the 6th Infantry Brigade, which was mobilised at the commencement of the war.

16182. Was it one of the brigades that was in the 1st Army Corps?—The brigade was not in the Army Corps, because it was composed of four battalions that were got together to form a brigade; it was not one of the complete brigades at Aldershot, nor was it a complete brigade in the Army Corps at that time. Four battalions were brought together and formed into one brigade, and I was appointed to command it at the time of the mobilisation of the Reserves.

16183. You mean according to the scheme of mobilisation, it was not one of the brigades; but it was one

of the brigades that went to South Africa?—Certainly.

16184. And it went to Natal, I think?—It went to Natal. I arrived at Durban myself on the afternoon of the 17th of November.

16185. And you served in Natal up to the relief of Ladysmith?—Up to the relief of Ladysmith, until the 9th of April. Then I went to the Cape Colony.

16186. And then you took part with the 10th Division?—I took part with the 10th Division in the operations in Kimberley, in connection with the relief of Mafeking, and the occupation of the Western Transvaal.

16187. Was that under Lord Methuen?—It was under Sir Archibald Hunter. Lord Methuen was acting in co-operation with us in the Orange River Colony, I believe at Boshof.

16188. That is what I was thinking of. Are you of opinion that the force which was designed for the campaign was an adequate force?—I do not think it was sufficient, considering that the whole of the Boer forces were mounted; and looking to the enormous distance from the base, either from Natal or from Cape Town, I do not think it could possibly be held to be sufficient, as it was almost certain that the Orange Free State would join forces with the Transvaal.

16189. It is on that assumption that you think the force was inadequate?—And also on account of the doubtful loyalty of the Dutch in Cape Colony and in Natal. They were sure to be in sympathy with the Boers, even if they did not actively support them.

16190. You are speaking now of numbers?—Yes.

16191. Did you ever form any idea in your own mind what numbers would have been required?—I cannot say that I did before the war.

16192. But I mean, from your experience in the war, what number do you think would have been required?—I could not say that I have actually formed any estimate of the number that would have been required. I have never actually considered it.

16193. But for the proper defence of the Colonies from an invasion of the Boers a much larger force than was in the Colonies before you arrived was, in your opinion, necessary?—Yes, I think undoubtedly necessary.

16194. And with regard to the Army Corps itself, was that a sufficient reinforcement?—So far as I know, the only force in South Africa before the Army Corps went there was the force in Natal. With the exception of one battalion, or two, perhaps, in Cape Colony, the main force was under Sir George White in Natal, and, so far as I am aware, that was the only force actually in the Colony.

16195. But the question I put was whether you thought the Army Corps was a sufficient force to send out to reinforce the forces that were previously to that time in the two Colonies?—I do not think so, because the Boers, in sending their ultimatum, certainly intended to take the advantage of being on the spot and of the great distance that we were from home, to strike a decisive blow, and settle the matter altogether, before we could get a sufficient force in the country.

16196. Then when you arrived in Natal the main force was enclosed in Ladysmith?—Yes, they were shut up in Ladysmith when I arrived, and had been for some considerable time.

16197. That being the consequence of there not having been a sufficient force previously?—Certainly.

16198. But in the *précis* which you have given us you say that the force would have been sufficient if the Cavalry had not been shut up in Ladysmith. What do you mean by that?—In answering the question in the memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575, post*), that was sent me by the Secretary to the Commission, I referred to the force in Natal, meaning that the force that was landed by Sir Redvers Buller in Natal would have been sufficient for the purpose we had to carry out, provided that we had had the Cavalry that were in Ladysmith. But I do not wish to criticise the fact of the Cavalry having been left in Ladysmith. I merely remark that had we had that Cavalry, I think we should have had sufficient to carry out Sir Redvers Buller's intentions at the time of Colenso—that is what I was referring to—without the assistance of another division, which was afterwards waited for, Sir Charles Warren's division. I say that the force that was in Natal at the time that the other reinforcements arrived there would have been sufficient to carry out the relief of Ladysmith and clear the Boers out of Natal, provided we had had that Cavalry from Ladysmith.

16199. Or you might put it in another way—provided you had had the same amount of Cavalry from home?—Certainly, if we had had the same amount of Cavalry from home; but, of course, the raising of a mounted force took time and caused considerable delay. I think there were only 300 mounted men outside of Ladysmith the day I landed.

16200. Were they Irregulars?—They were various. There was a squadron of Imperial Light Horse raised in Johannesburg; there was a force of Natal Mounted Police used for military purposes; there was a Mounted Infantry company which, I believe, had come down from Ladysmith; and there were a few details, making

up, I believe, altogether about 300 mounted men at Estcourt. They were the only mounted men outside Ladysmith at the time I landed, but on that same day Colonel Thorneycroft got together 230 men also. That was the only mounted force in Natal outside of Ladysmith on the day I landed.

16201. Colonel Thorneycroft did enlist more men afterwards?—Yes, it was increased afterwards.

16202. You have been good enough to give us some heads with regard to the quality of the men?—Yes. I think the quality of the men, speaking of the Infantry, was excellent.

16203. You are speaking in general terms there?—I am speaking generally of all the Infantry that I came across. With regard to my own brigade, I think they were excellent; their physique was very good, their morale was excellent, their shooting was very good, and their marching was extraordinary—wonderfully good.

16204. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What regiments had you in your brigade?—I had the Royal Fusiliers, the Royal Scotch Fusiliers, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

16205. (*Chairman.*) And they had all come from home?—Yes, they had all come from home.

16206. Were there many Reserve men in those regiments?—Yes. I should think certainly more than half of the men were Reservists. I could not say exactly, although I can easily obtain information upon that point from the depôts of the corps.

16207. Did you find any difference between them and the other men?—No, I cannot say that we found any difference. The first Reservists we obtained were extremely good men.

16208. Were they quite fit for the work?—Quite fit for the work; they were the men of between seven and twelve years of service, in their very prime, the very best period of their service, probably. They had completed seven years in the Regular Army, and joined the Reserve; they had not yet completed twelve years since the date of enlistment.

16209. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) But their shooting was not so good?—When I say in my *précis* that their shooting requires improvement, what I mean is that I think the Reservists should have more opportunity of shooting than they at present have had. Since many of these men left the colours we have had a new rifle, and when we had the new rifle—the Lee-Metford—given to us our Reservists were called up to do training, but it was only two days' or three days' training, and that was the sum total of it; and I consider that the Reservists should have some opportunity of having rifle practice. That is what I meant by improvement.

16210. Ordinarily they do not have rifle practice?—Ordinarily they do not have it. There is no regular system of the Reservists in the country having annual practice in rifle shooting.

16211. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There would be a practical difficulty rather in getting men away from civil employment for that purpose, would there not?—I think no doubt there would be difficulty. I am only speaking from a military point of view, of what I consider necessary; you want to keep the eye in by a little practice. We are constantly changing the system of firing, and constantly getting new rifles.

16212. I believe when we got our new Lee-Metford rifle the Reservists were called up?—Yes, they were when we had the new rifle. When the new Lee-Metford was issued the Reservists were called out, as I have said already, for, I think, two or three days' training in the handling of the rifle. I think it is very doubtful whether they then did any firing with it in many cases; some did, no doubt, but I am speaking as to the making of the Reservists permanently more efficient. I consider that they should have some opportunity of rifle shooting annually.

16213. (*Chairman.*) Could you trace any difference in the shooting of the Reservists and the others?—One is hardly able to judge of that.

16214. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) They might be called up entirely ignorant of the weapon they had to use, if it was a new weapon?—Certainly.

16215. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You thought our men shot better than the Boers?—I think our shooting was quite as good as that of the Boers. When there were Boers firing at us we could always move them, although

Major-General G. Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

Major-General G. Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.
20 Feb. 1903.

we seldom had a target in the attack. If it was a case of merely shooting at one another from any point, we could generally move them; you could tell by the sound; you very often could not see, but you could tell fairly well by the sound. We did not consider that the Boers shot so extraordinarily well; we thought they shot very badly; we gave them very good opportunities of shooting us, and they gave us very few opportunities of shooting at them. I do not consider that they were good shots. I think that if we had changed places, and the Boers had attacked the places we attacked, we should have made far more effective shooting.

16216. (*Chairman.*) When you say you gave them more opportunity, you mean that you attacked places?—Yes, we attacked places. You have no target when you attack under the present conditions of smokeless powder in a country like Natal—you do not see anybody. If you are attacking a ridge you do not see anybody, with smokeless powder and their being so extraordinarily well trained by nature and habit to lie still. Very often our men move about a little too much when they are defending a place.

16217. Was there a difficulty in getting your men to take cover?—I do not think there was difficulty in getting them to take cover.

16218. They did not take it spontaneously then?—I think they took cover. It depends upon whether you are speaking of attack or defence; the two are somewhat different. I think they took cover wherever it was advisable. I think they were led to do so and taught to do so by their officers quite as much as was useful. A position cannot be gained without some exposure.

16219. I am only putting to you the result of evidence that we have had, that there was a difficulty in getting the ordinary British soldier to take as much cover as his opponent did; he did not take cover in quite the same intelligent way. That is not your opinion?—The circumstances were so different. The Boers did not attack us generally in Natal; we always attacked, and therefore the Boers were always hidden, and they always had already taken up their positions some time beforehand, and their positions were not revealed to us either individually, or even the extent of the position was not revealed by anything we could see. That is why they naturally had superior cover to ours; they were better able to take it, and undoubtedly they are better trained. Even if we put men into a defensive position, our men are not sufficiently careful to keep still, and they have not the same natural training and habits that the Boers have.

16220. But do you not think that a good deal could be done by the officers giving them proper directions?—I do not consider that we have very much to learn in that respect.

16221. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) The evidence we have had is to the effect that our men were not observant of the inequalities of the ground, and that they might have taken cover in many instances when they did not avail themselves of it?—Well, I should like to say that our attacks certainly were carried out with the most extraordinary courage and bravery that it is possible to conceive. Nothing could have been finer than the advance of the 2nd Brigade at Colenso, for instance, or of my fusiliers who went to support Long's guns, or of my brigade storming Pieter's Hill. It would have been absolutely impossible for the men to have advanced and taken cover; they would never have got forward at all.

16222. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You cannot do both; you cannot advance and take cover?—You cannot advance across the open and take cover also, but I think when it comes to attacking a ridge, what we have always trained our men to do, is that we advance by successive sections, or by separate small parties, and then while one party is lying down firing, another party rushes forward a certain distance, and then lies down, opens fire, and enables those behind to come up and get forward again, and I think in that respect our men did very well indeed. If they had sought cover more I do not think we should have gained any position at all; it would simply have been a matter of lying down and shooting at one another at long ranges, and not seeing one another.

16223. (*Chairman.*) Do not take it that I was suggesting in any way that they did not show splendid courage in advancing. I was only asking whether, considering the conditions of modern warfare, owing to the nature of the recruit as competent as his opponent

to adapt himself to those conditions?—My answer to that would be that the circumstances were so different; that we attacked in Natal, and the Boers held positions nearly always carefully prepared some time beforehand, and that when you are attacking you have under present conditions no target; you have nothing to shoot at. There is a crest line where you know pretty well that the enemy must be, and that is about all you get.

16224. And if you want to get forward you must expose yourselves?—You must expose yourselves; and it is on that account, I may say, that I have made the remark in my précis that I think it is a mistake to attempt to take only one position. I would always try to take at least two or three positions simultaneously.

16225. Do you mean in attacking?—In attacking. I would always try to take two or three points in the enemy's position.

16226. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) So as to prevent his concentrating?—So as to prevent his concentrating. I am sure it is a bad thing to let him concentrate all his attention on the one party. What I have said is, "More stress should be laid on combined tactics and simultaneous attacks of different bodies on several separate points." May I tell you my reason for putting that in?

16227. (*Chairman.*) If you please?—In the last issue of "Combined Training, 1902," which was published last year, and is supposed to have been based on our experiences, the following occurs:—"The best type of an offensive battle is a methodical progression from point to point, each successive capture weakening the enemy's hold on his main position, and paving the way for a decisive advance." That I think represents rather the misfortune we suffered from on two or three occasions in Natal. At Colenso, General Hart's Brigade attacked on the left, and General Hildyard's Brigade was to have attacked at the same time, but, I believe the orders were altered.

16228. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You would have simultaneous attacks?—Certainly, if you are going to attack a long position, I would have simultaneous attacks on several points. In the same way in the latter stages when General Hart attacked, what is now known as Hart's Hill, he attacked alone; the place had been very severely shelled, but he attacked alone; and in the final attack of all, when I attacked what we thought was the left of the Boer position at Pieter's Hill, I went down the river bank for two miles, and then ascended the hill and attacked what we thought was the Boer left. It was not the Boer left, because I was a long way out-flanked but I attacked alone. I was told that two other brigades would attack on my left two other points further west, but those two other brigades did not attack until four hours after I attacked my hill, and therefore I had an immense amount of Boer force thrown upon me, and they were able to move their guns out and attack me from three sides.

16229. The Boer showed extraordinary readiness in transferring himself from one side to another?—Yes, certainly. The moment I got on the hill they galloped across from other parts of the line to reinforce the place I was attacking. I had only infantry, and, of course, they had the advantage. That is one point that I should like to make when talking about cover: that that hill would never have been captured if I had not impressed upon my officers that it was absolutely necessary for us to push forward rapidly, and not let the Boers (as they had so frequently done before) increase their numbers as they saw us coming. If we had gone slowly we should never have taken the hill at all; and I believe that we had less loss by that. We had very serious loss afterward, of course, because, as I say, the Boers reinforced the left of their line as they simply saw my brigade isolated away from the remainder, and without guns. They moved their guns out and attacked me on three sides.

16230. (*Chairman.*) But you say the chief deduction as regards future training is more independence for Commanding Officers and company leaders?—Certainly.

16231. Does "Commanding Officers" mean Commanding Officers of battalions?—Commanding Officers of battalions. I think the Commanding officer of a battalion should be given very much more scope for training his own men.

16232. Do you mean in the method of training?—I think in the method of training, and also he ought to be left more to his own control.

16233. You are speaking of training, not of action?—Training for war. I refer to it in this way; there is very little ground certainly in England for the Commanding Officer to train except at some of these large camps, and there the Commanding Officer does not have as much opportunity to handle his own battalion as I think he ought to have.

16234. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But you would have a uniform method, a uniform drill book, would you not?—Yes, you must have some forms, of course.

16235. It is more independence in action in the field that you mean, is it not, rather than in the method or procedure?—I think we are rather tied down to hard and fast rules. It is the same with shooting; there are hard and fast rules there. Men differ very much. If you have to take a party of one hundred men through a particular course some of those men do not keep up with the others. You want to have a little more latitude for the captain to train his men, but if you have orders coming from the Commander-in-Chief as regards shooting, and then from the Divisional General, and then the Brigadier General, and the Colonel, then what the captain rather feels is, how can he be judged by results if he has so little scope?

16236. (*Chairman.*) Then it runs on to very much what you say at the beginning of the next paragraph, that staff officers and staff duties are too much introduced into the training of regimental officers?—Yes, I think that is so.

16237. Do you mean by that just what you have been saying?—I think that the staff are constantly supervising the training of companies and battalions when very often some of those staff officers have not had the personal experience that many of those captains and colonels have had in actually training the men.

16238. Do you think that an efficient staff is selected from the first-class regimental officers?—I think it should be. I think, undoubtedly, the work would be a great deal better done if there was more sympathy between the staff and the regimental officers, and I think that is only obtained by staff officers constantly going back to regimental work; it keeps them in touch with the various changes of the men; there are a great many changes as regards the enlistment of men. When I first entered the army we had men who served twenty-one years, then when it came to having men who only served for very short periods the whole thing was very different, and therefore I think that staff officers should constantly revert to regimental duty—that they should have periods of regimental duty and then periods of staff duty, because then they would constantly keep in touch with regimental feeling, and especially with the improved knowledge and intelligence of the men who come into the ranks. Very often now staff officers get a staff appointment, and as staff appointments are very much more valuable financially and help to give a better position than regimental work, if an officer is a very good officer, he remains in staff employment for a certain number of years.

16239. That you consider a mistake?—A great mistake, I think, from the point of view of the Army. I am not thinking of the benefit of the individual. For the benefit of the individual, probably, to go from one staff appointment to another is a good thing. The rule exists that he should go back to regimental work, but I am afraid it is not often enough put into practice.

16240. Do I rightly understand this to mean that you think he would really be a better staff officer if he did go back to regimental work?—Yes, certainly, I think so. I think he would be constantly kept in touch with the feelings and wants of the men.

16241. And, therefore, there is no real hardship upon him; there may be pecuniary considerations, but there is no hardship upon him in his service?—Certainly not; it cannot be a hardship to him.

16242. That is the system that you think ought to prevail?—I consider it ought to prevail, and that if the Commanding Officer obtains command of a battalion, I think he ought to complete his time in command of the battalion; it gives him much more valuable experience for what he may afterwards have to do on the staff, whereas now very often, if an officer is considered a good officer at headquarters, he is given command of a battalion, financially not a very good position, and, perhaps, at the end of one year, or 15 or 18 months, he is put back again on the staff. He would be a far more valuable officer in the Army if he had completed

his four years in command of a battalion or regiment of cavalry.

16243. Were you satisfied with your staff in South Africa?—Yes, perfectly. I had only one staff officer—the Brigade Major; he was killed; then, of course, he was replaced by others, but they were all good officers that I had. One was a Staff College officer, and two others were not Staff College officers.

16244. Do you draw any distinction between those trained at the Staff College and those not trained at the Staff College?—I do not think for a Brigade-Major of an infantry brigade it makes a great deal of difference. Perhaps they are better adapted for preparing reports, because they have had more practice than others; but I do not think otherwise as regards the other details of the Brigade duties it makes much difference.

16245. There is one other point that you mention, that company officers should be relieved of pay responsibilities?—I think they certainly ought to be relieved of pay responsibilities. I think far greater responsibilities have been thrown upon them of late years than they formerly had. When I joined the Army we had the regimental paymaster, and although the captain of the company paid his men, still he always had the paymaster, who had his regular office, to whom he could always go in any difficulties, or to get advice and get assisted in his accounts. Now the regimental paymaster no longer exists, and his accounts are sent away to somebody else to audit, and he has not got a ready means of referring any questions; and also the accounts of the soldiers are very intricate; they are being lightened now, but they were very intricate, and the consequence is that even with the greatest care officers very often lose large sums of money, although they are thoroughly careful and conscientious in doing their best.

16246. (*Sir John Jackson.*) And their training does not particularly fit them for accountant work?—No, very often a second-lieutenant with only a few months' service may have to take charge of a company of 100 men, and the whole of the responsibility is thrown upon him.

16247. (*Chairman.*) Do you attach importance to the men being actually paid by the officer?—I do not attach any importance to that. I would not have them paid by non-commissioned officers, because I think that is putting too much responsibility upon the non-commissioned officers. They would have to keep large sums of money which they have not the means of keeping or the opportunity of keeping.

16248. But you see no objection to their being paid by the paymaster?—Not the least.

16249. And that is the system that you would prefer?—Yes, I would prefer that much. The soldier would always be able to go to his captain if he had any complaint with regard to his pay accounts.

16250. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The books that the captain has to keep are very large and intricate, are they not?—Not the books he himself has to keep, the accounts are intricate.

16251. But they are in the books?—Books have been done away with to a very great extent, and large forms introduced instead of books. I doubt if it is an improvement myself.

16252. I have been in a barrack not long ago this year, and I saw those large books in force?—Yes, there are a number of books.

16253. A book of about that length (*describing*), an immense thing?—The pay accounts are all done on sheets now; they may be bound into a book in barracks for convenience, but in the field they would be carried merely one sheet for each month.

16254. There are all sorts of accounts to be kept, are there not—clothing?—Yes, clothing accounts and accoutrement accounts.

16255. Clothing issued and clothing returned?—Yes. The clothing accounts and the accoutrement accounts I think the captain ought to keep, because the efficiency of his company, his command, depends very much on all that, and he is responsible for all his accoutrements, and therefore I think he must keep the accounts of it himself. But I think it is very different in the matter of pay, because there are great responsibilities, and young officers especially very often lose a considerable amount of money, not through any carelessness. If men go away, if they leave on active service, you cannot tell how their accounts stand.

Major-General G. Barton, C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

Major-General G. Barton, C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

A man may be killed or a man may be sent away as an invalid, and men may desert, and perhaps some months after they have gone away you may get a charge sent to you, saying that about three or four months or six months ago it may be (perhaps six months is rather an outside limit) a certain man received more pay than he should have done.

16256. And you have to account for that?—You have to account for that; you cannot recover it from the man, because he has gone; he has been killed or invalided, and there is no means of getting hold of him, or he may have been discharged from the Army. There are various ways of losing money which really are not the fault of the individual, perhaps, who has to make it good. In a large battalion of a thousand men, where you have a paymaster in the battalion, or in a regiment of cavalry, your accounts go to him, and it does not take very long to look them over; the audit and examination is much more rapidly done than when it is done by a staff paymaster, who has a very large number of corps to do.

16257. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) Altogether, do you consider that officers in command and regimental officers generally are too much tied down by hard-and-fast rules imposed upon them by the staff as it is at present constituted?—In the training of their men I think that is so. I think the rules are too hard-and-fast for the training of the men.

16258. They have not sufficient discretion?—If I may give an example, I was in command of a very young battalion which had just come home from India and was being heavily recruited; all our older soldiers were discharged, and we had nothing but recruits; we had about 800 men nearly all recruits, and we got the new Lee-Metford rifle. I was obliged to carry out my practice that year of rifle shooting with the Martini-Henry rifle, which we got from the Ordnance store for the purpose simply to do our shooting, and then return it again. I consider that was absolute waste of time, but it was in the Regulations that every man must shoot so many rounds, and therefore we shot them. The reason we had to take the old rifle was that the new rifle, being a more dangerous weapon, required a longer range, and there were no ranges available for us. I would rather have had no shooting at all that year, or to shoot only 200 or 300 yards, instead of the longer distance, than to teach new men to shoot with the old rifle, which they would not use on service. That is what I mean by hard-and-fast regulations. I do not wish to condemn the supervision of the staff entirely, but there are occasions when we are rather too much tied down by hard-and-fast regulations. I think that very often the voice of the staff is stronger on those points than the voice of the Colonel of the regiment, who is responsible for the training of his men.

16259. And the staff would not be too exacting with regard to such matters if they knew more of regimental duties?—I think that they know; I do not wish to question their knowledge; but I think if they were more in touch with them they would not.

16260. (*Chairman*.) Then as to supplies, do you think there was mismanagement?—No, I would hardly say that; but I say that when we took the field, and were actually in the field, the number of Army Service Corps officers was extremely small. One hardly ever saw an Army Service Corps officer who had been trained in the duties, because the Army Service Corps is so very weak, and therefore nearly the whole of the work of the Army Service Corps was thrown upon anybody we could get. There were officers from the Yeomanry, Colonial corps, Infantry—they were got from everywhere, and as it is not a very attractive employment, naturally they were not always the best and the most energetic officers who cared to take up that sort of work, and also they were quite ignorant of it. When I say in my *précis* that there was mismanagement entailing enormous loss to the State, I mean especially in the storing of supplies during the later periods of the campaign. I personally found a very large amount of wasted stores, which, had they been in the custody of experienced officers, would have been turned over more rapidly, and would not have been damaged by the long storage and the climate, with the excessive rains that they have in that country. I would like to point to that merely to show that a very much larger staff of Army Service Corps officers is needed.

16261. Where you had the Army Service Corps officers the management was better?—Yes; they understood things, and they knew what to do.

16262. So that if there was mismanagement it only means that the officers were not up to the work?—They were called upon to do duties for which they had received no training.

16263. And you think there was loss in consequence?—I think undoubtedly there was loss when all the stores were at the depôts. There were an enormous number of depôts; there were depôts at almost every railway station in the whole of the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and Natal, and part of Cape Colony too. There were stores kept at every railway station, which means a very large matter all put together in what is lost from not turning the things over, from things being left, and issuing from new supplies instead of turning them over. You will quite understand that there may be great waste in that way, and I think there was loss that might have been avoided.

16264. I see you mention the butchering in particular?—With reference to that I am not sufficiently up in the particulars of it, but I know that there was some sort of contract by which the chief contractors, who I think were the Cold Storage Company, received 2d. a lb. for every ox that was eaten, even if we captured the oxen from the Boers.

16265. We have had evidence about contracts?—I think a great deal of that could have been done by the corps. When I was at Chieveley waiting after the battle of Colenso I was informed one day by a Staff Officer that my men were to have nothing but tinned meat, and I protested most strongly against it, because it was lowering the men's condition; it is stuff which makes them extremely thirsty, and our water supply was abominably bad there. I protested very strongly against it, and I daresay I made myself very unpopular in consequence, but I believe the real difficulty was the butchering, and I offered to do it myself. I had lots of butchers in my brigade, and I was able to do it.

16266. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Was there plenty of live stock there?—The country abounds in flocks and herds.

16267. At that particular moment?—I think there is no doubt about it. There was the whole of Natal to draw upon at that time; we were not run out of stock.

16268. (*Sir John Jackson*.) I suppose your cattle were captured from the Boers, and the contractor had to do the butchering?—I am not aware that he did. I will not be sure about this, but my impression is that there was a butchering account kept, and that if I captured oxen from the Boers, and my own men butchered them, the contractor who followed my camp credited that account with 2d. a lb., but I will not say that is so for certain. That was the general impression, at any rate, and I believe that was the case.

(*Sir John Jackson*.) Possibly the contractor might have considered in fixing his price the advantage he would get by those captures of cattle.

16269. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) Were you often confined to the use of tinned meat when it would have been quite possible and easy to get fresh meat?—No, not at all. It was only on that occasion that I was told I was to have tinned meat every day, no more fresh meat, and I protested and objected, and it was altered.

16270. But when it was at all practicable to have the fresh meat it was supplied?—Yes, we always had it; we did not have any excess of tinned meat at all. Throughout the whole of my experience in South Africa wherever I was during the whole time, nearly three years, I was out there, we never had any excessive quantity of tinned meat at any time.

16271. (*Chairman*.) The quality of the supplies was good, was it?—The quality of the supplies was excellent.

16272. All round?—All round, and sufficient, except that I think we ought to have had a little more tea, and we generally got it, but it was not a recognised thing.

16273. (*Sir Henry Norman*.) Did you have bread or biscuit?—We had bread and biscuit, but we were not often confined to biscuit unless we were actually on some long marches; there was a great deal done in the way of baking. I do not think they could probably have done more than was done in baking; bakeries were established in every conceivable place, and very quickly in my experience we were supplied. Even later in the campaign all our blockhouses were supplied all through with bread. Of course, some of the marching columns could not get bread, or they would start away with bread for three or four days, and when it was finished they had to come to biscuit.

16274. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) And the biscuit was of good quality—equal to good ship biscuit that is usually on board ship?—Yes, I think the biscuit was quite good.

16275. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to say anything about horses?—I have nothing specially to say about horses.

16276. They would have done better if they had had a better chance, I suppose?—I think if they had had a better chance they would. The imported horse must be rested before he is worked; that is practically what it amounts to. Of course, I think at first we might have got more horses in the country, but there may have been political reasons for preventing a general surrender of horses—in Natal, for instance.

16277. As regards railway management, you think that there was some fault there?—I think so far as railway management is concerned that they were rather unfortunate in some of the officials; a good many of the officials appeared to assume a rather hostile attitude.

16278. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) In Natal or the Orange Free State?—The Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

16279. (*Chairman.*) In the Free State and the Transvaal the railways were really military railways, were they not?—They were military railways, but a great many of the officials were Hollanders, Dutch certainly.

16280. That railway was completely in the control of the military authorities, was it not?—Yes, it was, but I think there were a great many complaints of insolence on the part of railway employees, for instance, to military officers, which rather impeded the work.

16281. But there is no reason why those should not have been dealt with if it was a military railway?—I can give an instance of a very serious railway accident that occurred near Pretoria when a train was ordered to stop outside about three miles to pick up some men at a camp. The military officer at the railway station at Pretoria told the station master that the train was required to stop there and gave it him in writing. There was another train that followed it at an interval of 15 minutes, or something of that sort, and the intention was to warn the guard and driver of the second train that this first train would have to stop at the place, which was not exactly a station, but a siding, which had been occupied for many months. But the station-master did not do it; he declined to do it. I ought not to say he declined; he accepted the order; but he did not do it. I never heard the result of it; but, as a matter of fact, I know his answer was that it was not in accordance with the regulations of the Transvaal Railway that the train should stop at a siding, and we had nine men killed in consequence.

16282. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Had they not an experienced dispatch officer constantly at the telegraph on the railway to give intimation of trains?—Yes, there was all that. I do not say that the traffic management was not all right in that respect, but I mean to say that there was a certain amount of friction between the railway officials and the military authorities; and although I do not make a serious point of it, I do not think the same sort of thing would have happened in Germany. I do not think a station-master in Germany would say to the general officer who was the military officer in charge of the station that he would decline to carry out his orders on a military railway.

16283. (*Chairman.*) But you do not know what happened?—As a matter of fact I think this man was removed from his place, but I do not think that was sufficient.

16284. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) And deaths ensued from that accident?—Deaths ensued. The whole thing was examined and inquired into by Lord Kitchener, and the man was removed from his appointment, I believe. But I give that as an instance; there were plenty of other instances.

16285. (*Chairman.*) In Natal you had ox transport?—We had ox transport in Natal, regimental ox transport, besides Army Service Corps convoys.

16286. And regimental transport is what you prefer?—I prefer the regimental transport because I believe that the supervision is much superior. It is better supervised by the regimental authorities; they are more interested in it personally; their whole comfort and everything depends on it. They have the same animals and the same drivers, and attach themselves to corps and get to be known, and undoubtedly wherever that can be done I think that is a very great

advantage. It may be somewhat wasteful, but I do not think it really is so—I mean in this respect, that if a corps is going to stop and not march at all for a month or so, of course it is better that that transport should be utilised for some other purposes, otherwise it would be lying entirely idle. But wherever it could be arranged I would invariably have transport attached permanently to a corps in the field.

16287. What do you mean when you say in your précis that the infantry are shabbily treated in load tables?—It is run very much too fine as a general rule so far as the infantry are concerned, and they suffer chiefly because there is nothing that they use up. In the cavalry there is always a certain allowance for forage, and when a cavalry corps is moving, if they start with very heavily-laden wagons the first day, the first day's consumption of forage gives them space and brings down their weights, and consequently they are able to carry many more things which are really more essential in the field than infantry are able to do. When I used the word "shabbily" I did not intend this to be actually accepted as evidence.

16288. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) To what extent would you advise the allowance being increased; have you thought of that?—I have not gone into that fully. I think we generally noticed that. I think those in the infantry generally noticed it.

16289. Would you give them 10 per cent. more?—I would certainly give them a rather more liberal supply—something a little better. The infantry have to walk, and the others are carried, and considering the condition that we were in and the whole Army was in at that time (at the time we were marching hard), there was nothing for the infantry at all.

16290. The entrenching tools were carried for them, I suppose, separately?—Entrenching tools were carried, except the Wallace spade, which was carried by the men.

16291. Do you approve of that?—No, I do not approve of that at all. I think it is weighting the men too much, and I think the Wallace spade is actually no use.

16292. What would you substitute for it?—I would have the tools carried.

16293. Proper tools?—Proper, good, substituted tools, and for certain occasions I would have it arranged so that the man can strap a pickaxe or shovel on to his back. But that would be only for special occasions; one does not want to be digging every day.

16294. (*Sir John Jackson.*) You would substitute another spade for the Wallace spade?—I would not have the entrenching tool carried by the soldier.

16295. You said you did not approve of the Wallace spade; is that a question of the design of the spade?—I think it is a poor thing; it is weak, and not suited for the purpose, and it is at the same time a considerable encumbrance to the soldier.

16296. But, apart from its being an encumbrance, you think it is an unsuitable tool?—Yes, I think it is an unsuitable tool for its purpose.

16297. What would you suggest?—I would suggest that a certain number of first-rate entrenching tools of the very best material should be carried with each infantry corps, so that they can be attached to the person on occasions, but not carried permanently by the men. I think it encumbers the soldier too much.

16298. (*Chairman.*) Then as to medical arrangements, were you satisfied on the whole?—All the medical arrangements were very good that I had experience of, with one exception, and that was that when my brigade was transferred from Natal to Cape Colony; my field hospital and my bearer company were taken away from me.

16299. Were you supplied with another?—I was not supplied with another until some time afterwards, when I got to Kimberley, and it was then a very makeshift one, but I had already been in the field six months. My medical officers and the employees of the hospital were well known to my brigade and known to me, and they were all in touch and sympathy with one another, and it was a very great disadvantage to be deprived of their service. In the same way with my bearer company, they were part of my brigade organisation; according to the Army scheme they were just as much part of my brigade as one of my own battalions.

Major-General G. Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

Major-General G. Barton, C.B., C.M.G.
20 Feb. 1903.

16300. Then why were they removed?—That I cannot say. I strenuously opposed it. There may have been good reasons for it.

16301. But they were removed by order of the Commander-in-Chief in Natal, I suppose?—I presume so.

16302. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Was it a question of economy?—I should not think so, but I do not know.

16303. (Chairman.) They were probably wanted in Natal, but you think that your claim to them ought to have had precedence?—Distinctly; I think it is a part of the organisation. Part of the organisation of an Infantry Brigade is to have a certain medical unit attached to it, and therefore I think that as far as possible that arrangement should not be disturbed. The bearer company was afterwards sent after me, because I complained again when I got into Cape Colony.

16304. What is your opinion about the Royal Engineers?—The Royal Engineers were very good throughout the campaign.

16305. I see in your Précis that you raise some question about the duties of the Quartermaster-General and the Chief Engineer?—Yes, I do, because the Quartermaster-General has disappeared, and I think it is a great pity that he should have done so. I think the Quartermaster-General is a most important person.

16306. Would you explain why you think so?—I think the duties of Quartermaster-General are the most important duties on active service. They have been partly taken over by the Adjutant-General, partly by the Supply Officer, partly by the Transport Officer, and partly and perhaps chiefly, by the Chief Engineer; and I think that the Quartermaster-General should certainly be restored to the Army both at the head of the Army and in all the Divisions; and I think it is being done.

16307. Did you find a disadvantage during the campaign from that cause?—I think so. I think it was a disadvantage in regard to many points that one wished to refer.

16308. As to guns, you are doubtful whether the very heavy guns are really needed in the field?—Yes. Finding that the Boers had guns so very much better than we had, of course we got up those very heavy guns from the fleet, but I think it is a question whether such very large guns are really wanted in the field, except perhaps one or two that could be kept back, but not for constant use—not invariably trying to get these very heavy guns forward into action.

16309. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) It is a question of mobility versus range, is it not?—Yes.

16310. And you do not think the long range is absolutely essential?—I will not say the long range is not essential, but they go in for more than that. These guns are an enormous weight; they are not mobile enough.

16311. Then it comes to that in the long run; when you get two guns, both of the best construction, one of a longer range than the other, it must be a question of mobility versus range?—Yes.

16312. And on the whole you are in favour of mobility?—I am in favour of mobility.

16313. (Chairman.) I think you prefer common shell to shrapnel?—I think we ought to have some common shell, certainly. It would have far greater destructive power and moral effect than shrapnel. We have entirely given up common shell in the field. That is perhaps an artillery question rather than for me, but from my own experience of seeing shrapnel I know that one cannot see the effect of shrapnel. Even the best trained artillery officer with the best glasses cannot see the effect of shrapnel at 5,000 yards; unless one happens to kill a man, who jumps up into the air and shows himself, it is exceedingly difficult to tell the effect of shrapnel.

16314. Can you tell the effect of common shell?—I cannot say that you can tell the effect of common shell, because we did not have any common shell, but you can tell where a shell strikes and breaks.

16315. (Sir Henry Norman.) When was it abolished?—I could not say exactly, but it has been abolished.

16316. Do you know why it was abolished?—I think it was abolished in consequence of trials that were made, and those trials I do not think are a fair test, because a great deal of shrapnel is harmless—it falls quite harmless. I am not quite certain, but I think that the trials were probably made at canvas targets, or something of

that sort, and then when shrapnel was fired it was aimed, under the best possible circumstances, no doubt, on those canvas targets, and there were a certain number of blotches and marks showing that they had been struck, and every one of those marks was reckoned as a serious injury. And that is not always the case. A great deal of the shrapnel, I consider, falls quite harmlessly. We have often had shrapnel burst right over us and not injure anybody in the least.

16317. (Sir Frederick Darley.) If you were firing at guns, for instance, to try to dismount them?—We could not do that with shrapnel, it would do no damage.

16318. But if you were firing with common shell?—I think with common shell it would most certainly do damage, and I think the moral effect is greater.

16319. (Chairman.) But was there no shell used to dismount guns in the war?—I have no doubt that our 6in. guns fired shells. I could not say for certain, but I should think that they did.

16320. But not the field guns?—Not the field guns; they carried nothing at all except shrapnel. I think, as a matter of fact, the field artillery carry one or two shell as range finders, but I am not even certain of that. I think they do, because it is so difficult to ascertain the range by shrapnel. Shrapnel goes into the air; we fire at a ridge, and we see the shrapnel burst in the air, but we cannot say exactly at what point it has burst, whether it has burst 300 or 400 yards in front of the ridge or 500 yards beyond it; we simply see it burst in the air. Therefore I think the field artillery carry a few common shell as range testers.

16321. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But you may put a gun out of action with shrapnel by killing the gunners and horses when you are firing at a field battery against you?—Yes, we can do that.

16322. (Sir Frederick Darley.) We have heard that during the siege of Ladysmith none of the enemy's guns were dismounted. May that be accounted for by the use of shrapnel only, and not common shell?—Yes, I think possibly so. Then, of course, the Boer guns at Ladysmith—the investing guns at Ladysmith—were only fired at by our naval guns, the 4·7 and 6in. guns, but I think that they must have had shell, because they would naturally have brought up what they fire on board ship. They had shrapnel too, but they would have shell, and therefore I presume that it was simply that they did not happen to hit the guns, but I do not know why they should not have struck the guns.

16323. (Sir Henry Norman.) It has been given in evidence before us that the Boer guns kept themselves out of range, that they had a longer range?—Yes; I do not suppose they could possibly have hit the Boer guns on Isimbulwhana from Ladysmith.

16324. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Has it been customary in former wars to use common shell more generally than was done in South Africa?—It was always used until it was done away with some five or six years ago.

16325. What was the reason given for doing away with it?—I cannot say, but I believe it was in consequence of some tests of the comparative value of common shell and shrapnel. The trials were well conducted, and extended over a long time. The matter was thoroughly thought out, but I think the artillery claimed for themselves more destructive power for the shrapnel than it really has, in consequence of, as I say, the target being marred and marked.

16326. You hold the opinion strongly that common shell should not be discarded?—Yes, I hold the opinion that we should have common shell.

16327. (Chairman.) The rifle, you think, is a good one?—I think the rifle is very good. I prefer the pull-off of the Boer rifle—the Mauser—because I think it is a better pull-off. Ours is more in the nature of a hair trigger and a stiff pull, whereas the Boer trigger—the Mauser—gives to the finger gradually until the rifle is discharged.

16328. But you have some criticism as to the sighting of the rifle?—I know from experience that the sighting might be improved, or else the ammunition is uncertain. I cannot say for certain which of the two it is.

16329. But for some reason or another it was not quite satisfactory?—I do not say that merely in regard to the war; I mean that that is our experience.

16330. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) They are

Major-General G. Barton.
C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

not uniform then in sighting?—Each rifle should be carefully sighted of course and tested.

16331. (*Chairman.*) Your chief criticism of the organisation of the Army is as regards the present system of mounted infantry?—I think that one of the chief lessons of the war is that the infantry would find it extremely difficult to do, as they have always hitherto done, their out scouting and flanking, and that the assistance of a few mounted men is of enormous importance to an infantry force acting by itself. The tremendous range of the rifle at present, which goes up to something like 3,000 yards, renders it very difficult to have flankers out, or scouts in front of an infantry force sufficiently far to enable them to be reinforced or to get back, and at the same time to protect the column. The object of those scouts and flankers is that the main body shall march in security, and that the skirmishers or the extended files, shall give due notice in good time to enable a deployment; either they are to fall back or to be reinforced for fighting purposes. Therefore, I think, the provision of a few mounted men to each infantry corps would be an enormous advantage.

16332. You mean a detachment of mounted men to be kept with the battalion, but not to be used as a separate organisation?—Not to be used as a separate organisation, or to interfere with the eight company organisation.

16333. At present the mounted infantry company has been taken away, has it not, from the battalion, and used with other mounted infantry companies?—Yes, with other mounted infantry companies.

16334. That is not what you mean. You mean to have them always attached to the battalion to act in this way as scouts?—Yes, and that they should be trained with the battalion and trained with the brigade; the mounted infantry of the different battalions would be massed together to train with the brigade. I think it would give an opportunity of passing a very large number of men in each battalion through the mounted infantry course of training, and no man would remain simply as a mounted infantry man. He would go to the course of training, and might remain in it one month, two months, or six weeks, at the discretion of the commanding officer, until he became a handy, useful man. The riding does not take much training; it is not the dashing that is wanted so much, as to accustom the man just to ride on his horse, and look after his horse, and enable him to be carried rapidly across a certain amount of country.

16335. I did not quite gather that from your précis; I thought you meant to keep this mounted infantry as a separate organisation, a separate battalion. You mean, I now understand, to use it as part of your battalion, and pass men through it?—Yes, I say, "This establishment to be under the commanding officer, and be used for training as many suitable men as possible." You would then have in every battalion a very large number of men trained for these duties, and looking after horses.

16336. Why should it follow from that that all other mounted infantry is to be abolished?—Only in this respect, that it would be the mounted infantry. That is what I consider to be the best way of training mounted infantry, whereas now certain men are taken away from the battalion and sent to some central training ground where they are trained. They can in a battalion perhaps only have an opportunity of training, say, 25 men in a whole year, or in two or three years, or three or four years, whereas if 25 horses were given to a battalion, the men would go on being constantly trained in this work.

16337. I was thinking more of what would happen on service. If on service the general wanted a force of mounted infantry apart from your brigade I rather imagine you would object to the mounted infantry being taken away from the separate brigades?—I should not, of course, object for the general purposes of a campaign, and there would be, according to my idea and plan, a very large number of men in every battalion ready trained. If the general wanted them in the field on any occasion he would always find in every battalion a very large number of men trained, whereas he does not find that now. He can generally get them, but it does not necessarily follow that he will find them now; and if it is necessary to give up a certain number of infantry soldiers and make them into mounted infantry it can be done, but I know that during the South African War it was considered rather a hardship on

commanding officers that they should have to send away all their best men to the mounted infantry, to be utilised away from the battalion.

16338. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Just at the time when they wanted them most?—We had to choose our very best men, and it was very hard on the non-commissioned officers; they had considerable losses, and we were constantly having to replenish the mounted infantry of 100 men. The orders were that we must keep it up to the full strength of non-commissioned officers and men. The proportion of non-commissioned officers for the mounted infantry was to be two or three times that of the infantry; therefore we had to take away from the battalion a very large proportion of non-commissioned officers for the 100 mounted infantry, and any casualties to the mounted infantry had to be at once supplied by our best men from the infantry regiment. That is weakening to the battalion, and, of course, if it can be avoided it should be.

16339. (*Chairman.*) Where any non-commissioned officer is taken away for other service you think his place ought to be filled?—If a non-commissioned officer is taken away for any employment outside his own battalion I consider his place ought to be filled at once by the commanding officer. That is merely a question of money. The only thing that militates against it is the question of the increased pay of the non-commissioned officer. But, again, the efficiency suffers very much; if we suddenly lose one of our non-commissioned officers we must lose in efficiency, we lose in superintendence and handling of men in the field, and even in their ordinary duties in camp, and so forth.

16340. And that happened during the war, especially on the line of communications?—I think it happened very frequently; we had to send away a great many non-commissioned officers for various duties, and we were not always allowed to replace them.

16341. You sum it up: "Every officer and man should fill one place only in the organisation of the Army"?—That is another point altogether.

16342. What is that point then?—That comes under another head altogether. That comes under the head "all anomalies, such as the Militia Reserve, should be abolished."

16343. Please state what it means?—What I mean about that is that the Militia Reserve were men who belonged to a Militia battalion, but who had put their names down for the Militia Reserve, which means that their services are available for the Line, and, therefore, when they were called out, as they were during the war, they were called out to join their Line battalion; and then afterwards, when the Militia battalion was called out the whole of those men were away, more than half the battalion was away; therefore, the Militia battalions, instead of coming into the field 800 strong, came into the field 400 strong, or less. I think the point is thoroughly understood now at the War Office.

16344. I think we have had other evidence about that?—What I mean is that a man should have only one place; there cannot be two calls upon him. If he belongs to a Militia battalion he cannot belong to a Militia battalion and also to a Line battalion at the same time. That is the present state; at least that was the state of the Militia Reserve unless it has been altered recently: The "Militia Reserve" being really, I should say, a misnomer, because it was really the Army Reserve. When called up as a Reservist the man joins the Line, he does not join the Militia, but he has had his training in the Militia.

16345. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What do you mean by this statement in your précis: "There was an enormous and unnecessary waste of men on the line of communications, and the practice of grabbing individual men and entire drafts was freely indulged in"?—That was so, I am afraid.

16346. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I suppose that was owing to the immense demand for men on the line of communications?—No, it was not the demand, it was a draft going to join a battalion landed at Cape Town, and was on its way up country to join its battalion, when it was seized by somebody, and did not join its battalion perhaps for six months.

16347. Were they allowed to do that?—That I cannot say.

16348. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Although they were sent to join that battalion?—Yes. Of course, a thing of

Major-
General G.
Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

that sort may happen occasionally. If there is a critical moment, and some particular post has to be defended, it would probably be necessary to stop a train and utilise the men that happened to be passing through, but when that danger is passed those men who have been temporarily detained for a special purpose should be sent on at once. I think everybody knows pretty well that the practice was indulged in, and that it was a mistake, and the lesson from it simply is that it is better to give up a certain portion of a force to protect the lines of communication than to trust to generals who are in charge of certain sections just taking what men happen to be available, and making the most of them. There were numbers of drafts that arrived in South Africa which never joined their regiments for six months, and more than six months many of them. Many of those men were very young soldiers, recruits, and perhaps they came out with a second lieutenant, a young sub-lieutenant. It is not good for them; they were not of the same value; 100 men coming out in a draft like that would not be of the same value as a complete company of infantry detached under its own officers for that particular duty on the line of communications. That is the point that I wanted to make.

16349. (*Chairman.*) You want to encourage infantry officers to keep horses?—I would encourage infantry officers to keep horses, certainly. I think it would be very good for their training that they should be accustomed to ride about the country. It makes them very much more observant, and I know that a very large proportion of infantry officers in the Army would keep horses if it was not for the very great expense and difficulty of a stable. If you hire a stable outside the barracks it adds very much to the expense, and also the commanding officer will not allow a man to go out to groom his horse; therefore it means a civilian groom always, and the expense of the stable, and that is prohibitive. I think that it improves the mind of an officer who is accustomed to hunt and ride across country, and to ride about generally, and constantly, whenever he has leisure.

16350. That means stabling provided by the State?—Yes.

16351. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose it would not mean a very big stable?—It would not mean much, about 12 to 15 stalls perhaps to an infantry battalion. In the expense of building a large barrack I think it would be something very small.

16352. Do you propose that an officer should be allowed to have a soldier groom?—I put it at the discretion of the commanding officer. I think that the groom, as it is arranged regimentally, would not suffer in any way from his military training. I should certainly make him perform a certain portion of his duties so as not to make it heavier on the other men, and he would have his complete training.

16353. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Then he would have a groom besides his ordinary servant?—I do not say that I would give every officer a groom.

16354. But every officer having a horse?—I would not even say that; probably one man could perfectly well groom two horses. I would merely have it recognised in some way in the regulations that there should be nothing against it at any rate.

16355. (*Chairman.*) And you want to encourage rifle shooting. Is there any particular method you want to do that by?—Of course, as to rifle shooting and instruction, it is rather a difficult point. A man may not be a first-class shot, and a very great majority in the Army are probably what are called second-class shots, but that means a very good shot all the same; and there are very often in many places penalties for not being a better shot than you are, which rather make men kick against it, and make them surly and ill-tempered about the rifle shooting, and one wants as much as possible to do away with it.

16356. You must have some incentive to the man who is lazy?—Yes.

16357. And you would not publish the musketry figures?—I would not publish the musketry figures, because I do not think there is any very great advantage in it.

16358. You mean the figure of merit for the regiment?—Yes.

16359. Because really now it is more a question of individual shooting?—Yes, I think there is no question about it that where you have a published figure, it has led to deceit, misrepresentation of facts, and as long

as the general knows what the figure is, if he does not think it is good enough he can express his opinion upon it. I do not think that a mere comparison of the figures of the regiments in the Army can be made, as they are shot under such very different circumstances that it is not really a fair test or criterion.

16360. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) And the conditions as to climate and atmosphere are also different?—Yes, it is not a fair test; all are not shooting under the same conditions. If all were shooting under the same conditions it would be a different thing. I would not publish those figures, but at the same time each General Officer in his own district, where the conditions are probably about equal, can judge of them; he can judge where one does well, and where another does not do well.

16361. (*Chairman.*) The pouches that the men have for carrying their ammunition you think need improvement?—I think they need very much improvement.

16362. Did you find that there was great loss of ammunition from them?—The present pouch, the buff pouch, is an extremely stiff, uncomfortable and awkward thing. Personally I am in favour of the bandolier. Besides we can barely squeeze 100 rounds into pouches; the men are always required to carry 150, and some generals like to carry even more, and the consequence is that packets of ammunition are always carried either in the trousers pocket or the coat pocket, and if it is not used it gets knocked about in the pockets, and broken, and that leads to loss, and at the same time there is not very much check on a man. He can always excuse himself by saying it fell out of his coat pocket when he took it off.

16363. (*Viscount Esher.*) How many rounds does a bandolier carry?—I think a bandolier carries 100 rounds.

16364. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Would you carry it in clips as the Boers did in the bandolier, in clips of five?—No, I do not think so. I think our system is better, because it is not always necessary to use the magazine. I think it is of great importance to have the magazine full. The Boer puts his clip in, and then he has to use up his cartridges, whereas we do not use up the cartridges in our magazine. We fill our magazine, and then take one deliberate shot each time with a fresh cartridge; but we keep our magazine, and if we were suddenly attacked by cavalry we should have our magazine ready. The Boer has not got that; he puts in his clip, and he is then obliged to shoot away one, two, three, four, five cartridges, and then his rifle is empty, and if he is attacked hurriedly at that moment he has got nothing in his rifle. I think our rifle is better in that way.

16365. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Do you consider that the present khaki uniform is in every way suitable for service in the field?—The khaki uniform that we used, do you mean?

16366. As used now?—Of course, there have been so very many alterations since we came home six months ago. I was surprised the day before yesterday, when I went to Aldershot. I saw a perfectly different khaki coat from what I had seen three months ago.

16367. What do you believe to be its advantage as compared with the former uniforms of different colours?—I think that the khaki is very good, but I would have the khaki of the very simplest description. I think it should be a fighting dress of the very simplest description. I think, so far as the officers are concerned, the present coat is rather elaborate, but I have not given the matter any very serious study, because I am on half pay at present, and therefore not thrown with them much, only I happen to have seen the new khaki coat the day before yesterday, and I found it quite different from what I saw three months ago.

16368. I believe one cause for its introduction was that it was not so easy to distinguish at a distance?—Yes, that is as regards the colour. That is so undoubtedly. I think a man in khaki lying among rocks is not so observable. But I think the chief point is to have the whole dress of the same colour, that is practically it. I believe if you had blue, if it was all of one colour, under many circumstances in Europe the blue would be just as unobservable.

16369. Blue would be quite as good?—Yes; where there are backgrounds of hedges, and so forth, I do not know whether khaki would be more invisible than all blue. I think the great thing is to have the coat and

trousers of the same colour. It is the contrast of colours that makes them observable.

16370. (*Chairman.*) As to raising local corps, I understand the point that you wish to make there is that there ought to be some code of instructions by which the raising of corps should be done on a regular system?—So that it should be done a little more rapidly. I speak from experience. I raised a corps myself during the Zulu War in South Africa. A great many corps were raised in South Africa. Probably one of the officers who raised corps could give much more valuable information on the subject, but that is what struck me, if we had a few simple rules for the guidance of the men specially enrolled in the Colonial Corps in small pamphlet form it would be very useful.

16371. Nothing of the kind exists that you know of?—I do not know that anything exists at present; therefore each officer has to do the best he can to frame rules, and there are some things to which you must tie a man when newly enrolled; you must give him some sort of instructions.

16372. And whilst speaking of local corps we might take another paragraph in your précis dealing with the same subject. You think that even in Colonial Corps the commanding officer and a portion of the officers should be Regular officers?—Certainly, that is my experience.

16373. But not the non-commissioned officers?—The non-commissioned officers I would have from the newly enrolled men. I would not have non-commissioned officers from the Regulars, because they are perhaps apt to be rather too regular in dealing with Colonials, but I think the Regular officer adapts himself at once to the habits and feelings, and so forth, of specially enlisted men of that sort much quicker and more readily than non-commissioned officers of the Regular force would. That does not apply to permanent Colonial Corps.

16374. No, of course not?—Because there, of course, the officers are accustomed to the men and the men are accustomed to the officers.

16375. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And their training is very much on the lines of that of the Regular Army?—Yes, they adapt themselves to it, no doubt. But in the case of a specially enlisted corps, where everything starts from the beginning, then I think there should be a very large proportion of Regular officers.

16376. Take, for instance, the North-West Mounted Police of Canada, and any similar force; you would consider the officers of such corps quite suitable?—Quite, certainly.

16377. Where the training is very much the same as that of the Regular officers?—There is no better officer out there than Colonel Steele, of the North-West frontier.

16378. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) In reference to the company officers whom you say should be relieved of pay responsibilities: Do the pay responsibilities and the clerical work they now have, in your opinion, interfere with them in the training of their men; does it take up so much of their time that they are not able to devote sufficient time to the training of their companies?—I can hardly say that it takes up too much time, but it is the anxiety, worry, and responsibility of it which may prevent an officer perhaps reading more and studying more, and thinking more of his profession if he has those things on his mind.

16379. Do you not think that the very first duty of a good company officer is the training of his men?—Yes.

16380. And that anything that interferes with the training of his men he ought not to be asked to do?—Yes, I think so. I have always been of that opinion. I have over and over again recommended on various occasions when the opportunity offered that the executive officers of companies and regiments should be relieved of pay responsibilities.

16381. Of course, the fact that he may be at a loss having these pay responsibilities to discharge, may press on his mind so much as to prevent his discharging his duty of training the men?—I quite think so.

16382. (*Sir John Jackson.*) I think it has been generally stated that our men were not so well able to take care of themselves as the Boers; in point of fact, that they were not sufficiently careful in taking cover. Is it your opinion that our men in attacking were better than the Boers; that they showed more pluck? The Boers, I think, comparatively, very rarely attacked?—I hardly ever saw the Boers attack, except when they could manage to surround us and fire from a long distance, but I never saw the Boers advance to the attack on a position at all similar to the positions they held themselves.

16383. Whereas our men you found showed splendid pluck?—They showed magnificent courage and pluck.

16384. Then you spoke of the railway management being faulty; in what particular way was the railway management faulty?—I used that word "faulty" because I did not know that this précis was going to be produced. What I meant to imply was that if a railway is going to be used in a campaign a very strict discipline needs to be maintained on the line, and that the officers in command of the line of communications shall have very much more responsibility in connection with the railway, and have their orders obeyed, than a few officers who are specially deputed as railway officers.

16385. Civilian officers do you mean?—No, military officers.

16386. I will put the question in this shape:—From your experience did you find that the civilian officials of the railways did not pay sufficient respect and attention to the military officers in command?—I consider that the general and other officers in charge of the line of communication should have their orders attended to by the railway officials.

16387. And that in the case of South Africa that was, as a rule, not so?—There was not sufficient discipline maintained on the line.

16388. Or attention given to instructions?—Or attention given to instructions which they might consider necessary from time to time. One was constantly having to alter things. At one time trains were allowed to run at night, and at another time they were not allowed to run, and so forth; and very often the officials would say, "We cannot carry out your orders unless you refer them to Johannesburg," and so on.

16389. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) May I go back for a moment to a little matter mentioned in the second paragraph of your précis, where you speak of the Wallace spade, which you say is useless and cumbersome. Is that the regulation spade, and the only one that is issued to the Army?—It is the only one that is carried by the soldier.

16390. It is issued?—It is carried always by the soldier every day; it is part of his equipment.

16391. And you look upon it as being utterly useless?—I look upon it as a useless encumbrance. It is a very awkward thing to carry and march with, and it is of very little use on the ground, except it is the very softest ground, that has been turned over before.

16392. It is nothing more than a toy spade?—I think so.

16393. How long has it been in use?—It has been in use, I think, about 15 or 20 years.

16394. And it is quite unserviceable?—There are a great many different opinions on the subject, of course. That is my opinion. I say it is too much of a toy; it is not good enough. It was no use in South Africa.

16395. That is your experience?—That is my experience. I have never liked it.

Major
General G.
Barton,
C.B., C.M.G.

20 Feb. 1903.

NOTE.—The witness desired to submit a statement in writing with regard to certain points in connection with his services in South Africa, and leave was given to him by the Commission to do so. *Vide Appendix, page 659, post.*

FORTIETH DAY.

Tuesday, 24th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir EDMUND HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN DGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary.*

*Major-
General A.
H. Paget,
C.V.O.*

Major-General A. H. PAGET, C.V.O., called and examined.

16396. (*Chairman.*) You went out to South Africa when the Army Corps went ?—Yes.

16397. At that time you were in command of the 1st Scots Guards ?—Yes.

16398. And that formed part of Lord Methuen's Division ?—Yes.

16399. In the course of the fighting were you appointed to command a Brigade ?—Not in the first engagement ; in the first engagement I commanded two battalions told off for the attack at Belmont.

16400. Your own battalion and another ?—My own battalion and the Grenadiers.

16401. Was that your position during the fighting on Lord Methuen's advance ?—No ; in the next engagement two days after, I commanded my own battalion as a Divisional Battalion not attached to my Brigade ; at Modder River, two days after that, I commanded my own battalion, and when Lord Methuen was wounded the command of the Brigade of Guards devolved upon me.

16402. And at Magersfontein ?—At Magersfontein I was not present, as I was very ill.

16403. After that, in 1900, you were promoted to Major-General ?—On the 1st April, 1900.

16404. And you were in the Kimberley district ?—Yes, at first : my first command was the Kimberley district.

16405. And after that you joined Lord Methuen's Division ?—I did, and advanced with him ultimately to Kroonstad and Lindley, where the Yeomanry were surrounded by De Wet.

16406. On that occasion you made a very fine march, I think ?—The Infantry marched very well indeed, and the mounted troops made a very long march. I was not actually with Lord Methuen ; that is to say, I had my independent command ; he was on the left of a spruit that was there, and I was on the right ; he was on the north, and I was on the south ; we were moving parallel to one another, and he was in front of me. My force was chiefly infantry, and his nearly all mounted troops.

16407. And you remained at Lindley ?—I did, for a month. They left me to hold Lindley against the Boers, who at once surrounded the place.

16408. And did your troops behave well under those circumstances ?—Extremely well. We had some very severe fighting, and I could not wish troops to behave better than they did.

16409. Had you any difficulty about supplies on that occasion ?—Not much difficulty. De Wet always tried to take our convoys, and each time we got a convoy in it had to fight its way in, but it was not a difficult road, and it was easier than in most places to send out troops to hold posts of vantage where the convoy could be passed behind.

16410. Where had they to come from—from Kroonstad ?—From Kroonstad.

16411. And that was a distance of how far ?—About forty miles. The traction engines were employed—it was the first time I had seen them—for bringing me out supplies.

16412. What did you think of them ?—They did exceedingly well, but the difficulty was coal. As an example : when they came to Lindley the first time, they got there

with 50 or 60 tons of forage, but their coal had given out and there was no means of getting them back. They require to be used along a route where there are coal depots, otherwise they are practically useless ; to send them as they were sent to me at Lindley, and then back, there must be depots of coal, otherwise they cannot be employed.

16413. And to make them carry their own coal would lessen their utility ?—Very much, indeed. They burn a great deal of coal.

16414. What happened on that occasion ? Had you to get up coal in order to start them again ?—I pulled down some houses, and cut up all the wood in the houses, loading up all the wagons with wood, and they got back in that way.

16415. Burning wood ?—Yes ; I pulled down a lot of houses, and used the old timber.

16416. They can work with wood ?—Yes.

16417. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Equally well with coal ?—No, the coal is much better, but they had no difficulty in getting back.

16418. Was it hard wood ?—Very good wood ; we picked the wood.

16419. (*Chairman.*) You were reinforced after a time ?—I was ; a large mixed mounted force was sent out to me.

16420. And did that disperse the Boers ?—Well, it did not disperse them, but I was then in a position to attack the Boers.

16421. To take the offensive ?—Yes, which I did at once, and after two days' fighting we drove the Boers back on Bethlehem.

16422. And took Bethlehem ?—Then we assaulted Bethlehem and took it.

16423. And there did your troops behave well again ?—Exceedingly well. The mounted troops were a very mixed lot. I had nine different units composing the 1,100 men who were sent to me, and they had never been together ; they had all been scraped together, you may say, and sent up to me.

16424. Were they Regulars or Irregulars ?—All Irregulars ; I had no Regulars.

16425. How did you arrange for the command of mixed lots of that kind ?—Every unit had its own leader, and they were all under one Brigadier, who had been appointed by higher authority—I am not aware by whom.

16426. That puts the men under a disadvantage, does it not ?—Considerable disadvantage.

16427. You would have been much stronger with perhaps a smaller force ?—Yes, and a more compact force. I think I should say that at that time I imagine the Commander-in-Chief was much pressed, as there was fighting going on everywhere, and they had to scrape together whatever men they could.

16428. Had you Volunteers with you at that time ?—Yes, I had a very good battery, the City Imperial Volunteers Battery, composed of the Honourable Artillery Company.

16429. They did well ?—Extremely well.

16430. How did they compare with the Regular Artillery ?—As far as guns were concerned they were a

good deal better, and as regards the men themselves, they were certainly quite as good. I should say that they must have had some expert gunners sent out amongst them, their shooting was so good.

16431. How do you mean that the guns were better?—They had a very superior gun; it out-ranged the other guns, was better sighted, and was a quick firer.

16432. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Their guns were a present sent out?—No; I cannot tell you the history of the guns. You are thinking of the Elswick guns?

16433. Yes?—These were not the Elswick guns; these were the guns sent out with the Honourable Artillery Company, and I have no doubt they were given to them by the City. I know about the Elswick guns; they were given by Lady Meux to Lord Roberts, and I had two of them for a short time after the capture of Pretoria.

16434. They too were superior to our guns?—Very much superior; they were superior, again, to the guns of the City Imperial Volunteers Battery.

16435. (*Chairman.*) We have now got to a period after the capture of Pretoria?—Yes; there was great competition for these guns, and it was thought a great favour sometimes to have two of them.

16436. We are not inquiring into the military operations after the capture of Pretoria, but I just ask you this: after you joined General Hunter?—Well, General Hunter came up to Bethlehem, and I then formed part of his force—it would be very difficult to know what to call it, because it was practically a small Army Corps.

16437. Is there anything in the course of those operations in which you took part to which you would desire to call attention?—Of what nature?

16438. We desire to give any officer an opportunity of making any statement if he desires to do so, but we are just taking the statements as they stand; if there is any incident that occurred during your service in South Africa to which you wish to call our attention, now is the opportunity?—There was nothing which, in the public interest, I think it necessary to state.

16439. Passing on to the *précis* which you have been good enough to give us, as to shooting you were not very well satisfied?—Not at all satisfied; I thought the shooting was bad.

16440. Did you think it compared unfavourably with that of the Boers?—Very much so; some of the shooting of the Boers was extraordinary.

16441. Some of it, no doubt, but taking it on the average?—In those early fights their shooting was very accurate; every bullet had some mark, and there was no wild shooting at all, and when we got to the closer ranges, in places which were fire swept, everybody was hit.

16442. Do you think it was the case that in the earlier fights the Boers knew the ranges?—Yes, they must have known the ranges approximately.

16443. Which our men did not know?—That is so.

16444. And I suppose the Boers, not unnaturally, were better judges of distance than our men?—Much finer judges of distance, and then they were in their own climate, where they were accustomed to pick up ranges while that clear climate made it very difficult, whether for the officers or the men of our forces, to judge distances. No amount of practice in our own country would have made our men judges of distance in that climate. It was one of the difficulties of the war.

16445. We had some evidence which went to show that in the opinion of some officers the shooting of the British Army did not compare unfavourably with that of the Boers, taking it as a whole?—That must be a great deal a matter of opinion. I am going more not by what I saw when I had a higher command, but what I saw when I was in the fighting line myself.

16446. That is very valuable to us?—I was in the fighting line and saw everything that was going on, and certainly the Boers' shooting was very good indeed.

16447. And ours was not?—Our first move on Modder River I daresay is within your recollection, and there the whole of my advanced line and my machine gun section was wiped out in the first fire. The machine gun section had seven men and two mules, and in a few seconds there was nothing left.

16448. (*Sir John Edge.*) There the Boers knew they were going to be attacked?—Yes.

16449. And they had taken up their position some days beforehand?—Yes.

16450. It is quite possible that they may have marked off the ranges?—Quite probable.

16451. It was a proper military precaution?—Yes, but still it was 750 yards, and they had to shoot with great accuracy, because it was a long distance.

16452. Where you were fighting the Boers and driving them back to a position which they had not already taken up, did you find their shooting as good then?—No.

16453. To what do you attribute that—to their not having got the actual range?—No, the mere fact of retreating alone would be sufficient to account for their moderate shooting then, as beaten troops never shoot steadily.

16454. But would it not make a very great difference in shooting where the officers and men knew the range they were to fire at?—It would make a very great difference if they knew the range they were firing at, because as long as troops are steady and they have got the range with the accurate weapon of the present day, every bullet must come in very handy to its mark, the trajectory is so very flat. I would like to correct perhaps my remark when I said that the shooting was bad. I had better add to that that it was bad as regards moving objects. I have seen Boers missed, and I have had the same thing reported to me many times—Boers galloping up, say, to within the length of this room and the men missing them, and that can be accounted for by this, that in a great many cases with our hard-and-fast rules the men have all practically got their rifles with a fixed sight up to 500 yards, and it remains there practically all the time they are shooting. They forget in the excitement of men charging that they are shooting at these men with their sights fixed for a 500 yards' range, and the result is that all the bullets go over. The Boer has no such thing as a fixed sight—a slide which runs to the end of his back sight leaf.

16455. How does he know the proper elevation?—Because the Boer does not look at a moving object through the sight of his rifle. He fires high or low at the men according to the distance he guesses he is from them, and that is why our men were all rolled over at close quarters while we never hit the Boers.

16456. But shooting in that way requires a great deal of practice?—Yes, it would require a considerable amount of practice. I may add that given the range our men shot well enough; say that there was a range of hills at 1,200 yards, and they were given the accurate distance, all their bullets would go close up against the top of the hill. That they were very good at, but when I refer to bad shooting I mean at moving objects.

16457. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you recommend a change of system in our musketry courses or merely an increase of the number of rounds in the year?—I should very strongly recommend an increase in the number of rounds in the year, but the present training is good, especially with the military rifle. We have now little movable cardboard men running backwards and forwards, and we have also the targets which rise and fall, giving two seconds for the men to get their sights on to them, and all that is very good training for the men.

16458. (*Sir John Edge.*) Do you think it would be possible to train the infantry now to make their eye the sight really, and not to fire with fixed sights?—Very difficult, almost impossible. A great deal of ammunition would be wasted, and I do not think anything would be gained.

16459. (*Chairman.*) These fights, of which you were speaking, were the earlier fights?—Yes.

16460. Do you think the men improved further on?—The men improved a great deal.

16461. You say they were careful of their ammunition?—Very.

16462. Does that mean that they abstained from firing?—Constantly when good targets were offered. It was the common knowledge practically of everybody who was amongst the men, and at Modder River more especially (I only refer myself to what I saw), I was lying down with some of the men, and we could hardly get them to fire. They said to me: "We do not see anything," and I said, "You may not see them, but they are all lying down on the river bank; you do not

Major-
General A.
H. Paget,
C.V.O.

24 Feb. 1903.

Major-
General A.
H. Paget,
C.V.O.

24 Feb. 1903.

see them of course, but they are there." There was great difficulty at times to get them to fire.

16463. And that is because they were accustomed at home?—To reserve their ammunition, and to wait for some fixed target; that is their drill.

16464. There was a large amount of ammunition expended during the war?—Yes, no doubt. There was an enormous number of men engaged, and at one period all the troops were fighting every day in some form or another.

16465. I do not think I need take all these points separately, but marching, horsemanship, and general physique you consider to have been good?—Very good indeed.

16466. And the morale excellent?—Excellent.

16467. The horsemanship, however, was no good?—The horsemastership was not good, with the exception of the Regular cavalry and artillery.

16468. You are speaking with the experience of the Irregulars you have mentioned just now?—Yes, I should say that once or twice I had a brigade of Regulars attached to me, and I was able to compare notes as regards the appearance of the horses, and there was no comparison to be made.

16469. Even the cavalry soldier some witnesses thought was not a very good horsemaster?—He is the best.

16470. The artillery soldier we have always heard was good?—The artillery soldiers are wonderful horse-masters.

16471. But you think that the cavalry were too?—I think the cavalry were very good; the horses, when I saw them, always looked extremely well.

16472. And you think that, considering the class from which the Army is recruited the intelligence was good?—Yes, I thought it was very good considering the class.

16473. Does that mean that as the war went on they adapted themselves?—They adapted themselves, and improved immensely.

16474. And proved that they had it in them?—Yes.

16475. Do you think if you had had a superior class that experience of war would have been necessary to bring them to the same point as your soldiers came to afterwards?—It depends very much on the work they did at home before they went out; with soldiers who have to stand by hard and fast rules—what is called red tape, if I may use the expression—it takes a long time before they can be got to shake it off, that is to say to think and act for themselves, and that is the difficulty under which we laboured in the first part of the war.

16476. However intelligent they might have been before?—Yes, and there is also that fear of responsibility. The corporal will not do anything for fear of the sergeant, and the sergeant will not move for fear of the Captain, and so on, up to the senior officer in command.

16477. But granted you could train them on a proper system?—And take a larger minded view at home.

16478. In that case even the men you now have might be much improved?—Much improved.

16479. Does the same remark as to improvement apply to the officers?—As regards initiative, yes, and that dread of responsibility, which is what we all suffer from most, I think, should be done away with.

16480. That you found marked in the early stages?—Yes.

16481. But they grew out of it?—Not so much out of the dread of responsibility; in initiative and ability to think and act for themselves they improved enormously; but up to the last I think from reading the accounts alone of the actions that took place, if you read between the lines, it will be perfectly obvious that they dreaded responsibility.

16482. Have you any suggestions to make by which that difficulty could be overcome in the future?—It would present difficulties. I did touch upon it in the remarks I made. I think if we all in the Army felt that our actions would be fairly criticised, and not condemned too hastily, men would have taken more risks than they did. It was the dread of responsibility, of what might happen if things did not go well—that is what it amounts to in words—that hung pretty well over everybody. I do not refer necessarily to the higher

authorities; I am referring to the Colonels commanding regiments—perhaps the officers were afraid of taking the risk in case something went wrong, and they would be reported upon, and so on, right through. It is only a general feeling, not anything special, that I am drawing your attention to.

16483. But an officer ought to feel that his case would be fairly considered under all the circumstances?—If he has a check or a reverse he ought not to feel that that finishes him.

16484. (Sir John Edge.) Did you notice that there was any greater failure of taking responsibility as the war went on than there had been at the commencement?—Yes, it was very marked. Probably the reason was that there was a general impression that the war might come to an end at any moment, and consequently individual leaders often declined to take risks for fear of a reverse or a check just about the end of the war.

16485. Would it remove to any extent that tendency to avoid responsibility if an officer who met with a mishap had the right to have his case considered by a Board of senior officers in London?—Yes.

16486. (Chairman.) That means, as I understand it, that an officer ought to feel that before he loses his chance of further employment his whole career ought to be reviewed by some responsible tribunal?—Yes.

16487. And that tribunal you would prefer should be composed of several officers?—Yes.

16488. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) There is a general impression that the dread of taking responsibility is much more felt by Army officers than it is in the Navy?—Yes.

16489. Do you not think that the difficulty might be partly got over by giving greater latitude to subalterns and young officers in the Army?—Most certainly.

16490. In that way would they not grow up with a greater sense of individuality?—Certainly.

16491. So that when they came to have the command of battalions, or to be Generals of divisions, they would carry on the feelings that had been inculcated into them from their entrance into the Army?—Quite so.

16492. In fact the process of reform must begin from the bottom?—From the bottom, undoubtedly.

16493. (Chairman.) As far as the regimental officers were concerned, you cannot speak too highly of their leading of the troops?—That is so, and I saw a great deal of it. The regimental officer was a very fine fellow, and I think, if I may say so, his record as regards casualties—killed and wounded—in proportion to the men proves that.

16494. Were you satisfied with your staff?—Very much so.

16495. Did you have Staff College officers on your staff?—No, never.

16496. But you are of opinion that a proper training for a staff officer is an advantage?—Yes. The first thing is health and strength, because on service you must have men who are very fit.

16497. The work is severe?—The night work is very severe; after a long day's fighting you have to work all night making the arrangements for the next day, and it is a very common thing to be up all night after a fight.

16498. If equally good physically?—The trained man is the better man. When I began, my Brigade-Major had been Adjutant of a Militia battalion, and that was all the Staff I had.

16499. (Viscount Esher.) Was he a good staff officer?—He was a very hard working staff officer.

16500. And had he had a Staff College education?—No.

16501. (Chairman.) The next point upon which I wish to ask a question is with regard to horses; you say they were limited in number. What does that mean?—If we had a considerable loss of horses, and we came in wanting 100, 200, or 300, and we got half of what we wanted, we considered ourselves lucky. That is why I said they were limited in number, because the supply was not equal to the demand.

16502. You mean at the front?—Yes.

16503. That, I suppose, arose owing to difficulties in

supplying the casualties at the moment?—Yes, at the moment.

16504. You do not represent that there were not sufficient horses in the country, or perhaps you were not aware of that?—I do not think there were ever sufficient horses in the country. I may point out that I have only lately been sitting in this room on the Court of Inquiry on Remounts.

16505. You are aware, then, that the supplies were in excess of the demand?—Yes, they were so to speak, but the question is what was the demand? Their supply was according to the horses that were ordered, in excess, but the question is were enough horses ordered? The demand was, I suppose, what the Commander-in-Chief asked for in South Africa.

16506. And you think he did not ask for enough?—Well, I was under-horsed, and I never heard of any column which had all the men mounted.

16507. Was not that owing to the very excessive wastage?—Yes; but if there was excessive wastage the remedy was simply by having more horses. No doubt the wastage was caused by premature issue.

16508. That was the determining cause?—Yes. We would march probably at daybreak, come in in the afternoon, and pick up 200 or 300 horses, and go, say, 30 miles the next day.

16509. And to meet that would have meant the provision of sufficient depôts very much earlier in the campaign?—Yes, very much earlier; it would have saved thousands of horses.

16510. These depôts were instituted later in the campaign?—Yes.

16511. And when they were instituted did they, to some extent, meet the difficulty?—No; up to the very last we were short of horses.

16512. Then were the horses better acclimatised?—No, things remained practically in the same state up to the time I left, and that also appears to have been the case, from the reports I had, after I left, from various staff officers.

16513. There never had been really time?—No, there had never been really time to get 4,000 or 5,000 horses, and to keep on always having 4,000 or 5,000 horses in hand fit for issue. As soon as they were landed they were sent out. I will give you an instance that came under my notice. On a march in the direction of Philipsville I saw two mares drop premature foals in front of me, and I heard that there were nine cases on one march.

16514. Those mares ought never to have been sent up?—They had all been driven in from the neighbouring country, and they were just passed out to the troops 300 or 400 at a time.

16515. They were South African horses?—Yes, but nobody went into the question of their quality; they simply took a section of 400 horses and gave them to 400 men.

16516. They were not horses that had been imported from Europe?—No, these were local horses.

16517. I do not think I need ask you any question about supplies?—I had no trouble about supplies during the whole of the war; the food was excellent, and practically we were never short.

16518. And as to the rifle?—The rifle is a good rifle; the rifle with a clip is eminently preferable to the magazine.

16519. And the guns, as you said before, were inferior to those of the Boers?—Yes.

16520. You observe, as other witnesses have done, that you would have liked common shell?—Yes; I think I once or twice succeeded in taking positions with a very small loss of men, entirely owing to having common shell in my City Imperial Volunteers Battery. The principle of it is this: if the Boers are on the hills and ridges behind rocks, and shrapnel bursts, they all squat and get down behind the rocks. One does not know where they are, and cannot see them, but if a common shell is put amongst them they are jumping about all over the place, they show themselves at once, and then the infantry can locate them and one knows where to fire. The only effect of shrapnel on the Boers in my experience was to make them squat; I never could make them go, although I could keep down the fire.

16521. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are you speaking of common shells with time fuses or percussion fuses?—With percussion fuses.

16522. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) They did not give you common shell at all?—None at all. I never got one except with my City Imperial Volunteers Battery, and very effective they were. I could always move the Boers with common shell.

16523. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Where is the shrapnel supposed to come in?—On the plains, in the open, where there is no cover, but comparatively very few Boers were killed with shrapnel shell in the course of the war by my force.

16524. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But it was a peculiar war?—Yes, very peculiar.

16525. And it does not follow that shrapnel would not be very useful in a European war?—No; I think in my remarks I said, "A small proportion of common shell." Let us take an attack on a village; what on earth use is shrapnel in an attack on a village? If it is necessary to knock down two or three walls before the men go in common shell must be used, and we have none. I afterwards had two naval guns, 12 pounders, and excellent guns they were; they had common shell, and they answered the purpose admirably. If you ask general officers who have seen much fighting they will tell you the same thing, that common shell is a very valuable thing.

16526. (*Chairman.*) You think that in training men all arms ought to be trained together?—Yes.

16527. Is that possible in this country?—Quite possible.

16528. You mean training such as they can get at Aldershot now?—Yes, at Aldershot and at Salisbury on the plains there; but even if small bodies of men are put together—you need not necessarily have a Division—and there are some guns to go with the brigade and a squadron of cavalry, and they are constantly together, it is advantageous. If you wished I could give you an instance or two of the effect of people not knowing how to work the three arms together. Take the question of escorting guns, the ordinary thing for a man not accustomed to guns to do when attacked is to lie down near the guns, but that is the last place in the world where he ought to be, and it is only by being constantly with the guns that a man gets to know that as a matter of fact he ought to take up a position to the right or left or 900 yards in front, where he can cover the guns and better protect them than if he and his men were lying down close to them.

16529. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Does not the new drill book provide for all that?—Yes, but the drill book is not the same thing as doing the thing practically; the one is theory and the other practice; for instance, if a man going with an advanced guard, and he should have guns with the advanced guard, the probability is that if he is nervous about his guns he will have two or three battalions in front of his guns; suddenly a hot fire opens in front, there is a long pause, and last of all the guns come up; too late. Another time that man will have his guns right up in front he says, "I will not have to wait half an hour like last time." The one is theory and the other practice.

16530. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Were you satisfied with the accuracy of the fire of the naval guns?—Yes, they were very accurate guns.

16531. And the firing was good?—Very good indeed.

16532. (*Viscount Esher.*) You have got strong views as to the teaching of initiative to young officers?—Yes.

16533. You are in command of the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division of Aldershot now?—Yes.

16534. Have you any latitude in that respect?—Could you make such changes as would lead to such an improvement as you think desirable. Yes, I command the 1st Division, the 1st Guards Brigade is in that Division, and I have ample latitude.

16535. That is to say, you have the opportunity of carrying your theories into practice?—Absolutely, and I propose to do it. It is only by letting the officers clearly understand what you want, and telling them beforehand, that you can get it done.

16536. (*Sir John Jackson.*) You referred to the land transport and the value of the traction engines if you had had coal and water; have you ever thought of the idea of utilising oil motors?—Yes.

Major-General A. H. Paget.
C.V.O.
Feb. 1903.

Major-General A. H. Paget, C.V.O.
24 Feb. 1903.

16537. Are you in favour of it?—Very strongly in favour of it.

16538. Obviously there would be great advantages in a country where you had not the coal and water handy?—Yes, a supply of oil could be carried, and it is an obvious advantage. I am quite certain that if we had had some

motors out there, with an unlimited supply of oil at our various basis, they would have been of enormous assistance.

16539. (Chairman.) Is there anything you would like to add?—No.

Major-General Sir Reginald Pole-Carew, K.C.B., C.V.O.

Major-General Sir REGINALD POLE-CAREW, K.C.B., C.V.O., called and examined.

16540. (Chairman.) You went out with the Army Corps, I think?—I went out with Sir Redvers Buller.

16541. And at that time you were in what position?—I was in the position of Camp Commandant to Sir Redvers Buller—that is to say, practically the Quarter-master-General of his own or headquarters camp.

16542. On his staff?—Yes. Then, when I arrived at Cape Town, you know what happened. You know there were no troops in Cape Colony, and eventually, having diverted all the troops that he had intended for his advance through the Orange River Colony as it is now, Sir Redvers had to go himself to Natal. When he went he left most of the members of his headquarters staff in Cape town, and, amongst others, myself. A short time afterwards the man in command of the Ninth brigade with Methuen on the relief of Kimberley expedition was hit, and I was sent up to take command of the Ninth Brigade. I arrived just after the first fight of Enslin or Graspan—Belmont was the first fight, Enslin was the second, and Modder was the third—and I then commanded the Ninth Brigade until Lord Roberts arrived when I had command of the Guards Brigade until we started from Bloemfontein for the relief of Wepener, and then I had the eleventh Division, of which I continued in command until it was broken up after Komati Poort. Do you want to know anything about the Ninth Brigade or the Modder River, or anything of that sort?

16543. Is there is any question with regard to it which you would like to mention?—No. The first head of the memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575 post*), which was sent to me by the Secretary to the Commission is: "The adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field at different dates, to the work which they had to do," and I think on that I should like to say a word with regard to Methuen's command for the relief of Kimberley. It certainly was inadequate, it was inadequate in mounted men, especially, and I think that if it had been formed later on in the campaign he would not have been sent with only one regiment of Lancers and a very few mounted infantry.

16544. 120, I think?—Three companies he had, as a matter of fact. That was totally inadequate for the work he had to perform. Then besides that, his object and, as far as I recollect, his orders, were not only to get to Kimberley, but he had to relieve Kimberley, to pour in supplies, which entailed pouring them in by the railway, as there was no other means, and taking out of Kimberley a large number of women and children of the white population, and practically all the natives.

16545. That is what he said himself?—Then I am right. That meant not only getting to Kimberley which I have not the slightest doubt he could have done easily enough, but it entailed holding the railway in sufficient force to get out again. That meant repairing the railway bridge at Modder, and in order to do that he required a force of some strength at Modder to protect the working parties, and also making the line safe and sound through the very difficult country between Modder and Kimberley, a place called Spytfontein, where we expected to have to fight, but we had it at Magersfontein and therefore Spytfontein never came off. What I mean is, that we should have gone round by Jacobsdal, Brown's Drift, or Klip Drift, the way Lord Roberts went afterwards, and we should have gone straight into Kimberley and been there, I should say, 48 hours after the fight on the Modder, if we had not been hampered by the fact that we had to get out again.

16546. If you had gone round by the way you have described, the difficulty of getting out would have been very great?—We should not have got out, because we could not have put in supplies for the people there, and we could not have taken all the women and children and the native population out except by the railway; so that we should have done more harm than good. The only way of getting supplies up in sufficient quantities to do Kimberley any good, or for us to take the people

out, was by the railway, as we had not transport enough to do it otherwise.

16547. The transport, we are told, was only sufficient for two days for the force?—I believe that is right.

16548. And to put in provisions it was essential to occupy the railway?—Decidedly; to repair the broken bridges and hold the very difficult country, having first fought through it, between Modder River and Kimberley. I should not have gone to that difficult country at all to get to Kimberley; that is what I mean.

16549. And to act up to the full instructions your evidence is that you considered the force was inadequate?—I considered the force was inadequate. We made the scheme for going to Kimberley which Lord Roberts afterwards adopted; the way French went was our scheme.

16550. At later stages of the war, I suppose you found that the forces were adequate?—Oh, yes; as far as I saw myself, at later stages I do not think there was anything to complain of. I think that for some time, until, I may say, we got to Bloemfontein, the mounted forces with the infantry brigades and divisions, were not as a rule sufficient for the country, but then it is a peculiar country which requires mounted men.

16551. You mean on the march from Paardeberg to Bloemfontein?—Yes. I do not think any of us had enough mounted men, at least we would have been all the better for more. After we got to Bloemfontein we had sufficient.

16552. It was not only a question of numbers, but the horses had got so knocked up at that time?—After Paardeberg they were perfectly wretched, most of them; a good many fresh mounted infantry came up, but those that took part in the relief of Kimberley and the Paardeberg business were completely knocked up, chiefly from starvation, and so were the men.

16553. And that affected some of the operations afterwards between Paardeberg and Bloemfontein, did it not?—Yes, I do not think the cavalry ever recovered from it, until after they had been at Bloemfontein for a long time, and as to the men, I put down the great access of enteric, and the severity of it at Bloemfontein more to starvation than to anything else; very hard work under a hot sun on very small rations, and we always found that when the men were drawn too fine, as was only natural, they were liable to any disease that might be going, and enteric being the disease of the country, they got it. We who were better fed did not get it. We had exactly the same water to drink, and pretty much the same food, but we had more of it.

16554. Were the men's rations very much restricted on the march across to Bloemfontein?—I have no doubt you heard of the loss of the convoy crossing the Riet, and from that moment we were done as regards rations; if I recollect it was first of all half rations, and then I think quarter rations, but the Army did not recover from the loss of that convoy, until after they got to Bloemfontein. As I said, I thought the enteric was largely due to that.

16555. But I think your brigade of Guards marched into Bloemfontein in good style?—The men marched in very well, but my argument is this, that they were drawn too fine, and they were half starved, as well as being overworked, and that made them liable to any disease going, and that was enteric. They got it very badly afterwards when they got to Bloemfontein.

16556. After that period were you satisfied with the supplies?—Perfectly, as far as I was concerned.

16557. You always had sufficient?—Yes, but then I was usually with the centre block, nearest the railway except on the march to Dewetsdorp, and then we supplied ourselves, because the country was full of stock and full of grain, and we had no difficulty at all. After that I was almost entirely in the centre next the railway, and therefore there was no difficulty as far as I was concerned about supplies.

16558. And the quality was good?—The quality was excellent.

16559. Have you any evidence you would like to give about the quality of the men for war purposes?—I think they were very good. When we first started a large number of regiments had a great number of Reserve men, some had an average of 600 Reserve men to 400 in the ranks, and that naturally is not good. It cannot be, because not only are they raw, as a great many of them have been out of military work for some considerable period, but they do not know the officers. A great many of them had been soldiers before the non-commissioned officers under whom they had to serve, and the consequence was a poor discipline. That, of course, rights itself after a time, and I always think if we had a force ready to take the field without putting in any undue proportion of Reserves to begin with, when once the non-commissioned officers and the younger men serving in the ranks have felt their toes, so to say, on active service, then I should not mind how many Reserve men were put in, but if it is done at first it is very apt to destroy discipline. I do not say it absolutely destroyed discipline, but it made regiments not so good as they should have been; they were more like a mob than we like to see. I found that particularly at Modder River.

16560. As soon as the Reservists found their feet, I suppose the fact that they had been soldiers helped them to become very useful men?—The Reservists were quite excellent afterwards; all I mean is that if any plan could be produced whereby the chief part would not be Reservists at the start it would be very much better.

16561. (*Viscount Esher.*) Of course, it was never the theory that that should be so?—Certainly not, but that is unfortunately the effect of our system. It is exactly the same thing as regards the Guards' regiments. I think almost without exception—I am not quite sure about that regiment that marched from Gibraltar, it may not have been the case there—all the others had exactly the same ratio I mentioned—about 600 Reserve men to 400 in the ranks.

16562. Would it be a lesser evil to leave a large number of young soldiers in the ranks to go on active service? Now, of course, the cause of what you complain of is that the soldiers under a certain term of service are left behind, and the Reserve men are drafted into the battalion. Of the two evils would it be the lesser evil to leave a larger number of the recruits to go on active service with their battalions?—Well, that depends entirely on what they really are; if the young soldiers were really twenty years of age or over nineteen, I think your proposal would be better than putting so many Reserve men into the ranks, but you must remember that in a great number of regiments—I will not say in the Guards, but in a great number of line regiments—we have what they are pleased to call "physically equivalent"—sixteen and seventeen—who are not sufficiently fit in physical health, and they cannot stand it.

16563. When a battalion went out from England to South Africa, the tendency was to put every Reserve man you could get hold of into the battalion—was not that so?—I think they were obliged to do that; I think it was more than a tendency—they were obliged to do so by the regulations, because they had not the men to go.

16564. But you think they might have made that rule rather more elastic?—Yes, I think certainly something of that kind might be done.

16565. I only put the point to meet the difficulty you yourself raised?—Yes, but real boys who are not physically fit to stand the strain must not be sent. We found that years ago in Afghanistan—of course, that is a very much worse climate than Africa, and Africa is the climate of all climates for boys or young men—that the older and harder men whose constitution was more confirmed stood the strain infinitely better than the young soldiers.

16566. Of course that specially applies to hot climates?—I think it does. I am not talking about Europe.

16567. (*Chairman.*) As the regiments were constituted the physique was pretty good?—Better than I have seen it for years, in consequence of the Reserve men in the ranks.

16568. And the morale?—Very fine indeed. I had nothing whatever to complain of. I commanded altogether three brigades. The 9th Brigade was an exceptionally good one, because some of them were men who had come from other places in England, and they were not the young soldiers or the Reserve men. The 18th

Brigade was extremely good, and I never wish for any better men in any way.

16569. Were they intelligent men?—Yes, I think as intelligent as can be expected from the class from which they enlist. There were more intelligent men in the Guards Brigade than in the others, because they came from a different class, especially those Reserve men who were to a large extent men who had joined the Service on the three years' system in order to get a character for the Metropolitan Police, and we always get good men in that way. That was very much knocked on the head when they sent the Guards battalions to Gibraltar, because those men said, "Oh, no, thanks, we prefer not to join; we cannot afford it now"; but we had an exceptionally fine lot of intelligent men before the battalions went to Gibraltar in consequence of what I told you—that they joined with the bait hanging out in front of them of a preference in selection for the Metropolitan Police if they had three years' good service in the Guards.

16570. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you say that the fact of the battalions being located abroad interfered with the recruiting of the best class of men?—At Gibraltar—it knocked it on the head, and we could not get the men at all.

16571. Do you think if that scheme was carried out of quartering a large number of recruits in South Africa that would interfere with the recruiting?—Ah, that is a different thing. I am talking about the Guards. You see, we had that three years' enlistment, and nobody else had it.

16572. However, if it was proposed to send a Guards Brigade permanently to South Africa, I suppose that would interfere with the recruiting?—You could not hope to get those men, because they join for a particular purpose. On the other hand, I believe that South Africa has such a magnificent climate for men that the material that would be obtained would improve very much on the high veldt, and, of course, there is a scope for manœuvres that there is not in this country. I think it would be a very fine school.

16573. (*Chairman.*) Manœuvres is what you look to as necessary in the future training of the Army?—I think so for every reason—manœuvres of a sort, manœuvres where there is really a scope, where men can be really taught to look out for themselves and to scout.

16574. Do you mean manœuvres such as you can get at Aldershot?—No, I do not, not at all—to a very small extent, I think.

16575. Can you get them in this country at all?—To a very modified extent; but then I do not think we must suppose that because we have learned to fight the Boer indifferently well we have learned everything with regard to other nations. That is a very peculiar country, and I do not suppose we should find that country again if we searched the world over, except perhaps in the bush in Australia. I do not suppose we should ever be so foolish as to fight in Europe, but naturally that would be a very different thing, and so would fighting in this country, or fighting in any enclosed country, and they could be taught that here.

16576. That you could teach in this country?—Perfectly, better than in Africa.

16577. Because the manœuvres would be quite different from those you had to practise during the war?—Perfectly, and I think it is a very difficult thing to say how men should or should not be trained, for that very reason. I think that whatever training is given to the men must be modified by the circumstances that are found in the country to which they go.

16578. We have had a good deal of evidence that both officers and men were unwilling to take a sufficient amount of responsibility; have you anything to say on that point?—I do not think they were unwilling to do it. I should not say that.

16579. Perhaps I should say initiative?—You mean they had not sufficient initiative?

16580. Yes?—I did not find that. I think that as the campaign went on there were circumstances that possibly prevented men from taking the initiative they otherwise might have taken. I think that is probably the case.

16581. You are speaking more of officers in that case?—Entirely of officers.

16582. But even with regard to the men was it not

Major.
General Sir
Reginald
Pole-Carew,
K.C.B., C.V.O.

24 Feb. 1903.

Major-
General Sir
Reginald
Pole-Carew,
K.C.B., C.V.O.

24 Feb. 1903.

the case that in the circumstances of the South African War generally the units became so divided that a man must take the initiative and a certain amount of responsibility?—Yes.

16583. For which his training has not suited him?—I can only tell you this, but please do not think I wish to take any credit myself, because I do not, and I am talking about the men. I had no "regrettable incident" of any sort or kind, and only, as far as I can recollect, lost four prisoners during the whole time I was there, and that was not by a surprise (they were mounted infantry men), but I must say that I never found that the non-commissioned officer or men failed in any task when they were put in a little out-of-the-way corner and had to look after themselves; they did very well. It may have been the case that the first blush of the campaign had really been gone through at that time, and they may have learned.

16584. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You are speaking of the later stages of the war now?—No, I am speaking of the beginning, but you see when we went to Modder after the fight at Modder River we lay there for two months and therefore the 9th Brigade and the Guards Brigade had a very good opportunity of finding out how to fight the Boer and what the game was. I did not take command of the 18th Brigade until after we got to Bloemfontein, so that they also had had a considerable time to find out their job. The mounted infantry I commanded in the same way were Australians, and they had shaken down also.

16585. By that time a European war might have been over?—That is more than probable.

16586. One wants to know what the men were like during the first six weeks?—I found them extremely good as far as I was concerned.

16587. With plenty of initiative?—Plenty of initiative, I think. Of course, the men require leading; at a pinch they must require leading, but I doubt if very much better material can be got out of the class from which we recruit. I always put down the excellence of the Australians and the excellence of our Volunteers not to training—many of them were extremely raw when they first came—but to class. They were of a very superior class, and with class, as you know perfectly well, you get better education, and therefore higher intelligence. That is what really forms the superiority of the Volunteers in this country to the Regular soldier; that they are superior with regard to intelligence, and so are the Australians.

16588. (*Sir John Jackson.*) You also get a better-fed man; the man from the class from whom the Army is drawn is not, as a rule, well fed?—No, but I think it is the education. A man may not have seen or known anything of active service in his life; he may know nothing of soldiering, but if he is a well-educated man, and an intelligent man, as I think the higher class usually is, he settles down so much quicker.

16589. And particularly if he is left to himself?—Yes. Could you imagine a finer thing than a regiment of officers, taking the class from which you draw them? I would rather command a thousand of those fellows than ten thousand of anybody else.

16590. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You think brains are more important than numbers?—In a case like South Africa, most certainly. Please do not think I am talking about the possibilities of a European war, where it is necessary to have numbers. As you said just now, a European war would have been over, and that is perfectly true, but I am talking of the experience of South Africa.

16591. But we have to draw lessons for the future from the past?—Quite so.

16592. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose the efficiency of these Volunteers you speak of depends to a very large extent upon their leading; the officers you put in command of them?—Yes, but I think their class gives the men more initiative than the ordinary British soldier. I think their class means education and superior intelligence, and I think they are really easier to deal with after a little active service and training. They probably improve much quicker than the British soldier.

16593. Supposing you had to take a difficult position, would you very much mind whether you were making the attack with a regiment of Regular infantry or of Volunteers? Which would you prefer?—That depends entirely on what has to be done. If a place has to be rushed, without any sagacity required on the part of the men,

it is not possible to have a better lot than a well disciplined British force, but if sagacity and real individual initiative have to be employed, I should say much better work would be got out of men like the Australian Mounted Infantry we had, or the English Volunteers; but it is impossible to lay down a fixed rule for them.

16594. (*Chairman.*) Are there any other points in the memorandum which we sent you on which you would like to offer any remarks?—There is one thing; as to the shooting capability, I thought the shooting as a rule very good, and I had no fault to find with it. The marching, I think, speaks for itself; it was first rate. As to horsemanship and horsemastership, with regard to the mounted infantry, it was excessively bad.

16595. Are you speaking of both?—Both. The man was so busy riding that he had really no time to look, and in horsemastership they were beneath contempt. I think that is the fault of our system entirely. To begin with, every British infantry regiment is spoiled when it goes on active service by taking out of it the best men, because it is necessary to have the most intelligent men and the most intelligent subalterns and captains. They are picked out, and form a Mounted Infantry Company. When we first began they allowed mounted companies to act with the regiments from which they took them, but that was very soon knocked on the head, and practically the best men and officers are taken away from the battalions to form mounted infantry. Well, they have had no training as a rule; there is a certain amount of training at Aldershot, but as a rule those men are very quickly disposed of, and those who come on afterwards have had no training whatever in either horsemanship or horsemastership, and I think the system is absolutely wrong. I think the mounted infantry are most important, and I think a body of mounted infantry ought to be properly formed.

16596. Apart from the regiments altogether?—Quite apart from the regiments altogether. I have always said so. It is expensive, I know, but it must be done.

16597. It was suggested to us that another way of doing it was to have a certain number of ponies with the regiment, and pass men through, so that a large proportion of the regiment might be qualified to act as mounted infantry?—Yes, but there must be one thing or the other, I think, because an infantry battalion is spoiled by doing that. I can quote the 5th Fusiliers as an instance; it is not as if we had one captain and two or three subalterns for a company of mounted infantry, and that that was the end of it, but the 5th Fusiliers were especially unfortunate, and I think in the first phase of the war they lost something like five captains and four or five subalterns, and they had to keep filling up and up, and the men in the same way had to keep filling up, so the regiment is drained to nothing.

16598. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And you take the best shots and everything else?—Yes, that must be done; there must be the best intelligence too.

16599. It has been suggested, on the other hand, that the danger of a permanent mounted infantry force is that they may become bad cavalry?—Yes, we have all seen that said. If you want mounted infantry you must have mounted infantry. I believe the origin of the Dragoons was exactly the same thing as the mounted infantry now—men who could fight on horseback and on foot, and they have developed, I will not say into bad cavalry, but into cavalry. Some arrangement must be made by which that will not happen.

16600. And you think that quite feasible?—I think it could be done. Why should not that be worked out? After all it is only a matter of detail, which I think could be worked out. I do not know why we should not have a regiment and make them actually work on foot and on horseback, make them infantry to-day and mounted infantry to-morrow. That is only a suggestion, however. Anyway, do not drain the infantry battalions when they are most wanted. As to entrenchment and cover, the men picked up entrenchment quickly, and I think before they had been there very long they were equal to the Boers, which is saying a great deal, as the Boers were the best entrenchers I have ever seen. Then the next point in your memorandum is general physique, morale, and intelligence.

16601. (*Chairman.*) Those you have spoken to?—They were as good as we could have, I think. The next head-

ing is "Deductions from the experience of the war in connection with the general question of the training and duties of regimental and staff officers." The regimental officer, I know, is the target at which most people shoot, and I must say I am extremely sorry for it. The regimental officer and the regimental men absolutely fought this war, and a more devoted and a more excellent lot of officers I do not think you could wish to find. I do not think a man is wanted who has every attribute of a staff officer with his regiment; what is wanted is a man who can lead men; there must be intelligence, of course, but if reform is wanted the staff must be reformed. The staff was beneath contempt really, looking to the orders and counter orders, and after orders, and the confusion there was in the staff. I am sorry to say I do not know much about the working of the German Army, but I fancy that a general staff is the thing we want, and I do not think we shall get on without it.

16602. (*Viscount Esher.*) You have had a good deal of experience on the staff on the North-West Frontier?—Yes.

16603. How did the staff compare there—the Indian staff?—That was a very small affair compared to this; that was a one man job.

16604. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you think the Staff College gives a good education for the staff?—I do not know that it does not. I am not prepared to express an opinion about that, but I do say that that education, whatever it may be, has not a fair chance afterwards with the way in which our staff is constituted in the field.

16605. And at Aldershot now, under the present Army Corps system, is there any better opportunity of exercising the staff there?—That I cannot tell you, because I have not been there since it was formed.

16606. (*Viscount Esher.*) You were not at the Staff College yourself?—No, but it is the staff in the field I am talking about; I think a general staff is wanted.

16607. Did you think among the staff officers with whom you came into contact that the men who had been educated at the Staff College were in any way superior to others who were employed on the staff, and who had never had that education?—That is a difficult question to answer; some of them were quite first rate and some were not.

16608. You did not see any marked superiority on the part of officers trained at the Staff College?—No, I should say that is a question of the individual intelligence again, and that does not alter what I say about the instruction of a general staff for the field.

16609. What you mean, as I understand, about that is that there should be trained in times of peace a body of staff officers who have been accustomed to act together, and who would be employed in time of war?—Yes.

16610. (*Chairman.*) You do not wish to go into details about the supplies?—No. We were short of food and forage occasionally, but that was inevitable, and that occasion when the convoy was lost was the worst experience we had. As to the numbers and quality of the horses, it was a matter of amazement to most of us how the country and the Quartermaster-General here managed to supply the number they did; it was perfectly marvellous, and I am quite certain no other nation could have done it. The quality at first was good, but they destroyed such an enormous number of horses by waste and by want of care, and by one thing and another, that afterwards the quality became very bad, and in the case of the Argentines it was little else than murder; the Argentines they sent were soft-hearted brutes, and I saw it time after time myself—they looked good enough, but the moment they were asked to go at a pinch they stopped dead.

16611. Had that not something to do with their not being acclimatised?—Not at all; it is the nature of the animal. The animal is a brute, and no use at all. A lot of our mounted infantry were destroyed because the horses would not move. I rode them myself, and I know what they are.

16612. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Did you see any of the Canadian horses in South Africa?—Yes, some of them are very good; some of the Australians were very good too, and those I knew, of course, before in India. Some of the ponies we had from India were excellent, but the best naturally (I think it is always

the case), were the ponies of the country, the Basuto pony, as they could go further and do better with less food than any of them. The English horse was very good, the Irish pony first rate, but then he was more liable to get horse sickness. I think the English pony was just as good as the Australian, and better; but the animal that never ought to have been sent was the Argentine, which was perfectly useless.

16613. They were rejected by everybody who could get any other horses?—Yes, everybody. Mind you, there are two classes of the Argentines, as I dare say you know. There is one a very well-bred horse. Although I do not think they have a stud there, they have some very good blood, and a well-bred horse, which I have seen and ridden over country in Ireland, and which is very like an English thoroughbred, but the brutes they sent out to South Africa were a very low class of cob. They were "flat-catchers," because they looked much better than they were. They were all right until they were asked to gallop, but the moment they were asked to move they stopped dead.

16614. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to say anything about the guns?—The rifles were excellent, better than the Boer rifles a great deal; they lasted better, and I do not think there was anything to complain of. As to the guns, there again it is impossible to say whether our own 15-pounders would not have been better in an enclosed country and a less clear atmosphere than they proved to be out in South Africa. I think you must be, to a great extent, guided by the climate and the atmosphere you are going to fight in, but out there our field guns were of no use whatever against the long-range guns of the Boers, and as to our horse-artillery guns they were like pop-guns. The best guns we had were the Naval 12-pounders and the 4·7 guns, and that was, of course, owing to the marvellous atmosphere, the distance we could see, the distance we could shoot, and the open nature of the country.

16615. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Are you of opinion that the Boers were able to move these heavy guns much better than our men could?—Yes, they certainly did so, but you must remember that they were always fighting on an inner circle, so that they had not so far to move as we had.

16616. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And their life is also one of trekking?—Yes, and they used an enormous amount of forced labour. The Kaffirs really moved their guns and dug their trenches at the point of the whip and the rifle.

16617. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Were you satisfied with the accuracy of the firing of the Naval guns?—Quite. The 4·7 is a much finer weapon than the 5-inch that we had, and I think the 5-inch was practically put out of the Navy for the 4·7 one. The Naval 12-pounder is a beautiful gun, I think; it is so light that we dragged it about with mules, and it could go anywhere. For instance, we took a pair of Naval 12-pounders through the most awful country I ever saw, to Komati Poort, and the bluejackets were splendid. On one occasion I wanted some horse artillery, and they had not come up, and these two Naval 12-pounders kept up with the mounted infantry through that bush in the most extraordinary manner.

16618. There was no question about the accuracy of their fire?—It was very good indeed. They did not take the time our gunners did to take angles, and that sort of thing. They put one shot over and another under, and the third was usually in the middle, and having once got it they kept it.

16619. (*Sir John Edge.*) Had you any Volunteer companies attached to the Regulars under you?—Yes.

16620. How did they do?—Very well indeed; in the 18th Brigade each of the four battalions had a Volunteer company, and they did extremely well.

16621. Did they fall into line quickly?—Yes, very; and on that I have formed my opinion to a certain extent that there is more in education and intelligence than there is in training.

16622. Have you had any experience of Volunteers at home here?—Those were Volunteers from home.

16623. You have had no experience of the Volunteers except of the men you had in South Africa?—No. I saw the City Imperial Volunteers, because they were in South Africa too. I have never had to do with Volunteers in this country.

16624. Does the experience you gained in South

Major
General Sir
Reginald
Pole-Carew,
K.C.B., C.V.O.
24 Feb. 1903.

Major-
General Sir
Reginald
Pole-Carew.
K.C.B., C.V.O.

Africa lead you to consider that that class of man even imperfectly trained might easily be quickly trained and made a good soldier?—Yes, and that remark

(After a short adjournment.)

applies also, as I have told you, to the Australians, Canadians, and New Zealanders, and I had to do with them all.

24 Feb. 1903.

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. STOPFORD, K.C.M.G., C.B., recalled, and further examined.

(See Questions 931 to 1064, Vol. I., for Sir Frederick Stopford's previous Evidence.)

Brigadier-
General The
Hon. Sir F.
W. Stopford.
K.C.M.G., C.B.

16625. (Chairman.) I think you went to South Africa with Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes, I went out as Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller, and I stayed out with him all the time he was there.

16626. As Military Secretary?—Yes.

16627. You did not hold a command in South Africa?—No, I had no command. I remained with him all the time.

16628. But in that position you had opportunities of studying the various points that emerged during the war?—Yes.

16629. And you had had before you went out to do with the mobilisation?—Yes, I was in charge of the mobilisation branch of the War Office before the war.

16630. So that no doubt your attention was drawn in South Africa to the manner in which the mobilisation scheme worked out in practice?—Yes, I naturally took great interest in seeing how the scheme, which we had prepared, worked when put to the test of war.

16631. Would you give us your views upon that point? In the first place, before you left were you of opinion that the mobilisation had been carried out satisfactorily?—Yes, I thought, as I stated to the Commission before, that our arrangements worked well so far as it was possible for them to do so, considering that the money necessary to complete the preparations was not sanctioned until a very late date.

16632. The delay in giving you funds did cause, in your opinion, a certain amount of delay in mobilisation?—It caused delay in the completion of the mobilisation in that the troops were not completed with the necessary equipment, harness, vehicles, horses, etc., when they arrived in South Africa.

16633. Sir Redvers Buller in his evidence pointed to seven days in which he thought there had been some delay in consequence of delay in the orders; what I want to know is, was there any other cause of delay except the delay in giving you authority for the money?—Mobilisation might have been ordered earlier than it was. As far as the military were concerned, the Reservists could have been called out and the mobilisation commenced at a much earlier date than that on which the mobilisation was ordered.

16634. (Sir George Taubman-Galdie.) But you only give orders to mobilise; from the moment the orders are given it passes out of your hands entirely. You are not an executive body?—No. Once the order is given to mobilise, the mobilisation branch at headquarters ought to have nothing more to do with it. The carrying out of the mobilisation rests with the General and other officers in the district; there was no delay on their part when they had received their orders to mobilise.

16635. (Chairman.) You have been good enough to prepare a précis of the evidence which you would give, and that can be incorporated as part of your evidence?—If you please. As the secretary has informed me that the Royal Commission desire to hear any views I may have formed upon the points indicated in the memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575, post*) which he forwarded to me, I have prepared the following précis of my views, but I wish to point out that as I have not held a command in South Africa I had not the same opportunities of studying the points in detail as was given to officers who held commands, and who had, therefore, personal touch with the men under their command, and direct dealings with their supplies, transport, etc. My remarks must therefore be taken as those of an officer who has only indirect knowledge of the points upon which his opinion is asked, arrived at from personal observation during Sir Redvers Buller's campaigns in Natal and in the Eastern Transvaal, 1899-1900.

Adequacy in Point of Strength of the Forces in the Field.

It is hardly my province to touch upon the adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field at dif-

ferent dates, and it is difficult to do so without criticising my superior officers, but it was apparent to everyone that the forces at the disposal of Sir Redvers Buller on his arrival in South Africa and for some months afterwards were quite inadequate to cope with the situation which he found existing in Cape Colony and Natal. On our arrival at Cape Town, Sir Redvers Buller received the intelligence that the disaster at Nicholson's Nek had just taken place, and that Sir George White had fallen back to Ladysmith, where he was surrounded. The only troops in Natal to prevent the advance of the Boer main army on the capital of the Colony, and, indeed, to the sea coast at Durban, were about 2,000 men, viz., two Regular infantry battalions and a few local Volunteers; there was no field artillery or cavalry available.

As regards Cape Colony, Kimberley was being invested, the Dutch were rising daily throughout the Colony, and the High Commissioner thought so seriously of the situation that he wished the artillery, on landing, to be retained for the defence of Cape Town. There were then in the Colony only one regiment of cavalry, three batteries of field artillery, and three and a half battalions of infantry.

An Army Corps was on its way from England, but instead of its being possible to employ it, as had been Sir Redvers Buller's intention, for an advance through the Orange Free State, leaving the Boers in Natal to be contained by the troops in that country, it was necessary with the Army Corps (a) to meet a general rising of the Dutch in Cape Colony, (b) to prevent the Boers invading the Colony, and (c) to save Natal from being overrun by the enemy. That the troops at Sir Redvers Buller's disposal were inadequate is proved by the fact that more than an Army Corps was subsequently required for the operations in Cape Colony and the Orange Free State alone. The portion of the Army Corps which could be spared from Cape Colony (and which had only just arrived in Natal in time to save the capital) was inadequate for the task of taking the Boer entrenched positions on the Tugela—positions described by General De Wet in his book, "The Three Years' War," as "stronger than any other English general in South Africa had to operate against."

Quality of Men of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces.

The general physique and moral of the Regulars were excellent. As I had been connected with the mobilisation of the force sent out from home, I was much interested in observing the effect on battalions, squadrons, batteries, etc., of having Reservists in their ranks. It had been thought by some that they would have lost to some extent their energy and military knowledge. The general opinion in Natal was quite the contrary. They were excellent, and the steadiness under fire of the troops, under conditions of modern warfare which they had never before experienced, such as heavy artillery and rifle fire from an absolutely unseen enemy, was due in a great measure to the presence in the ranks of a large proportion of experienced, well-disciplined men, who set an excellent example to their younger comrades. Such regrettable incidents as a panic or surrender of unwounded men were practically unknown in the Natal Army. The war has shown that our system of short service and Reserves is a sound one as far as service in the field is concerned.

As regards intelligence, many of the men who join the Army have not the same educational qualifications or practical experience as have men belonging to Colonial corps, and they have not had to exercise their intelligence to the same extent as the latter. The war has brought prominently to notice the necessity in our training of cultivating and improving the individual intelligence of the private soldier, without impairing the discipline, which is as essential now as ever it was. What was specially required in the severe fighting of large bodies, such as was experienced by the Ladysmith Relief Force, was intelligent leading on the part of the company officers, and implicit obedi-

ence to, and faith in, those officers on the part of the men. As the officers and men gained experience in front of the enemy, the leading improved, and they rapidly picked up their duties, and adapted themselves to the existing conditions, with the best results. The leading of the officers and quality of the men were given a very high test during all the fighting on the Tugela, and especially during the fortnight's continuous fighting, day and night, which immediately preceded the relief of Ladysmith, and again at the fights of Alleman's Nek and Bergendal, where strong entrenched positions were taken at the point of the bayonet. Nothing could have exceeded the coolness and discipline of the artillerymen under fire on all occasions, but our system of fire tactics left room for improvement; but here again the intelligence of the officers saved the situation. I had no personal opportunities of seeing the cavalry in action.

The shooting capabilities of the infantry were satisfactory on the whole, but there was room for improvement. The Boers told us that our fire was very deadly at the commencement of an action, but that after an hour or so it deteriorated.

The Natal Army had not the same amount of marching as the forces in the Orange River Colony, but its marching qualities were excellent, and the manner in which the infantry climbed the rugged mountains at the Tugela, Biggersberg, Botha's Pass, and the Mauchberg, was deserving of the highest praise.

As regards entrenchment and cover, the troops did not at first realise the necessity of entrenching themselves as soon as they had gained a position, but they soon learned their lesson, and every man on the Tugela soon became an adept at providing himself with cover. The Natal campaign gave the men of all branches of the service such experience in shooting, marching, taking cover, looking after themselves, cooking, etc., that by the time Ladysmith was reached I do not think anyone would wish to see a more perfect fighting machine than the troops which marched into that town on its relief.

There were no Yeomanry or Militia battalions in the Natal Army. There were some Colonial mounted troops in it, notably the South African Light Horse, and Thorneycroft's, and Bethune's Mounted Infantry, who did excellent work, and during the operations in the Eastern Transvaal subsequent to the relief of Ladysmith, Strathcona's Horse joined the forces; they were first-rate in every way.

Training of Regimental and Staff Officers.

I think the regimental officers have been unduly criticised, and as I have already mentioned, they performed excellent work, and led their men with great bravery, zeal and intelligence. They had had no previous training of war on a large scale, under present conditions, but they very soon adapted themselves to those conditions, with the best results. What is wanted is a system that will give the junior officers more power of initiative, and encourage them to act more on their own responsibility.

As regards staff officers, the organisation of the staff of divisions, brigades, etc., which had been compiled prior to the war, worked fairly well. Officers who had had no previous experience of staff work, and had had no staff training were naturally handicapped in comparison with those who had those advantages. The necessity for a careful system of staff training was proved; as, indeed, was to be expected.

Equipment, Supplies, etc.

I am not in a position to go into details regarding supplies, equipment, etc., but thanks to a good system of organisation, both of supplies and transport, it may, I think, be taken that every unit of the Natal Army, and subsequently of the force operating in the Eastern Transvaal, was always well supplied with ammunition, equipment, food and forage. Similarly, I cannot give details as regards the adequacy of the medical and Engineer services. I believe the medical arrangements to have been excellent, and the wounded and sick were well looked after, and were sent down from the front under a well organised system, to hospitals which were established in healthy situations in Lower Natal. The Engineer services were well carried out, the telegraph and bridging arrangements being specially deserving of praise.

Effectiveness of Guns and Rifles.

The actions showed that the effect of modern shrapnel against troops in the open, or behind very slight cover, is satisfactory when the range has been found, and if the fire is controlled and concentrated on the objective. Against entrenchments, however, gun shrapnel had little effect, either moral or physical, and a more searching fire, such as we obtained from the field howitzers, with their steep angle of descent, is imperative in an attack on troops behind cover. Greater range for both guns and howitzers was often required, and may again be required under similar conditions of atmosphere and visibility.

The Lee-Metford rifle stood the test of the campaign very well, and proved a thoroughly reliable weapon. There was a desire on the part of the cavalry for a more effective and longer-reaching weapon than their carbine.

Use of Different Arms under the Conditions of Modern Warfare.

As regards the use of different arms under the conditions of modern warfare, the value and practicability of using heavy artillery with a field army were clearly demonstrated. The want of a long ranging gun of heavier calibre than the weapon with which the horse and field artillery were armed was felt at the beginning of the war to cope with the heavy artillery brought into the field by the Boers. This want was met by the employment of Naval guns, viz., 12-pounder and 4.7-inch (brought up from His Majesty's ships at Durban, and mounted on improvised carriages), and subsequently by 5-inch artillery guns, and it was found that these heavy guns were sufficiently mobile to keep up with the infantry. As an instance of their mobility, I may mention that during the fighting near Lydenburg, in the autumn of 1900, a battery of 5in. guns accompanied Sir Redvers Buller's force, which drove the Boers over the Mauchberg, which is over 8,000 feet high, a rough and practically roadless country.

The value of mounted men who are good shots was brought prominently to notice, and I consider that in future campaigns the value of a force of mounted men who are good riders and good rifle shots will be immense, but to get the greatest value out of such a force, the men must be thoroughly well trained in horsemanship and horse management, and every man must be a picked shot; in fact, the two paramount qualifications must be good horsemanship and good marksmanship. Such a force will, I think, have a great rôle in European as well as in South African warfare.

16636. I do not know that I have any question to ask you with regard to the strength of the forces in the field. In that part of your précis you deal with the circumstances as they are known to have existed at the time?—Yes.

16637. Then we come to the point that I was speaking of at the beginning: that as you had been connected with the mobilisation of the force sent out from home you were much interested in observing the effect on battalions, squadrons, batteries, etc., of having Reservists in their ranks?—That I naturally took great interest in, and as I have mentioned in my statement, I thought that the fact of having Reservists in the ranks was an undoubted benefit to the units—that the presence of trained, seasoned men in the ranks was an undoubted good. The fears of certain people before the war, that the fact of the Reservists having been some time away from the colours would make them slow or lose their military knowledge, were not borne out. I think that our system of short service with Reserves joining the ranks in time of war is a sound one.

16638. Do you know, with regard to those regiments that you had in Natal, what sort of proportion there was between the Reservists and the other men?—I should think there were about 50 to 60 per cent. of Reservists.

16639. And you see no objection to such a number as that?—No; none whatever.

16640. We have had evidence to the effect that, at any rate at first, until the Reservist became acquainted with the conditions it was apt to interfere with discipline. Did you observe anything of that sort?—I cannot say that I saw anything of the kind at all. I think the Reservist was quite as well behaved a man as the young soldier, and, having had previous ex-

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir E. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.

24 Feb. 1903.

Brigadier-
General The
Hon. Sir F.
W. Stopford,
K.C.M.G., C.B.

24 Feb. 1903.

perience in soldiering, he settled down quicker to life on active service than the others.

16641. Please do not understand me to suppose that the Reservist was not a perfectly well-behaved man, but evidence has been given to the effect that, owing to the Reservist coming back to a regiment in which he found perhaps non-commissioned officers—younger men than himself—and the conditions of service, and, perhaps, of the arms even being different from what he had been accustomed to, there was almost necessarily a time during which the regiment had not amalgamated?—That is possible, but I should not have seen it personally, because, owing to the nature of my work, I was not in very close touch with the regiments; but I did not hear any complaints on the subject from officers. On the contrary, I heard good spoken of the effect of the presence of Reservists in the ranks.

16642. Do you not think that difficulty would arise more if the proportion was so large as 60 per cent.?—It might possibly have that effect.

16643. That was, in fact, the proportion that was given to us, that there were regiments in which the Reservists were something like 60 per cent., and that a difficulty was felt?—I can imagine there being an initial difficulty, but I should think it would very soon wear down, and it certainly did so.

16644. Would that difficulty arise chiefly in regiments coming from home?—I should think probably it would. I put it this way: The regiments coming from abroad would be much stronger in seasoned men and the proportion of Reservists in the ranks would consequently be much smaller. In case of mobilisation for home defence the proportion of Reservists would be very much less, because men of much shorter service and younger men would be in the ranks than was the case in the late war.

16645. But in this case in South Africa you left at home a very large proportion of young men?—Yes, I think I gave the Commission the actual details of the case the last time that I was examined.

16646. But that would account for this question of 60 per cent. of Reservists in the regiments coming from this country?—Yes, there would be nothing like that proportion for the ordinary conditions for service at home.

16647. Was there any calculation as to what the probable proportion would be for the regiments that went out?—Yes, it was worked out actually. After this lapse of time I could not speak accurately as to this without seeing the figures.

16648. But, generally, what would you have anticipated the proportion of Reservists to men with the colours would have been?—I should think, out of a battalion of a thousand men, it would be from 150 to 200 for home defence if battalions were up to their peace establishment.

16649. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But we had 80,000 Reservists in the country at the time of the outbreak of the war?—For South Africa there were 50 or 60 per cent. of Reservists in the ranks, but supposing the mobilisation were for home defence, the number of men who would be retained in the ranks on mobilisation would be so much greater, that the number of Reservists required to complete would not be more than about 200, supposing battalions were up to their peace establishment on mobilisation being ordered.

16650. That is 20 per cent. of the regiment?—Yes.

16651. But 80,000 men would constitute more than 20 per cent. of any army we are likely to have at home?—Ycs. The Reservists not required to complete the units up to war establishment would be in reserve until they were required.

16652. You would only call out that number?—That does not follow. All the Reservists would probably be called out, although they would not all be required in the first line.

16653. Section A you mean?—No. Supposing there were a large war; for home defence or on the Continent, all the Reservists would probably be called up, but would not be utilised at once in the first line.

16654. Let us have it quite clear. If you call up 80,000 men you would require more than 200 men to a battalion to make up the fighting line, would you not?—The number required to make up the fighting

line is irrespective of the total number of Reservists available. It depends upon the number required to bring up each unit from its peace strength to its war establishment, which is a fixed establishment.

16655. And you put them as only 200 per 1,000 as the maximum?—I should not like to say what would have been the actual number for every battalion in the Army at the time of the war, supposing the mobilisation had been for home defence. It would vary so much in different battalions, consequent on their actual strength at the time of mobilisation, but a battalion which was then up to its peace establishment would require about 200 to complete it to its war establishment.

16656. (Chairman.) What I understand is, that though there were nearly 80,000 Reservists available, the mobilisation scheme did not imply that the whole of those 80,000 were to be at once put into battalions of the Army?—Only as many Reservists as would be required to make up the units to their war establishment would be utilised in this way. By having a fixed war establishment for each unit the details as regards its equipment, transport, etc., can be worked out beforehand, any surplus Reservists to that establishment would be kept in reserve until required.

16657. To fill up, say, the casualties?—Yes. The war establishment is an absolutely fixed one, as by fixing the establishment all the mobilisation arrangements are very much simplified.

16658. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I quite understand that, but I gather from the figures before the Commission previously that there would be more than 200 men?—I may be quite wrong, that is my impression, from recollection, as to the numbers required for a battalion which is up to its peace establishment. I could get you approximately the correct proportion.*

16659. (Chairman.) I should be very glad if you would. But you are of opinion that your experience in Natal with regard to Reservists shows that the short service, the Reserve system, is sound?—Yes, I certainly think so.

16660. Then as to intelligence, with which you deal next in your précis, that was a matter which developed very much as the war went on?—Yes; as I have stated in the précis, I think that the men certainly gained their experience quickly, and that what is most required now in training is to encourage that individuality, but at the same time not to loosen the discipline in doing so. That was the point I wished to make.

16661. You put it as strongly as this: that by the time Ladysmith was reached you do not think anyone would wish to see a more perfect fighting machine than the troops which marched into that town on its relief?—I thought they were as good as they could be in every particular.

16662. That means then, if I understand it aright, that men recruited from the classes from which our Army is recruited, can be developed into a perfect fighting machine?—Yes, I think so. I think for the fighting we had before we got into Ladysmith, which was of a severe kind, attacking very strong positions, that the class of man we had was exactly the man you want.

16663. He is sufficiently intelligent, you think, to be trained into a good soldier?—Quite. We were fighting in large bodies, under difficult conditions, and I think that the fact of some of the men being rather of a roughish nature was all the better.

16664. But there has been a good deal of criticism of the class from which the Army is recruited. Your experience then, would lead you to suppose that so far as that is concerned it is more a matter of training than of class?—Yes, I think it is. I should be very sorry to see the Army without a large proportion of the hard, strong, navy class in the ranks. He makes a magnificent fighting man. A certain number of men enlist who are not the class we require, either in character or physique, but very few of them complete their service or pass into the Reserve.

16665. But do you get the navy at present?—I think some of the men we had who had been in the Reserves were as fine specimens of that class of man as you could wish to see.

16666. You are speaking more of the Reserves than of the recruit as he comes into the Army?—I think the recruit will grow into that, though when he enlists he

* The witness subsequently wrote that the proportion of Reservists which would be required to complete a battalion which was up to its peace establishment, in the event of a mobilisation for Home defence, was about 200 men.

is very young, and he has not, as a rule, developed into the same class of fighting man as the Reservist is.

16667. It has been put in this way: That a smaller army drawn from a more intelligent class would be of equal value to a larger army drawn from the class which we, at present, recruit from. Is that your opinion?—I think that the more intelligence you have in the ranks the better, if you do not get the intelligence at the loss of discipline and physique.

16668. In what way?—I should be sorry if in training our men to use their intelligence the result was in any way to lessen the discipline that at present has made our Army a good fighting army. I think there is a tendency to believe—I do not mean to say in military ranks—that intelligence without careful training will make a man a good soldier. I do not hold this opinion.

16669. But there are differences of intelligence between different classes in society, no doubt?—Yes.

16670. And the question is, whether if you take a more intelligent class, you could do with fewer men, and have an adequate training without any loss of discipline?—Possibly, but I should be sorry to see the navy class eliminating from our ranks.

16671. But still, so far as I understand the sentence I have just read, the result of the training of war upon the troops that we actually have at the present moment, was that it made them, in your opinion, a perfect fighting machine?—Yes; if you take the men who fought at Pieters, and took those strong positions there, I do not think one could wish to see better soldiers for that class of work.

16672. (*Viscount Esher.*) You mean that you do not like the idea of the soldier having too much independence of thought?—I should like to see him trained into independence of thought, but not at the expense of discipline.

16673. (*Chairman.*) You have no experiences of the Yeomanry or Militia?—None in South Africa.

16674. And only of the South African Colonial troops?—We had troops raised in the country, Colonial mounted infantry, and after we left Ladysmith, Strathcona's Horse.

16675. Do you think well of them all?—Yes. I think that they learned their work quickly, and did exceedingly well.

16676. They, of course, had had very short opportunities of training?—Yes, it was short, but it was continuous, and they improved very much. I do not say at first they were as good as they were afterwards, but they were hard at it continuously. I suppose no body saw more fighting than the South African Light Horse and Bethune's and Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry. They were, in fact, fighting practically every day.

16677. I rather think we have heard that they were recruited from an intelligent class; was it not, therefore, for that reason that they adapted themselves so well in a short time with little training?—It may have been to a certain extent, but I did not think, from what I saw of them, that they were of a very much different class from the British soldier. I am speaking of those that were raised in the country. They were very much of the same class as our soldiers. They were men who had knocked about the world a good deal, and had more experience, but I do not think they were from a different scale.

16678. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) They were men of wide experience in all sorts and condition of life?—Yes, that is so. I think they were of the same class as our men, but had more occasions for looking after themselves.

16679. They had been practised in initiative during all their lives—from the time they were men?—Yes, I should think a great many of them. I am not now speaking of Strathcona's Horse, who were a different class of men.

16680. (*Chairman.*) But you saw Strathcona's Horse?—Yes, they were with us for some time, and they were excellent. They were a different class, and I should have thought that they were men who had had a certain amount of semi-military work before—police work; they gave one that impression.

16681. In the training of officers, what is wanted, in your opinion, I understand, is to give them more initiative?—Yes, I think that is so.

16682. And to train them to act upon their responsibility?—Yes.

16683. How would you propose to do that?—I think I might give you as an instance, the method adopted by Sir Redvers Buller when he was commanding the First Army Corps at Aldershot two years ago, which was very much appreciated by all the officers serving under him, and which had a very good effect. Whilst the operations were going on he never interfered with the officers, but always watched them, and saw what all ranks were doing. He never practically found fault at the time with what they were doing, but after the operation, the next day, he used to take out the officers and go over the whole of the work again, ask their reasons why they did so and so, and explain and correct any mistakes they might have made. I thought the system was much appreciated by the officers, and that it had a very good effect upon the training of all the troops. That is one way in which I think you could encourage officers to take responsibility without interfering with them whilst doing so.

16684. And in regard to staff officers, what have you to say?—I speak rather diffidently, as being a staff officer myself, but I certainly thought that the officers who had had staff training had an advantage over those who had had none.

16685. Do you mean Staff College men?—Yes.

16686. I suppose there were a good many officers on the staff in South Africa who had not been through the Staff College?—There were a good many, but there was a very fair proportion of officers who had been through the Staff College, or who had been adjutants, and done a certain amount of staff work. I certainly think that the Staff College training is an advantage to an officer.

16687. And that it would be an advantage to the Army if more men could go through the Staff College?—Certainly it would.

16688. I suppose, as a matter of fact, in South Africa there were not enough men who had been through the Staff College to supply the staff?—Yes, but I do not think it would be advisable to shorten the course at the Staff College.

16689. Would you give your reasons?—I think our officers should have as complete a staff training as have officers of other European nations. With the exception of Austria and Russia, who each have a two years' training, every nation on the Continent gives their officers three years' training in their Staff College. We give ours two years, and during that training they are attached to other arms, whereas abroad officers are attached to other arms in addition to their Staff College training. I think the course should not be reduced without very careful consideration.

16690. Does that apply to all grades of the staff?—Yes; I know myself I thought that what I learnt at the Staff College was of very great service to me. I think more officers should go to the Staff College, but I do not consider that they should do a shorter course than at present.

16691. If the course cannot be shortened, the only way to enable more officers to go to the Staff College will be to increase the accommodation at the College, will it not?—I am not sure that that would be necessary, but the present Commandant, Colonel Miles, could give the Commission, if thought well, much better details than I could, because it is many years since I was there. I understood from him that the number of students could be increased without any great increase of the building, that the halls, and so on, are large enough for a greater number of officers, and that many of the officers are married and could live in the neighbourhood, as some of them do now. But I am afraid I am not quite competent to speak on that point.

16692. That is not a point that you wish to deal with?—No. It is several years since I passed the Staff College, so that I do not know how matters are arranged there at present.

16693. As to guns, you agree with other evidence that we have had that shrapnel by itself is not quite sufficient?—Yes. We found that when the enemy were under cover we required howitzers with a steep angle of descent to assist the shrapnel. The shrapnel had no doubt the effect of keeping the enemy hidden in their trenches, and this was a great advantage in the attack of positions as the enemy's fire was kept down, but shrapnel had not the same effect as regards killing and demoralising the enemy in the trenches as the howitzers had, for the enemy knew that

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.

25 Feb. 1903.

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.

24 Feb. 1903.

the latter could kill them even when hidden in their deep trenches, which the former could not.

16694. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You are not raising the question of the difference between shrapnel and common shell, but the difference between shrapnel and howitzers or mortars?—I meant to emphasise the fact that gun shrapnel by itself is not sufficient, but that howitzers were a powerful adjunct to it—as we found in Natal where the howitzers did most excellent work.

16695. (*Chairman.*) What do you say about common shell? Some officers have said that common shell is necessary?—I would sooner have howitzers than common shell from guns, though I must say that the effect of common shell fired by the naval guns at Pieter's was very great indeed, because they were able to play on the trenches until almost the last moment, much longer than would have been possible with shrapnel.

16696. But the ordinary field gun does not carry common shell?—No, but they can use percussion shrapnel as common shell if considered necessary.

16697. They are not taken by the batteries?—No, common shell is not taken.

16698. What officers have said to us was that in their opinion common shell ought to be always carried by a battery and used. Was that your experience also?—I should prefer a combination of shrapnel with field guns and howitzers.

16699. That is the way you would meet that particular point?—Yes. I am not an artillery officer, but that is my impression.

16700. You also mention the heavy artillery?—Yes, we certainly found that we were at first out-ranged by the Boers, and the heavy artillery was most useful. We also found it was quite practical to take the heavy guns over very rough country indeed. We found that heavy guns could be taken with infantry over almost any country. We took them over the Mauchberg, which one would have thought was only suitable for mountain guns.

16701. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) What guns do you mean?—Five-inch guns.

16702. (*Chairman.*) I think it was put to us that as it stands the horse artillery were too weak, but that you might get the field artillery so adapted as to go with the cavalry or with the advancing line, and rely upon the heavier guns of which you speak for the infantry?—I have heard this, but it must be remembered that mobility on the battlefield itself is essential for most of the artillery, both for prearranged successive advances under fire and to meet unexpected developments. Heavy artillery will be most useful, but cannot move except at a walk, which would be useless for the above purposes, and if attempted under fire would be fatal.

16703. And with regard to mounted infantry, which has come out so prominently in this campaign; you think that they will also come into observation in European wars?—Personally I do. I believe that any army that has a really well-mounted body of men, who are really good riders and good horsemasters, and at the same time are good shots, will have a very great advantage over an enemy who has not such a force.

16704. No doubt the conditions in South Africa were particularly favourable to such a force?—Yes, but I think also in Europe the same thing would apply. The men would have to be more highly trained in riding than many of our present mounted infantry are.

16705. And what about home defence?—I think they will be of very great value; the local Yeomanry, if trained on these lines, would be of great value.

16706. Even in a very enclosed country like England?—Yes, I think so, especially men who know the country well and have made themselves acquainted with local lanes, etc. The fact of the country being enclosed will be in their favour if they know it well, as they will be able to fire from hidden positions which they can get to and from by their knowledge of the country.

16707. It has been stated before us that in a very enclosed country like England, with good roads, you might do away with the great expense of a mounted corps such as the Yeomanry or Mounted Infantry Corps, and get the same amount of mobility by the use of other means—bicycles, and so on. What is your opinion with regard to that suggestion?—I do not believe a bicycle corps would replace mounted troops. We tried a bicycle corps a year ago at Aldershot, and I must say that I was

not impressed by the advantage to be gained by using them in large bodies, though I fully realised their importance when used in small units.

16708. For what reason?—For one reason, they take up such a great amount of room on the road.

16709. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) More than horses?—Yes, because, for instance, going down a hill they must be two or three bicycle lengths apart when they are moving in large bodies; they cannot be kept in tight touch of one another.

16710. (*Viscount Esher.*) And their mobility is not so great as that of a horse? They can only go along roads?—They can only go along roads.

16711. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) On the other hand, they do not require feeding?—They were most valuable for small bodies of men, but many of us were disappointed as regards their use in large bodies.

16712. Were you trying experiments with motor-bicycles?—No, we have not done that.

16713. With those you can go as close as you like?—Possibly, but they would be rather expensive.

16714. (*Viscount Esher.*) They want feeding too?—Yes.

16715. You have told us how you would propose to improve the initiative of the senior officers, but how did you propose to improve that of the junior ranks of the Army?—By practically the same system; that is to say, by giving the officer in command of a company a free hand to command that company, and by supervising him in his work without interfering with him during his work.

16716. Has anything been done in that direction lately at Aldershot?—Yes; it depends to a certain extent upon the individual commanding officers.

16717. But has the General Officer Commanding at Aldershot given any special instructions or advice to officers under him on those particular points?—Advice, yes. I do not think he has lately given any instructions in writing, but he has constantly spoken to officers about it, and it is in our books of instruction, and is well understood.

16718. It has always been in the books, has it not?—Yes, of late years.

16719. You see, so many officers have told us that that is one of the great practical lessons of the war, and what we are not quite clear about is as to how that great lesson has been tried, if it has been tried at all?—At Aldershot it certainly has, and is now being tried.

16720. You have had large experience, and must have seen great changes yourself during the last few months?—I do see great changes in the last few years. The whole tendency now is to let the officer commanding his company command it without interference. There are certain individuals who do not carry it out perhaps as much as others, but in the training of the troops at Aldershot that is the line on which it is worked.

16721. You do not go below a company at all?—Not as a unit.

16722. You take that as the unit?—Yes, but an officer who commands a company wisely would leave his subalterns to look after their half-companies, and they would also encourage the non-commissioned officers in command of sections. But the person responsible for the company is the captain.

16723. Do you think that the company officer gets in these days any special credit if he shows any peculiar capacity for dealing with his company?—Yes, I think he does.

16724. He does not get promotion, does he?—Not specially.

16725. Nor does a lieutenant if he shows any peculiar capacity or power of hard work get any practical advantage from that, does he?—Not at the moment, but I think it is known, and well known, which officers are doing their work best, and this is of advantage to keen officers.

16726. I suppose he would be well mentioned in his confidential report?—Yes.

16727. But when it comes to promotion, when a vacancy occurs and an officer is promoted to a company, as a rule the senior subaltern is appointed?—Yes, as a rule, if considered fit for promotion.

16728. In your experience have you ever known the—

case of a subaltern being passed over for another who had done better and shown more aptitude?—I have known officers not promoted because they were not considered fit for promotion, owing to the manner in which they had commanded and trained their company.

16729. Is not that rather when you come to the higher ranks, when it comes to a question of the second in command of the battalion?—I know the system is not promotion by selection in the lower ranks, as a rule, but an officer who was not up to the work would not be promoted.

16730. Then, what encouragement is there to a young officer really to work hard in his profession in the way that people work hard in any other profession; not very much, is there?—Perhaps not very much as regards increased prospects of promotion. He has the chance, of course, of being adjutant of his regiment.

16731. Then, I will ask you a question about the mounted infantry. What is your view about mounted infantry; do you approve of the present system of forming a company of mounted infantry per battalion?—As compared with what system?

16732. Of having a regular force of mounted infantry?—I think the system of taking a company from each battalion is a better system than having a regular battalion of mounted infantry, in that it is so much more elastic; you can train so many more men, unless a large number of mounted infantry battalions were raised. It is rather a large question of Army organisation. If you had only a very small number of mounted infantry battalions you would lose the services of a great many men serving in infantry battalions who would make very fine mounted infantry.

16733. Was Colonel Godley, who at the present moment is responsible for the training of the mounted infantry at Aldershot, out in South Africa?—Yes, he was in Mafeking during the siege and served in South Africa after the siege.

16734. I suppose he has more experience than anybody else at the present moment of the actual training of mounted infantry?—I should think he has.

16735. (Sir John Edge.) I suppose that every officer in the regiment knows that his confidential report depends upon his diligence and his capabilities?—Yes, I am sure he does.

16736. And there are other adjutancies open, I suppose, to men in the regiment?—Not as a rule. The adjutancies, as a rule, would be kept to the regiment.

16737. I understand that the adjutancy in the regiment would be kept to the regiment, but it might be necessary to get an adjutant for the Militia battalion?—Yes, the Militia battalions are a portion of a territorial regiment.

16738. It would probably come from the regiment?—The adjutancy of a Militia battalion would, as a rule, be held by an officer serving in the regiment.

16739. It might be necessary to get an adjutant for the Volunteer battalion attached to the regiment?—Yes.

16740. And a subaltern in the regiment would know he had that to look forward to?—Yes. I must say my own personal opinion is that I should like to see a system by which a good officer would realise that his chances of promotion were hastened owing to his good work, more than is the case at present.

16741. I am speaking of what may happen under present conditions. A subaltern in the regiment would know that there were several chances open to him if he were a good man?—Yes, I think so.

16742. Then I suppose when it comes to be the question of second in command, or commanding the regiment, the confidential reports are looked into?—I should think so. I imagine they are.

16743. (Sir John Hopkins.) You had with you on your various expeditions against the enemy round Ladysmith some Naval large 4·7 guns?—Yes, 4·7 and 12-pounders.

16744. Did you see practice from them at any time at the enemy?—Yes, constantly. I was with Sir Redvers Buller the whole time, and naturally, being with him I saw a good deal of the artillery work.

16745. Was it good?—Very good indeed.

16746. The 4·7 and also the 12-pounders?—Yes, both.

16747. Of course, our own field artillery were greatly

outranged in many places?—Yes, they were outranged very much at first.

16748. And then Naval guns came in?—Yes, they came in most usefully.

16749. With great effect?—Yes.

16750. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I just want to go back for a moment to the evidence that you gave us as regards the mobilisation, and sending out the troops before the war. There was one point, I think, that you were not examined on. Would it come within your department to receive orders to send out cavalry and artillery, especially at first, in case such an order was given?—The order as to the despatch of troops after mobilisation would not emanate from the Mobilisation branch.

16751. But as attached as Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller, do you remember the fact that there was a great outcry at the time about cavalry and artillery being wanted at the Cape, because, of course, the horses had to be kept some time there before they were fit for service?—Yes. There was a want of mounted troops in South Africa at the time of Sir R. Buller's arrival in South Africa.

16752. Can you remember at this moment whether there was anything in the cry; whether there was any delay in sending out cavalry and artillery?—I cannot say, because I left England before the mobilisation was complete.

16753. So that you could not give evidence on that point?—No, I could not.

16754. You spoke just now about Reservists falling quickly into their places. From your experience how many years do you think a man, on the average, would retain his memories of military training; that is to say, how long after he leaves active service would you rely upon him as a trained soldier in the Reserve?—I do not think that our term of five years' Reserve service was too long at all.

16755. My point was this. For how long after a man leaves the ranks could you count upon him as a trained soldier to return as a Reservist?—You are speaking of infantry?

16756. Of infantry only; there must be some limit of time?—I think you could count upon him as long as he is fit physically for his work. I do not think he would lose his powers of soldiering for seven or eight years or more. He would, of course, be all the better for a certain amount of training whilst in the Reserve.

16757. By soldiering powers you mean his habits of discipline and his military habits?—Yes, I think it would come back to him. It would depend upon the man, but I think he would keep his soldierly habits for a good many years.

16758. As regards both discipline, drill, and military habits generally?—Yes, I think so, but he should be occasionally trained, especially in musketry.

16759. Your mobilisation department is really a thinking department, is it not?—To a great extent.

16760. You plan schemes of mobilisation?—Yes.

16761. And when, of course, those schemes are planned the actual working of them falls upon the depôts of various people all over the country, does it not, the actual calling out of the men?—Generals commanding districts draw up local mobilisation regulations based upon the Army Mobilisation Regulations which are drawn up beforehand by the department.

16762. Still, that is all a thinking department?—Yes.

16763. And you are now amalgamated with another thinking department, the Intelligence Department?—The Mobilisation Department has since I left it been placed with the Intelligence Department, under the Director of Military Intelligence and Mobilisation.

16764. I should say your department and the Intelligence Department are thinking departments?—Yes.

16765. So that you may really say that your present department is now really a thinking department, a scheming department?—I believe so.

16766. You prepare schemes of mobilisation and strategy, and schemes of defence and offence all over the world?—I believe so.

16767. And it is not an executive department in any sense?—I think not.

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.

24 Feb. 1903

Brigadier-General The Hon. Sir F. W. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B.
 24 Feb. 1903. 16768. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Do you consider that the Canadian mounted troops who came under your observation showed intelligence in scouting, and were especially expert and serviceable in that respect?—I thought very much so. I did not see the actual scouting myself, but my impression formed of the regiment as a whole was a very high one. We

all formed a very high opinion of their intelligence and soldier-like qualities.

16769. They were used a good deal in scouting?—Yes, they were; and I believe they scouted very boldly and very well.

16770. (Chairman.) Is there anything you wish to add to your evidence?—No, thank you.

FORTY-FIRST DAY.

Wednesday, 25th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.G.S.I., G.C.I.E. (Chairman).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
 The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
 The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
 Sir JOHN EDGE.
 Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (Secretary).

Major-General Sir W. F. GATACRE, K.C.B., D.S.O., called and examined.

Major-General Sir W. F. Gatacre, K.C.B., D.S.O.
 25 Feb. 1903.

16771. (Chairman.) You went to South Africa with the Army Corps, I think, in command of the Third Division?—I did on paper. On arrival in South Africa I reported myself to General Buller, and he told me that there were no troops in my Division at present, but that he would give me some as soon as they arrived. In about three or four days (about the middle of November) he sent for me and said that there was a Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles arriving, and that I was to join their steamer and take them up to the eastern side—the East London line. On that I joined the ship and went across to East London with the Royal Irish Rifles—800 men. They were my Division till the end of the month.

16772. You have been good enough to prepare a statement in answer to the Memorandum *Vide Appendix page 575, post*, which we sent to you, and you would put it in as your statement on the general points?—Yes.

The adequacy, in point of strength, of the forces in the field at different dates to the work which they had to do.—On this point I can only speak of my own force, if called upon to do so by the Commission, as my action while commanding the Third Division has been criticised by the Commander-in-Chief.

As to the adequacy of the force at my disposal, however, I would merely say that my Division consisted of one Infantry regiment 800 strong when I took command, that it strengthened gradually to three and a half battalions; that the area held by me was long and broad, full of sedition, and that the force was inadequate for the work I was expected to perform with it.

The quality of the regular and auxiliary forces in respect of Shooting.—The Regular soldier, as well as the Volunteer, was a very good shot, as good as the average Boer, but when he got into the Field, the invisibility of the enemy, who was making himself unpleasantly felt, puzzled him. He was rather slow in getting his aim, and he found he was unaccustomed to use his rifle, without exposing himself, which at once brought a Mauser bullet in his direction. The Boer, on the contrary, was particularly good at shooting from cover, at getting his bead on to the enemy's hat or mess-tin quickly, and in getting covered again before our men could aim and fire. Other reasons for want of accuracy in our men's fire was too great hurry in getting off their shots, and in being trained, by so much collective practice, to fire at positions rather than at individuals (or whatever there was to be seen of them). This requires careful correction. On several occasions I saw our men wasting their ammunition at purposely prepared vacant trenches on kopjes, when the men who were doing the mischief were under cover in front or

to a flank. The Colonials used to say that black powder was purposely used by the Boers to attract attention to one part of a position, while smokeless powder was being used with effect by the rest, from trenches some distance away.

The shooting of the Militia from all accounts was not good, but a great number of men had never fired a course, and those who had had not benefited much by it, as the time at disposal during annual embodiment is too limited. A large proportion of the Militia knew very little about the rifle and what it was capable of.

The whole question of the Militia training is difficult, on account of the short time available. The country naturally does not wish to keep these battalions embodied longer than necessary on account of the expense to the State and the loss of wages to the men. The only solution appears to be to put as much shooting and consequently as little drill into the time as possible and to endeavour by all means to make rifle shooting a national pastime amongst the classes from which the Army is recruited.

It is impossible to expect the Militia Recruits to become efficient shots if their rifle training is to be hurried through as it is now. One month is as long as men can be expected to serve without losing their employment, and increased pay for even another month, say, would not compensate men for the loss of their permanent employment.

Marching.—As soon as the men regained their condition from board-ship life their marching powers were good. It is merely a matter of time and practice and is not progressive year upon year as a result of route marching each winter season with a valise on.

On service practically a man never carries his kit; certainly never his valise, which is a most irksome and detested load, and which would after a long march unfit a man for fighting an active enemy. There is, therefore, no object in a soldier carrying his valise on route marching; its use on these occasions has lately been restricted to men over six months' service, but it should not, I think, be carried by any soldier.

Horsemanship and Horsemastership.—I had no regular Cavalry under my command, but I saw a good deal of Cavalry horsemastership in many ways; much training is required to teach a man to be in sympathy with his horse.

The interest taken by Mounted Infantry in their work, riding, and their horses was remarkable. The men took to riding and made great progress in a very short time; of course much depended on the officer in charge.

Taking it all round, horsemastership was fair, but general result was bad owing to the fact that remounts

were landed in unfit condition after a long voyage, and had no chance of recuperating or getting into work gradually. This state of things was increased by the poor quality of the make-shift saddlery purchased for the Mounted Infantry and Colonials.

Entrenchment and Cover.—The men showed a keen aptitude and much ingenuity in making places strong. They worked willingly and patiently, but they had much to learn from the Boers, who were first-rate in planning and executing shelters and entrenchments in the most disguised and clever fashion.

For instance, trenches made by the Boers were seldom continuous, never finished with artificial or obtrusive lines about them; they were placed in any good position on the line of defence, on the hill, half-way down or at the foot, sometimes all three, where the command gave a chance of using them; sometimes the upper one well in view, was made unmistakably a trench, to draw the fire of guns and infantry, while the trenches below were occupied by men waiting their opportunity, when the attack got within certain distance.

The trenches were generally deep ones, wider at the bottom than at top, and gave good protection against shell-fire—if possible one end of the trench would open out into a donga to allow occupants to move to front or rear without exposure.

General Physique, Morale, and Intelligence.—The first troops, those I saw, belonging to First, Second, Third Divisions were composed of very fine material; there were many reservists in the ranks; the men were closely medically inspected, and there was plenty of choice; later, when more divisions were sent out, much younger material was met with, both in Regulars and Militia. The younger men wasted more than the older.

As might be expected in a protracted war of this kind, the privations and hard work found out many weak constitutions, but the sound ones became splendid men.

There were many cases in the South African War where the morale of the troops could not be surpassed, and there were cases where this was not so.

The men generally worked intelligently, and this was particularly marked in the Mounted Infantry, possibly because they were so constantly on the move and in touch with the enemy.

Deductions.—What we require at home are liberal manœuvring areas in each command, convenient to the troops, either acquired as a permanency or taken up under the Manœuvres Act of 1897. Government should secure manœuvring rights over a quarter of a county each year, or such less space as may be needed, to enable real value to be got out of the training and appliances given to the Army.

Tents are expensive to keep up, but outlay on them avoids the purchase of land and the erection of barracks on ground which is wanted for manœuvring and not for residence.

Difficulty in Finding the Enemy.—Owing to atmosphere, novelty, what not, this was very great. The necessary training to effect this must be very thorough, men's eyes must be trained to search for any strange object on the landscape or immediate surroundings, anything unusual, that should not be there, and men must constantly be practised at this kind of exercise; equally must they be taught how clearly to convey to others what they have seen and its exact position on the landscape.

Rushes in the Attack.—These must be sudden, short, rapid and irregular in interval and strength, otherwise the defenders get many chances; each rush must be locally supported by comrades' fire till the runners have settled down ready to support the next group in turn.

It seems impossible in the future to contemplate attacking by masses or in close formation of any kind. Regimental training must be constant practice over ground which permits of incorporating musketry with tactical exercises.

The mounted Boer is an adept at moving under fire from one position to another, dribbling three or four men at a time at a canter at very open intervals from behind one kopje to the next; the gunner found it difficult to get his range, as after one lot had gained the shelter, the next would canter 100 yards to the front

or 100 yards to the rear before branching off for the shelter. I saw this on several occasions.

Open Order.—The open nature of the South African country facilitates open order movements, and we found that the best order of advance was open column, company following company, men well extended to six or seven paces, often more, in single rank, with a distance of 150 to 200 between companies, the rear companies closing up when shelter was reached.

When the attack gained the dangerous zone, say half a mile from the position, unless the ground favoured the attacker, it was necessary to extend the files to a much greater distance, say 10 to 20 paces, and advance very slowly, men rising and spurting 25 yards to get to the next cover, while fire was kept up by groups whose turn it was to run next. No regular method can be laid down for this; it depends not so much on the officer or non-commissioned officer in the immediate vicinity as on the initiative of the best non-commissioned officers and men who become local leaders.

Owing to the noise of firing and the extreme extension, officers commanding units no longer control the advance by word of command, but their presence in the line helps to keep the movement in the right direction. It is difficult to keep the men moving under a heavy fire when cover is available. Education of the soldier to a high sense of national honour and responsibility must be a prominent feature in his training from his earliest school days.

Cavalry will more than ever be necessary for the fight of the future, but their rôle will be more that of Mounted Infantry than of Cavalry as at present one interprets the term. For turning movements, prolonging attacks and positions rapidly, for rear guards and pursuits they must be available. Care for their horses must be constantly impressed on them, and as carefully watched. Knowledge of how to save horses comes with experience; it cannot be taught in a year or two.

In any ordinary profession, if a man wishes to get on, he must devote the whole of his time to his business. In the Army this has not always been so, and it has rather been the fashion to consider that all work should be done in the morning, leaving the afternoon free.

The numbers and quality of horses.—During the first four months, the number of horses and mules was very inadequate, and as the bulk of the horses were newly landed and driven up country at once, without any proper feeding arrangements, a great proportion were in such an emaciated state by the time they arrived at their destination that they were worn out in a single day's work.

At Springfontein I saw hundreds pass through in this condition. Mules being much harder did not suffer in the same way; some batches under good horsemasters were quite a different thing.

A great deal of rubbish in the shape of horses came from all sources; the cause of this has been ventilated in the Press.

Some Argentines were excellent, hardy and strong and kept condition well, others, badly bought, were worth nothing. The omnibus horses sent for the Artillery were magnificent.

American horses, where properly selected, especially those bought out of work, were good, but those just caught had little chance of getting into condition.

The effectiveness of the guns, rifles, and other armaments used.—The field gun with spade attachment I thought did very well when pitted against field guns; in many cases it was condemned as useless by those who lost sight of the fact that it was only a field gun.

When the Boers used these guns they gained enormous range, 5,000 to 6,000 yards by abnormally elevating muzzle, but these shells did no harm.

Lyddite in its present form appears to be an over-rated explosive; results were said not to be commensurate with expenditure.

The Lee-Metford proved a good weapon; it is awkward and heavy to ride with, but any strong military rifle must be that. If a safe button pressing instead of trigger pulling rifle can be perfected, a vast improvement should follow in the shooting.

In selecting Staff Officers for Brigade and Division commands, there should always be one officer at least with previous war experience amongst them.

Major-General
Sir W. F.
Gatacre,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

25 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
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16773. On the question which we first raise, which bears upon what you have just been saying, your opinion is that you never had at any time an adequate force?—No, I had not sufficient troops at any time.

16774. You had not an adequate force for the purpose required?—No, it was quite inadequate for the purpose; the tract of country was very large and broad, and communication very difficult.

16775. You began, as you said, with the one battalion?—Yes.

16776. And afterwards you were reinforced?—Yes, afterwards I was strengthened gradually up to three and a half battalions, practically one brigade, and until within a few days of my being sent home, that was the amount of Infantry I had. Of course, I had miscellaneous troops that came in and trained and went away again, but I had no complete division.

16777. Was that chiefly Infantry?—It was three and a half battalions of Infantry.

16778. Had you any other troops?—I had a brigade division of Artillery which came to me, and I trained them, and then they were called away to join Lord Roberts' force; and I had another brigade division, which had a difficulty about horses, which remained with me, but, I had only a few mounted troops available. My mounted Infantry that I trained were called away as fast as they were trained, and in South Africa it is impossible to do without mounted troops. I am aware that they were very much wanted both on the right and left of me.

16779. But, still, their being taken away increased your difficulties?—Very much, because the line of country that I had to defend was the Stormberg range, running east and west from my line of advance. There was no lateral rail available, and Infantry could not get quickly from pass to pass if required to reinforce in South Africa. There were four principal passes, approximately 17 or 18 miles apart, which had to be held by Infantry, and it was quite impossible to make any movement from them, because I had not the necessary number of mounted men. That added to my difficulties very much. I was aware at the time that I went to Stormberg that I had too small a force, but at the same time I was repeatedly asked from Cape Town whether I could not make an advance on Stormberg; whether it would not be good business to make a night attack at Stormberg. When one gets suggestions from the Commander-in-Chief one tries to act up to them.

16780. You never had any Cavalry?—I never had any regular Cavalry. I raised Brabant's Horse, but they were made independent of me on the eastern line.

16781. They did not remain under your command?—No, not all the time. When the Stormberg affair took place, they were only equipping. One detachment was at Penhock, but it arrived too late at Stormberg to take part.

16782. Had you any Yeomanry?—No. I had no Yeomanry. Of mounted Infantry I got four companies from England, and they were sent away to the Modder River to join Lord Roberts; some of my other mounted Infantry that I trained were drawn away to Bloemfontein to join Lord Roberts' force.

16783. When you say you trained them, were they part of the battalions under your command?—They were taken from my Infantry. I took company after company from each Infantry regiment, and as fast as that was trained and taken away I raised another company; but there were great difficulties about saddlery, equipment, rope, and so on, which made training slow.

16784. Then that depleted the battalions, did it not?—Yes, that, of course, reduced the strength of the battalions by 120 men each time.

16785. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Now you are talking of a time subsequent to Stormberg, when you say they were all taken away and sent to Lord Roberts?—Yes, subsequent.

16786. But you say they were taken away and sent to Lord Roberts. That, of course, was later; that does not apply to the earlier period—your first difficulties?—In the case of the mounted Infantry, that was taken

to Lord Roberts' force west of me. That was subsequent, of course, to Stormberg, because he had not then come out. At Stormberg itself, I had too small a force altogether.

16787. That was the point I wanted to elicit?

16787. * (Chairman.) And in choosing the mounted Infantry from the battalions, did you take the best men of the battalions?—Yes, they were always the best men I consider who joined the mounted Infantry. We picked them for being sharp; not always for being riders, because we trained them to that, but they were the sharpest, quickest, and most keen to do anything.

16788. Is that not rather hard upon the Infantry?—I think it certainly weakens the Infantry battalions. A commanding officer rather dreads mounted Infantry being raised in that way, because he knows his best officers, non-commissioned officers, and men go into the mounted Infantry; they like it better, too, and so they are keen on it; there is always a rush of men to go into the mounted Infantry.

16789. What do you say as to that, as a system to be adopted for the future?—What I think about that is, that by degrees every man should be trained to be mounted Infantry, so that you would be able to take a company entire instead of picking the best from all the companies. The latter is the system we adopted. We took the best men from all the companies, men who were suitable, not too heavy, of course; but all the best men were, as a rule, taken. But if every man was trained an equal lot would be obtained, and the battalion would not be injured so much.

16790. Do you think it would be practicable in the training of the Infantry battalions in this country to train them all for mounted Infantry work?—Yes, certainly, if there is a tract of country to train them over, it would be quite easy, and it would be a very useful thing, I think.

16791. Is anything being done in that direction now?—Yes, at Aldershot they have a regular training school now. I do not know at this moment what the establishment is, because it varies. I think they have one battalion only there, made up of companies from different regiments. That was going on prior to the War, and has been going on for some time.

16792. But that is a system that you rather object to—taking away companies from a battalion?—Yes, if the best men are picked out of the whole Regiment to form one company of Mounted Infantry; but what I mean is that if successive companies are trained, all the men are gradually trained in the regiment; not necessarily going to Aldershot, but to any big centre, sending all the men of the regiment through a month or six weeks' course successively.

16793. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Do you see any objection to maintaining a force of Mounted Infantry quite distinct from the battalions altogether?—The only difficulty I see about it is its expense, and that a force that was not elastic would be obtained, whereas if the regiment was put through training, company by company, there would always be a standing nucleus, and the men would take more readily to the duties.

16794. (Chairman.) As to shooting, you are satisfied with the regular soldier on the whole?—The shooting was good, but not quite quick enough. The British soldier shoots very well, but in the field he found himself handicapped because he was not accustomed to shoot as quickly as the Boers shoot, which can only come, of course, with actual practice.

16795. And you think the Boers purposely led people to shoot at unoccupied trenches?—I was often told so by the Colonials. Personally, I saw it on one occasion at a place called Luperberg; I saw our men firing at an unmistakable unoccupied trench, and I remember going round and pointing it out. I think there is no doubt that this trick was played.

16796. And the Boers even used black powder to attract them?—That I cannot say, but I certainly saw black powder used in one or two places where it was quite unnecessary, and the Colonials say they did it on purpose. Other people were asked, the police, and so on, and they said, "Well, the Boers are armed with all sorts of stuff, and they shoot what they have got.

A Colonial Boer from some out-away farm accustomed to shoot game, will have old stuff and will probably use blackpowder cartridges." I think that is not only quite possible, but very probable.

16797. I suppose most of their ammunition was smokeless?—Most of their ammunition was smokeless, and very good. At the same time we found all sorts of old-fashioned ammunition and bullets of every shape and size dropped about, which showed that they had some old-fashioned ammunition.

16798. Had you Militia with you too?—The only Militia I had with me were handed over to me about four days before I was sent home. I saw a good number of them passing through.

16799. But you did not see them shooting?—No, I did not see them shooting.

16800. So that when you say that their shooting was not good that is from the accounts of other people?—Yes. One knows from what one sees at home when they are shooting that they are too hurried at it.

16801. They have not time for training?—No, it is impossible to do a lot of shooting in one month and train men as well.

16802. What would you suggest in order to make the Militia training more effective?—It is a difficult question, unless they are up for a longer time, when more practice could be given them. I think the solution is to get shooting somehow or other to become a national pastime, so that they may practise in rifle clubs at home. I think rifle clubs are excellent; but then they want prizes to shoot for, or else men will not spend their money on it.

16803. The marching was good, you say?—The marching was good.

16804. But you think the soldier had too much to carry?—That depended upon what was put upon him. What I meant was that at home it is the order that route marching must be carried out with the valise on. The valise is never carried on service, and I think as they are all young men, growing, improving, and altering every day, the fact of a man training in cold weather with a valise on his back does not help him in any way, and the weight may injure him. I think route marching is excellent, but I do not see any point about carrying the valise at home.

16805. But on service he would have to carry it, would he not?—No, he never carries the valise on service; practically his kit is always carried for him. It comes to that.

16806. And you found the men took to the necessity of getting cover, and so on?—Yes, they took to it very readily; but all that depends upon the men's training, and if there is not ground to train upon a man cannot be taught all those things. Manœuvring ground is the most crying want at this present time. We are very short of manœuvring ground.

16807. But the men were sufficiently intelligent to take up the work?—Yes, the men were quite intelligent enough.

16808. And you were satisfied with the men both in physique and morale as well as in intelligence?—Yes, the first lot. Subsequently in the Militia, and in the Regulars, too, the men who came out were not as good stuff as those that came out first; they were much younger. When the first three Divisions went out there were plenty of men anxious to go, and there were a great number of Reservists taken. Subsequently the Reservists got used up, as it were—they were all out, and a great number of very young men were in the ranks.

16809. But the Reservists did well?—Very well; they were splendid men.

16810. There was no difficulty owing to there being a large proportion of Reservists in the battalions?—I never found any difficulty from it.

16811. Unless you have the manœuvres of which you have been speaking, it is not easy to train the men to judge distance and to take up objects at a distance, is it?—No, it is difficult, because the men have not been accustomed to it, and they do not understand what is wanted. If there is good ground and varied ground

men can be shown exactly what would happen on the battlefield; but if there is only a small piece of ground that they know, plain ground with no cover, and so on, it is almost impossible to make the men understand what is wanted of them. Practice over rough ground is the only thing that will ever teach men what is wanted of them.

16812. And in the same way it is difficult to teach them the proper modes of attack?—Yes, the same thing applies there.

16813. You say in your *précis* that the attack now ought to be in rushes?—Yes, that has always held good. The advance must be quick and sudden, but it is more than ever the case now when fire is so rapid with the magazine rifle, and when the enemy cannot be seen owing to the invisibility of the smokeless powder.

16814. But the nature of the country in South Africa lent itself to open order movements?—Yes, it was a wild country, a very beautiful training ground; there was every sort and form of ground—cover and bare land between the cover, and all that could be required.

16815. But, however much you might train the men, a good deal at the moment would have to depend upon the initiative of the officer or non-commissioned officer, would it not?—Yes, that is so; it is the man on the spot who takes the initiative, who takes the others with him. The officer commanding a battalion, for instance, will have no more power over the battalion than a man who is not there; practically when the battalion is extended he can only actually influence the few men who are in his immediate vicinity.

16816. And even the company officer?—The same applies to the company officer because the men are spread out to 10, 15, 20 paces, and as they are all in a single line 150 men cover a large front.

16817. Then to whom must you look in the future; is it the non-commissioned officer or the individual soldier?—To the officer, non-commissioned officer, and men. The non-commissioned officer will, of course, influence the men in his immediate vicinity, but the class of man we require must be educated to a full sense of his responsibilities, if we ever arrive at that.

16818. Do you mean that with the class of men that we now get you can educate them up to that point?—There are always good men amongst them. There are, of course, a great number of men who are not capable of that. There must be some common class stupid men, but there will always be a good number of very good ones among them, very sharp and intelligent men. I think it is quite possible.

16819. It is quite possible, you think, to get a considerable proportion of the men trained to do this independent work?—Certainly.

16820. But it has been argued that if you had an army composed of more intelligent classes it would be sufficient to have a smaller army. What do you say to that?—I quite think it is a matter of quality and not quantity, especially in our own particular case. So far as one can see at present I should say it was quality that was wanted. We are very unlikely to attack any Continental Power—I mean to say our business is in India and South Africa; but we must have an expanding nucleus, and the more intelligent our men are and the more highly trained they are the better it would be, and if any big efforts are required of us we must do the same as we did during the South African War—we must increase our forces very largely—but we cannot expect to get trained men, though we should get very good ones no doubt. The country cannot keep up an army for a general purpose of that sort, I mean to say for the purpose of offence.

16821. But I understand what you have been saying just now to come to this, that even from the class from which we now recruit you get a very considerable proportion of men who can be trained to do what you want in the Infantry soldier of the present day?—Yes.

16822. We have had evidence from other witnesses that the soldiers improved wonderfully in that respect after being on service for a short time. Was that your experience?—Yes, they improved a great deal. The fact is that a man at home if he wants dinner goes

Major-General
Sir W. F.
Gatacre,
K.C.B., D.S.O.
25 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir W. F.
Gatacre,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

25 Feb. 1903.

and takes it from the cook-house. If he is in the field he has to cook it himself, and it sharpens him up. And in the same way if he wants to put a new helve into his axe he goes to the store at once and demands one, and gets one. In the field he has to go and cut a piece of wood that will fit the axe; he is taught that on service he learns his needs and how to meet them.

16823. As to mounted men, you have told us that you had not many with you, but you think that more care of their horses is very necessary?—Yes. The care of horses is, of course, a thing that comes by experience and by very careful training, and I think there is a good deal that needs to be continuously taught.

16824. And a good deal of the waste in horses arose from insufficient care being taken?—From insufficient knowledge, I think, insufficient care you may say. But of course in a great measure that waste of horses was caused by the urgency of the case, so that they were used before they were ready to be used.

16825. (*Sir John Jackson.*) That was from travelling by sea. I take it they are much the same as a man. If you are laid up in bed for a fortnight with a sprained ankle you can hardly move on your leg when you get up. Does not the same apply to horses travelling by sea? If they have had no hard exercise for two or three weeks, for a few days they are not at all fit for work?—It depends upon what sort of voyage they have. If they have a rough voyage they will want a fortnight or three weeks to get them fit to commence conditioning them but it takes longer than that to get them in their full condition; and if they have a bad voyage they become emaciated and are not fit to work for a long time. Many of these horses were landed one day and moved off the next.

16826. And they get no exercise in the ordinary sense at sea?—No, what they want of course, is slow exercise daily.

16827. (*Chairman.*) Did you see the horses going up country?—Yes, a great number passed through Springfontein.

16828. You mentioned some of the Argentines as being good?—Yes the Argentines generally were condemned out there, but some batches, the first batch for instance that I saw, were excellent, they could not be better for Mounted Infantry; a short, stout, cobby sort of horse with great power, which would live upon anything; but of those that came out afterwards that I saw, a great number were worthless.

16829. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Can you remember whether the Argentines you saw first were those bought in 1898 or those bought later?—I should say in 1898, because they had been with the Berkshire Mounted Infantry roughly a year; but they were very good, they were the best class of horse from the Argentine.

16830. (*Chairman.*) As to guns; you thought well of the field gun?—I thought well of the field gun. I think it did its work very well, but it was so often pitted against a better class of gun, a newer class of gun with a heavier calibre, that it could not play its part.

16831. But you say that when the Boers used those guns for very long ranges the shells did not do any harm?—They used to elevate the muzzle considerably; the shell would come down and there was an end of it. But the moral effect at first was great, and they could get a couple of thousand or fifteen hundred yards out of them more than we could. But in the one case the shell was effective, and in the other it was not, although it looked the same when it dropped.

16832. Was that shrapnel?—Yes.

16833. You think the effect of firing at long range is a good deal a question of moral effect?—Yes.

16834. Those long range guns do not do so much material damage?—If a gun is used at much over its effective range, then, of course, the shells become ineffective.

16835. With regard to the lyddite, you did not form a very high opinion of it?—I never saw it used, but from all I heard its effect was not very great.

16836. Then the rifle, the Lee-Metford, do you approve of that?—Yes, it shot very well.

16837. What do you mean by a button-pressing instead of a trigger-pulling rifle?—Instead of pulling the trigger there is a button to press. There is one under trial I believe. The advantage is that it is necessary to press steadily. If there is a trigger, and a man is jumpy or young, he pulls to get the thing off; but he cannot do that with the button, he must press.

16838. Is it not rather a dangerous thing?—I refer to a safe one; it must be a safe one. It wants, like all these things, working out, and there must be something that will render it safe.

16839. As to Staff Officers were you satisfied with the staff that were provided for your Division?—I took over the staff that was handed to me. There was no officer of any war experience on my staff: that handicaps a General Officer.

16840. Were they Staff College Officers?—Yes.

16841. But they had not had any actual service?—No, they had had no war experience.

16842. Do you prefer an officer for your staff who has had staff college training?—I should always be inclined to take one. If two officers are put in the field, one of whom has had it and the other has not, I should take the officer who had had it, unless I knew the two men, and knew that the other was the better man. Going to the Staff College does not, of course, make a man able or a good staff officer, but it ensures a certain amount of military training and staff training which is always an advantage.

16843. We explained in our memorandum the position which we take up with regard to any reference to matters of controversy, either strategy, tactics, or otherwise. I will only ask you if there is any incident in connection with the operations in which you were engaged as to which you wish to make any statement to us. If you say there is nothing you wish personally to allude to or which you think it is in the public interest you should allude to, that is of course sufficient for us?—I should merely like to say with regard to both Stormberg and Reddersberg, the two affairs for which I got censured and sent home, that on neither occasion had I an adequate force for the work in hand, and that with regard to Reddersberg, the three companies of Infantry that were sent to Dewetsdorp were sent on a telegram from headquarters at a time when everything was going well, but that on the day when they arrived at Dewetsdorp everything in front went wrong Lord Roberts had about 30,000 men at Bloemfontein at the time; there was a Cavalry Brigade and a Division of Infantry of General Colville's at Thabanchu and on the Modder River respectively; and my small post that was sent out to hold Dewetsdorp was in their rear, about 80 miles to my front. General Broadwood's Brigade met with a disaster at Sanna's Post and General Colville's Division was withdrawn, leaving my three companies in the front line. Of course I was quite impossible for them to hold their own, but when they were sent there there were 30,000 men at Bloemfontein, and there was a Cavalry Brigade and an Infantry Division in their front as stated above. I never sent them there as an outpost, not expected them to act as such but merely to hold a post on an interior road.

16844. That is all you wish to say?—That is all.

16845. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Had you any naval guns with you—12-pounders?—No, there was a small naval gun in Queenstown.

16846. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You were speaking about manœuvring ground for the troops; have you served in Ireland?—No, I have never served in Ireland.

16847. You could not say whether it would be a suitable place for keeping an extra Army Corps in order to give them plenty of manœuvring?—I do not know the country well enough.

16848. Then another point that you mentioned was the initiative required for subalterns and non-commissioned officers. That can only be obtained in war by giving them plenty of freedom in peace?—Yes, in manœuvring troops.

16849. And also freedom from superior authority in action during the manœuvring?—Yes.

16850. Is that being carried out at Colchester at all; has any change taken place since the War under your command in the direction of giving more freedom to the subalterns?—I always endeavour to help them in that way, and the way one does it is by placing subalterns in command of companies at the company training. I always do that.

16851. And you impress that upon colonels of battalions and so on?—Yes, make them the umpires, so that the subalterns and junior officers (who are generally commanding companies) really have individual responsibility.

16852. And should you say that that is now being carried on to an extent that is was not carried on before the War?—Much more so.

16853. Much more so?—I think recently both in the Cavalry and Infantry, and it is a practice that one wants to increase.

16854. You are in command of a Division, are you not?—Yes.

16855. I ask you because, of course, it is to those in command like you that the country looks to see that the question of the initiative of the younger officers is being attended to?—I am always very strong on that point. When I am out I am always watching to see that the subalterns are employed in that way and given a free hand. The most valuable part of the training is the company training under the supervision of the Commanding Officer of the regiment when two or three companies are employed on the one side against two or three on the other.

16856. And besides that it is essential, I suppose, that they should not be too severely taken to task if they fail, or they will not assume responsibility afterwards?—Just so.

16857. Should you say that was generally understood throughout your Division?—I think it is, much more so than it used to be, anyhow. There has been a distinct increase in it.

16858. Just one other point. You were speaking of the difficulty of getting the Militia to shoot sufficiently well and to perform military duties sufficiently well with so short a training. The same objection has been raised with regard to the Volunteers owing to the small number of days that they train; and the same applies also to the Yeomanry?—Yes.

16859. Let us assume for a moment that the country submitted to have universal military training for boys of 18 for six months; would that be sufficient time in which to give a general military training for those who afterwards entered the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers?—I think so, if the shooting is made enough of. Every man would get an idea of what he might have to do on emergency; I think it would be quite sufficient if the shooting was made a strong point and encouraged in every sort of way; not pot-hunting but village rifle shooting.

16860. And I suppose six months' military training would teach a young man of that age a great deal?—It would teach him a great deal.

16861. We have had evidence from high authority that if he was intelligent it would make him into a good Infantry soldier?—Yes, I think so, because we do not want, after all, to make the man a barrack yard soldier, but to make him a sharp fighting machine, who will do anything he is told, or, if he is not told, will take it upon himself to do the right thing.

16862. Then, passing to the other case, in which you said that in the event of a great war we must necessarily rely upon obtaining Volunteers from this country (as we did in the South African War), you would then have an enormous reserve of partially-trained men to draw upon?—Yes, men who would soon come to hand.

16863. You would approve of such a system provided that the country would submit to it? Yes, I do not think there would be much difficulty about it, so far as conscription goes, if there was a system of insurance started. Nobody wants to be conscripted; then let everybody pay so much for not being conscripted, and insurance companies would insure men against being conscripted; that is to say, if a man

joined he would pay nothing, if he did not want to join the insurance companies would give him at the end of his three years' service or whatever it is—say, £200 or £300, or £400—and then all these young men would jump at military service because they would afterwards get a start in civil life.

16864. I want you to understand that I was not asking questions upon the subject of conscription for foreign service, but merely on the subject of universal military training for all the youth of the country?—Without the word conscription?

16865. Not only without the word, but without the fact. It would be, of course, compulsory if it was universal, but it would include the whole of the youth of the country?—Yes, it must only be for a short time, six months or something of that kind, or the prosperity of the country would be affected.

16866. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I understood you to say that from the beginning, and throughout, you had not a sufficient force for the duties assigned to you?—I had not.

16867. Did you make any representation with regard to that fact?—I constantly asked for more troops, but I was told by General Buller that they were wanted, and as soon as they became available I should have them.

16868. You also said, I think, that you endeavoured to improve the condition of your force by forming Mounted Infantry—mounting a certain proportion of your Infantry?—Raising them, yes.

16869. And that immediately you had succeeded in raising them they were time after time taken from you?—Yes, they were drawn away.

16870. And you had to begin anew?—Yes, I had to begin anew.

16871. You chose the best of your men necessarily for this work?—Yes.

16872. So that your force was really depleted of those who for the work to be done would have been the most useful?—Yes.

16873. Did you complain of that also?—No, I never complain. I went on raising these men. I thought the more men we could raise, the more likelihood there was of keeping them. I was always in hopes that I might be able to stick to the men and they would become valuable to my force.

16874. Is it a usual thing in the field to take away men from a regiment in that way?—That is the only way they can be taken. There are no other men to draw upon under the present system, because we have never had any force of Mounted Infantry before this war; we have practically never had any big force of the kind. There have always been a certain number of men who have been trained at Aldershot.

16875. You state in your *précis* that the Colonials used to say that black powder was purposely used by the Boers to attract attention, and so on. Had the Colonials any better means than the others of ascertaining what the Boers were about?—They all spoke the language.

16876. (*Chairman.*) You mean the South African Colonials?—Yes.

16877. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) The local Colonials?—Yes. I had none of the others.

16878. So that, of course, they knew more of the country and more of the Boers?—Yes.

16879. You say that the soldier when at home, if an axe handle is broken, gets another from the stores?—Practically, yes.

16880. But he has to make one if he is in the field?—Yes, it often happens so.

16881. He has to get a piece of wood for it and make it himself?—Yes.

16882. Did you find that the Colonials (you say you had only those from South Africa) were more expert, more adroit, in this work than the ordinary soldier?—They knew a good deal more.

16883. They were handy men, so to say?—Yes, it is their life, of course. They were farmers, and if they

Major-General Sir W. J. Gatacre.
K.C.B., D.S.O.

25 Feb. 1903.

Major-General
Sir W. F.
Gatacre,
K.C.B., D.S.O.

26 Feb. 1903.

could not make one they would get one. Our soldier, of course, is told never to take anything that is not his own. With the Colonial it is rather the other way—always to take somebody else's rather than his own, if he wants it.

16884. And that is a great advantage in the field—to be able to replace anything of that kind?—Yes.

16885. You said also (and that we have heard from others) that often the horses on being landed from the steamers were in a very bad condition?—Yes.

16886. They were entirely unfit for work for some time?—Yes.

16887. Do you know anything of the provision made on board ship for keeping the horses in as good condition as possible throughout the voyage; whether everything was done that you think ought to have been done for that purpose?—I think on most of the ships it was, but sometimes they had a bad voyage; and when horses are crowded together and are down below, a thousand on a ship, there is very little fresh air, and that deteriorates the horse more than anything, overcrowding, difficulty of feeding, difficulty of watering. When there are 100 horses in row after row it is very difficult sometimes to get to the horses and ensure that all get their food. It is supposed to be done, but there is a difficulty about it, naturally.

16888. I think we have had evidence that in some cases they were able to exercise the horses to a certain extent every day, taking a few at one time, and others at another time, and so on—in fact that they were able to move them about?—That is so, but it is a difficulty, and if there is any question of weather, the captain will not have a horse out at all; a loose horse on deck is rather an awkward business—sailors do not want it.

16889. There is a very great advantage when they are able to do so?—Yes, but when there are a thousand horses it is not possible to do much. Some horses can be brought up in that way; our battery horses were brought up in that way, because the battery officers and men knew every horse and they brought them up; but when there are a thousand wild, half broken horses, that cannot be done. The theory is good, but in practice it cannot be done.

16890. When the Yeomanry or Militia are brought out for training annually, do you think it would be better that they should have their camps in different parts of the country, and on ground of different character? For instance, I believe it is usual to have the camp in the same place year after year, is it not?—The Manœuvres Act of 1897 or 1895, I think it is, anticipates hiring fresh ground forcibly year after year. That will be a very unpopular measure, because it destroys the game, but the principle is good. It is no use taking up a piece of ground full of fences, ditches, and dykes, which men cannot move across. So that it practically comes to this, that sooner or later the best piece of ground, heathery open ground, must be taken; fences and such things cannot be destroyed wholesale for the movement of troops.

16891. Training them for the field by observation of the ground?—Yes, getting good open rough ground and using it; taking it up for the year.

16892. (Sir John Edge.) The attack on Stormberg took place on the 10th December, 1899?—Yes.

16893. Did you give an explanation to Lord Roberts of what had taken place at Stormberg?—Yes, I was called upon for it when he first came out to take command; he asked for an explanation.

16894. That was when he came out first?—Yes, that was December or January. It was the beginning of January, I think.

16895. Did you subsequently see him in Bloemfontein?—Yes, it was in March when I saw him at Bloemfontein.

16896. Did he then propose to increase your command?—Yes.

16897. By how many regiments?—Ten battalions, for the purpose of covering his right flank during his advance.

16898. You had, I think, sent three companies to Dewetsdorp?—Three companies of Infantry and two Mounted Infantry companies.

16899. When was that?—That was on the 28th of March. Lord Roberts telegraphed to me at Springfontein: "If you have enough troops at your disposal I should wish you to occupy Dewetsdorp. Will make road from here to Maseru safe, preventing enemy's forces from using telegraph lines to the south. Let me know what you can do in this."

16900. On that did you send these three companies to Dewetsdorp?—On that I sent off the three companies and informed him at once.

16901. And the mounted men?—Yes.

16902. You sent them to Dewetsdorp?—Yes.

16903. And informed Lord Roberts?—Yes.

16904. At that time was your front covered?—My front was covered by Lord Roberts' troops, 90 to 100 miles ahead of me. I was 90 miles south of Bloemfontein.

16905. But had you any troops nearer than that on your front?—No, all my troops were alongside of me, practically on both sides of the rail parallel with Springfontein—Bloemfontein Railway.

16906. And were there any other troops between you and Lord Roberts?—Just small detachments guarding the connecting line of rail between Springfontein and Bloemfontein.

16907. Did anything occur to make the post at Dewetsdorp more exposed than when you sent the men there?—General Broadwood's Brigade withdrew from Thabanchu, and got into trouble at Sanna's Post, but that I did not hear about till too late to get my Dewetsdorp detachment back. General Colville's division was at the waterworks there, on the Modder River, but they were withdrawn, why I do not know. I believe there is a controversy about it.

16908. We need not go into that?—Anyhow they were withdrawn, and I never heard of either till I got an urgent telegram from Lord Roberts to say that it appeared that Dewetsdorp was too far advanced, and that I should withdraw to the railway line. On that, of course, I wired at once.

16909. You got that I suppose on the 31st of March; Lord Roberts wired to you on the 31st of March?—Yes.

16910. That Dewetsdorp was too far advanced?—Yes.

16911. What steps did you take then?—I sent a telegram to Wepener, which was acknowledged. I sent despatch riders direct from Springfontein (there were no other means) to this force, and got it acknowledged by Captain Casson, who was in command at Dewetsdorp.

16912. You sent despatch riders with orders for the force to withdraw?—To withdraw at once towards Reddersberg, towards the railway line. The Officer Commanding also sent a despatch out from Wepener to that effect.

12913. And it was on the retreat then from Dewetsdorp that this affair at Reddersberg happened?—Yes, they could not get back to the railway.

12914. Subsequently to that Lord Roberts removed you from your command?—Yes, on the 10th.

12915. And sent you back to England?—Yes.

12916. Now, I have to ask you, were you called upon for any explanation of that affair at Reddersberg, or of your sending the men to Dewetsdorp before you were removed from your command?—No. I merely received a telegram asking what steps I took on receipt of Lord Roberts' telegram of 28th March.

16917. (Chairman.) Is there anything else you would like to add?—No thank you.

(After a short Adjournment.)

Lieut.-General Sir THOMAS KELLY-KENNY, K.C.B., Adjutant-General, recalled and further examined.

(See Questions 4472 to 4963 Vol. 1, for Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny's previous Evidence.)

16918. (Chairman.) When you were here before we postponed any examination or any statement which you might desire to make, based on your experience in South Africa; have you some statement which you would wish to put before us now?—I have no desire to make any statement. The Secretary to the Commission asked me to prepare a short statement of my experience in South Africa while I was in command of the advance, and I have prepared that statement. I understand the Commission wishes to have a short sketch of my movements from the 12th February till we arrived at Bloemfontein on the 14th March. The most concise manner in which I can lay this before you is in the form of two of my despatches, and the first was to Lord Roberts from Modder River, near Osfontein, February 20th, 1900:—“My Lord, I have the honour to lay before your lordship a short resumé of the operations of the troops under my command from the morning of the 12th February, when we marched from Enslin on the line of the railway until the morning of the 19th, when your lordship arrived on the field and assumed command of the troops then engaged with the enemy. On the 12th the 6th Division with troops attached marched to Ramdam. At dawn on the 13th the march was continued, until we struck the River Reit at Watervaal Drift. This was a very trying march, owing to the heat and dust. On the 14th, leaving Watervaal at one a.m., we marched down the Reit to Wegdrei, arriving there about 10 a.m. Here we halted for some hours. Outposts were immediately thrown out of the mounted infantry and the infantry. Jacobsdal was temporarily occupied by the mounted infantry without opposition. The small party which occupied it having been withdrawn, the enemy, who hitherto had not been visible, opened fire on the mounted infantry outposts. The outposts were strengthened by the infantry, and a battery was pushed forward, but the enemy presented no target. This day was a trying one, owing to the night march, and also the minor operations connected with the enemy's move from Jacobsdal, and the men under ordinary circumstances deserved a night's rest. When I became aware early in the afternoon that your plans required an extra effort to enable General French's division to march on Kimberley, I directed the troops to march again at 5 p.m. across the veldt, making a night march so as to strike the Modder at Klip Drift in the morning. All ranks responded to this call. We left the Reit at about 5.30 and reached Klip Drift about one a.m. on the 15th. After some hours rest the division crossed the Modder and relieved General French's outpost. I was able to cover General French's march with my Artillery, including the two Naval 12-pounders. Our fire drew the enemy from General French, when he proceeded on his march. During the remainder of the morning our guns were turned on the enemy's laager, and on those retiring from General French's left flank. On the 16th the whole of the troops under my command, except those occupied in the outpost line, were disposed so as to enable a large force of mounted infantry to follow General French. The troops were paraded at dawn and marched into their positions. About 6 a.m. we saw in the distance, passing from west to east, a very large convoy. It was Cronje moving from Magersfontein. I gave directions to attack it and harass it. As we were rather behind it we could not hope to capture it. Realising the importance of doing everything possible to harass this convoy, I directed that the movement to Adam's Dam following General French was to be abandoned, and all efforts brought to bear on the convoy. The Mounted Infantry and Artillery and General Knox's Infantry Brigade was engaged all day from dawn to dusk in a rearguard action. We did a considerable amount of damage, both to the convoy and the laager. Our losses were about 100. The enemy suffered severely. It is impossible to state his loss accurately. On his evacuating his laager, our people endeavoured to collect his wounded into it. Notwithstanding the efforts made on the 16th the troops again marched at three a.m. on the 17th from Klip Drift on Klip Kraal, where we rested a few hours, and reached Bomvall Drift about two p.m. the same day without opposition. At 5.30 p.m. we again marched towards

Paardeberg, and reached its vicinity about nine p.m. On the 18th we marched at three a.m., and came into touch with the enemy between six and seven a.m. He was strongly posted along the banks of the Modder. His laager was on the north bank. The Artillery kept up a heavy fire all day, destroying the laager and blowing up the enemy's magazines. The Infantry was gradually brought into action, General Knox's brigade holding the enemy entertained. Colonel Stevenson pushed on his left flank over and along the river banks. Early in the action I was informed that General Colville was moving up on the left. I sent back to him to move one brigade on the left and one on the right bank with a howitzer battery and a field battery. The battle continued all day, the troops pressing the attack on the flanks but meeting with considerable opposition. The enemy held such a strong position on the north bank, the river being in flood, that I decided not to assault in front. Part of General French's Cavalry from Kimberley co-operated from the hills on the north. Although at nightfall the enemy still held on to his entrenchments, he was completely hemmed in on all sides with his laager wagons and ammunition destroyed. I regret the losses, returns of which were sent to your lordship to-day as far as they could be ascertained. I believe that both General Knox's and General Macdonald's wounds are not very severe. I will take an opportunity of bringing to notice the special acts of devotion to duty on the part of individuals. I confine myself at present to representing to your lordship the fine spirit and gallantry of all the troops engaged. Major-General Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., Chief of the Staff was present all the time. In accordance with instructions conveyed to me in your note of the 17th I recognised his suggestions as conveying to me your lordship's orders, and acted thereon.” That was the despatch up to the 20th February. The other despatch I scarcely think I need trouble you with; that is the despatch after the battle of Driefontein. I will read it if you wish it or hand it in.

16919. Will you just hand it in?—It is as follows:—“Bloemfontein, March 15th, 1900. My Lord,—I have the honour now to amplify the short notes I gave you at your Lordship's headquarters on the morning of the 11th inst., describing the salient points in the engagement in the neighbourhood of Abraham's Kraal and Driepan of the previous day.

2. In accordance with instructions from Army Headquarters, the Division marched from its bivouac at 6 a.m. A Cavalry Brigade was some 5 miles in front.

3. The distance between our bivouac in the morning and Abraham's Kraal is about 9 miles. I proceeded with part of my staff in advance to reconnoitre and obtain from General French the result of the Cavalry reconnaissances. The division rested and breakfasted between 9.30 and 10.30 a.m.

4. Finding the enemy in force about Abraham's Kraal, with two guns on the extreme southern end of that position, I determined to bear away from the river as wide as possible—having in mind that my objective was Baberspan and to move forward between Abraham's Kraal and Driepan. I attach a sketch elucidating the description of the operations.

5. As my troops consisted only of Field Artillery and Infantry, the movements were naturally slow, and the enemy's tactical mobility admitted of his being able to throw his strength on my line of advance, while his long-range Creusot guns never ceased throughout the day to throw shells amongst my troops, and occasionally amongst the transport. I may here say that notwithstanding that my Field Artillery was outranged and unable to keep down the Boer fire, and the frequency and accuracy of the latter, comparatively little loss was experienced thereby, as the shells generally failed to burst.

6. Finding the Boers in strength in my front, I contented myself for a considerable part of the day with containing him, and arranged with General French that the mounted troops were to move still further to the right against the enemy's flank or rear, and thus

Lieut.
General Sir
Thomas
Kelly-Kenny.
K.C.B.

25 Feb. 1903.

take off the pressure from my front. General French and I were in accord as to the soundness of this movement, and I anxiously awaited its development.

7. The day was passing away, and by bearing in mind that, whether the division was to reach its camp that day or bivouac in its present position, it was impossible to allow the enemy to occupy the commanding hills in our front, I decided that even without the assistance of the mounted troops I would force the enemy's line.

8. As the trains were large, and exposed to an enterprise from the river side, it was necessary to secure them by a strong rear guard. I left the command of this rear guard to General Knox, with two battalions and one Field Battery, so that when our forward movement in the afternoon commenced I had at my disposal only two Field Batteries and five battalions, viz., the 2nd Battalion the Buffs, the 1st Battalion Yorkshire, the 1st Battalion Essex, the 1st Welsh, and the 2nd Battalion the Gloucester regiments.

9. I kept the Buffs and Gloucester Battalions in reserve. The Welsh advanced in the centre, the Essex on the left, and the Yorkshire on the right, but rather back, as it was hoped that, failing the assistance of the mounted troops, we might operate with this battalion on the enemy's left flank. The line was very extended, particularly so on the right, as the troops were kept on the high ground as much as possible, and did not move along the valleys between. The reserve was in rear of the centre.

10. At first the troops made some advance, but the enemy's fire prevented anything like a general forward movement. The Welsh Regiment was the first to make ground decisively, but under a heavy fire, so much so that from the Reserve I ordered up the Buffs at once, and later two companies of the Gloucester Regiment.

The Buffs came very quickly into line, and assisted the Welsh Regiment to establish its position. I may here say the two batteries of Field Artillery much contributed to admit of this movement of the Welsh and Buffs. I now drew in the Yorkshire Regiment to its left, and despatched it to operate against the enemy's left flank.

11. The engagement was now in full force, and little progress could be made owing to the stubborn resistance of the enemy. I therefore drew in the Essex to its right, its direction being to the left and rather to the front of the Welsh. The Essex now charged the enemy's right flank with fixed bayonets with such dash and determination that the Boers gave way, and a general advance taking place the whole of the Boer line gradually joined in the retreat. Our troops pressed forward, but it was too late to make our camp at Baberspan, so we had to content ourselves with long-range volley firing at the retreating enemy and the occupation of the ground hitherto held by him.

12. On the conclusion of the engagement I rode to your Lordship's headquarters and received your orders for the occupation of the ground during the night, and for the further advance on the morning of the 11th.

I regret the losses which this engagement entailed on my division; they are as follows:—

	OFFICERS.			RANK AND FILE.			
	Killed.	Wounded.	Died of Wounds.	Killed.	Wounded.	Died of Wounds.	Missing.
Royal Artillery	—	—	Lieut.-Col. Umphelby	2	5	—	—
Royal Engineers	—	—	—	—	3	—	—
The Buffs	Capt. Eustace	Col. Hickson Lieut. Ronald. Capt. Bradley-Dyne.	—	17	79	—	5
Yorkshire	—	—	—	1	27	—	—
Essex	Lieut. Parsons Second Lieut. Coddington.	Capt. Broadmead. Lieut. and Adjutant Pratt. Second Lieut. Raleigh. Major Whaite, R.A.M.C.	—	10	79	1	16
Welsh	Capt. and Adjutant Lomax.	Lieut.-Col. Giffard Lieut. Berkeley. Second Lieut. Lloyd. Second Lieut. Pope. Second Lieut. Torkington.	Lieut. Wimberley	17	109	—	5
Gloucester	—	Capt. Jordan	—	4	19	—	—
Totals	4	13	2	51	321	1	26
TOTAL Casualties				421			

13. I particularly regret the death of Lieut. Parsons of the Essex Regiment. I had already brought his gallantry to your Lordship's notice, and recommended him for the Victoria Cross for his courageous actions on the 18th February at the battle of Paardeberg. Colonel Umphelby, of the Australian Artillery, I regret to say, died of his wounds; he acted during the operations since the 14th February as a galloper, taking my orders

to the Artillery; he was a general favourite with all his comrades in the Army. Captain Lomax, Welsh Regiment, is also a great loss to his regiment.

14. It is difficult to say with accuracy the strength of the enemy, but I judge, from all indications and observations on the 10th, and from reliable intelligence since obtained, that it was over 6,000 with four guns. The retreat was apparently on Bloemfontein, and north.

of it. The losses of the Boers were very heavy, 102 dead bodies were found besides those carried away. I believe that at least 60 bodies were so carried off; the number of wounded I estimate at 400. We made some prisoners, sent to your Lordship's headquarters.

15. It remains for me to bring to notice some names of those in the 18th Brigade who were conspicuous in the engagement. I do so, as this Brigade is about to be transferred to another command to make room for the 12th Brigade under General Clements, which originally formed part of the 6th Division.

With regard to the names of those of the 13th Brigade and other troops permanently belonging to the 6th Division, in accordance with Circular Memo. No. 1, of 6th March, 1900, I have made a note thereof to be submitted at the conclusion of the campaign.

Brigadier General Stephenson in this action, as on every occasion in which he has been engaged, was cool and sensible, and his leading inspired confidence in all ranks. He was ably assisted by his Staff, Captain Couper, B.M., and Lieut. Howard, Essex Regiment, A.D.C.

Lieut.-Colonel Giffard, of the Welsh, commanded this Battalion throughout the day with judgment. He never failed to take advantage of any opportunity the enemy gave him during the advance. Major Fearon on this occasion, as on others, particularly at Kitchener's Hill on the 23rd February, showed military skill and judgment.

Major Brown commanded the Essex Regiment. I was quite satisfied with the manner in which he exercised his command.

The undermentioned have been brought to notice by Brigadier General Stephenson and the Commanding Officer of the battalions concerned."

The next point is the question of the command at Paardeberg. I had no intention of re-opening this matter, but I assume you wish to ask questions about it. Your questions and Lord Roberts' evidence which you sent to me, remove to some extent the reserve I hoped I might be able to maintain with regard to it. I say "to some extent," because I volunteer nothing in the way of evidence. I have no complaint to make or grievance to air, but incidents and discussions, mostly of a confidential nature, were inseparable from operations such as those I was associated with.

16920. Certainly. We thought it right to give you an opportunity of seeing what Lord Roberts said?—To make the question of the command at Paardeberg clear I am afraid I must retrace my steps to February 13th, 1900. The whole of the afternoon of that day (my march from Ramdam having been accomplished in the morning and forenoon) I was occupied in getting my own division over the Watervaal Drift and in assisting the Cavalry trains over it. I completed the crossing about five in the afternoon. Later, Lord Roberts came from De Keil's Drift to my bivouac. I reported to him the result of the day's operations and the situation of my command, that is the Sixth Division. Lord Roberts desired me to make a night march on Wegdrei, where he said I would receive further orders. I understood him to say that he would join me there. I marched from my bivouac about 1 a.m. on the 14th February. At dawn, when halted to await the result of a staff officer's reconnaissance to the front, for the first time I discovered that Lord Kitchener was with the force. From that time Lord Kitchener accompanied the advance. I cannot say that our relations were quite satisfactory. I felt and I told him that I was in command and responsible. He admitted this without reserve. I never failed, however, to recognise Lord Kitchener's knowledge of the general situation and of the Commander-in-Chief's plans, and we were in constant consultation. Up to, however, the afternoon of the 17th February I had no doubt whatever about the command and the responsibility. No doubt you noticed the following sentence in my despatch of the 20th February describing the battle of Paardeberg: "Major-General Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., Chief of the Staff, was present all the time. In accordance with instructions conveyed to me in your note of the 17th I recognised his suggestions as conveying to me your Lordship's orders, and acted thereon." I put the position as delicately as I possibly could, in order not to rouse a controversy, as, of course, I knew my despatch would be published. Nevertheless, from the receipt of Lord Roberts' letter on the 17th I felt the situation was com-

pletely changed. I hand to the Chairman Lord Roberts' letter referred to; in fact, I had better read it.

16921. If you please?—"Jacobsdal, 17th February, 1900. My dear Kenny, I hope you are pushing on with all possible speed to overtake Cronje's laager. It is of the utmost importance it should not get away. The bullocks drawing his wagons cannot go as fast as our mules, nor so many consecutive days without breaking down. I hope to join you to-morrow. Meanwhile, please consider that Lord Kitchener is with you for the purpose of communicating to you my orders, so that there may be no delay such as reference to and fro would entail. If we can deal Cronje a heavy blow it is likely there will be no more fighting in the Orange Free State. Believe me, yours truly, Roberts." Although Lord Kitchener could carry out the Commander-in-Chief's directions, as stated in Lord Roberts' evidence, viz.: "You must go and join General Kelly-Kenny, and keep me informed of all you can hear from General French or whatever General Kelly-Kenny may decide to do as affairs turn out, and I shall be able to communicate with you as to what happens here," anything like orders was quite incompatible with my being in command, considering the distance, several marches separating Lord Roberts from me and the enemy I was pursuing. I was very much upset by this note, particularly so as up to the receipt of it the troops under my leading had done everything that soldiers could do, either in fighting or marching. I considered the note, although courteously worded, with one superseding me. I hand to the Chairman my reply; in fact, I had better read it.

16922. If you please?—"Bothaville Drift, 4 p.m., 17th February. Dear Lord Roberts, I telegraphed to you to-day how we are getting on. Nothing can exceed the marching and spirit of our people. Marching day and night; we made an eleven-mile march this morning. After a rest we start again at 5 o'clock, and again, as your plan has suggested, we march at 3 a.m. to-morrow; we will bivouac at Paardeberg, I hope, this afternoon. So far to-day there was little opposition. The wounded yesterday I under-estimated about a hundred. We are doing all we can to send them to Klip Drift camp. The Boers lost heavily yesterday. Reported 100 killed and 300 wounded. We are doing what we can to help them. You will get the Jacobsdal Hospital people to take them there. I am marching very soon, only awaiting report from the Mounted Infantry. With regard to my position and Lord Kitchener's, your description of it I perfectly understand. This is not a time to enter into personal matters. Till this phase of the operation is completed I will submit to even humiliation rather than raise any question connected with my command. We are doing well in regard to fresh meat, and this must be replenished soon. I believe a column is coming in. Artillery horses are very soft. I have one Navy gun, a 12-pounder.—Yours truly." That was my reply to Lord Roberts, and I gave it to the orderly who brought me his letter. I may say that although the receipt of the letter in due course could not have altered the decision, the orderly missed Lord Roberts, and in fact the letter I have just read was not delivered to him, but brought back to me the day after the battle of Paardeberg. In accordance with the line I had marked out I determined not to trouble Lord Roberts with this personal matter until the Cronje phase of the campaign was ended. On the 27th of February I accepted the surrender of 4,000 of Cronje's troops. I looked on this as the end of that phase of the campaign. I subsequently discussed the question of the embarrassing position I was placed in. I explained to Lord Roberts that the reply to his letter had missed him, and I read it to him. The Commander-in-Chief assured me that no such incident would again occur. I was perfectly satisfied, and I would not have originated this controversial discussion except in the circumstances already mentioned, that is Lord Roberts' evidence. I do not wish to leave the Commission under the impression that there is or ever has been any personal quarrel or ill-feeling between Lord Kitchener and myself; there never has been. I may mention that at Paardeberg he shared his luncheon with me, and we are the best of friends. Lord Roberts arrived at Paardeberg the day after the battle and assumed command. During the action at Poplar Grove my division, reinforced in Artillery to 40 guns and a large force of Mounted Infantry, made a flank attack. As Lord Roberts commanded the whole I made no special

Lieut.
General Sir
Thomas
Kelly-Kenny,
K.C.B.

25 Feb. 1903

Lieut.
General Sir
Thomas
Kelly-Kenny,
K.C.B.

25 Feb. 1903.

report of that action, but I am willing to reply to any question the Commission puts to me. I did not include it in any of the despatches. I have handed in a copy of my despatch on the battle of Driefontein. Lord Roberts commanded the whole army during the remainder of the advance on Bloemfontein, and I have nothing further to say in reference to the advance. From the 3rd May I was in command at Bloemfontein and of the country north of the Orange River. As the troops under Lord Roberts advanced the extent of my command increased. I have already referred to the general situation in the Orange River Colony. The great difficulties of my command commenced about the time Lord Roberts got to Pretoria. I understand the Commission does not intend to pursue questions in regard to the campaign beyond that date, but I am quite ready to answer any questions.

16923. You have been good enough to prepare some answers to the questions in the Memorandum (*vide Appendix, page 595, post*) we sent you?—Yes. The first question I think is with regard to the numbers sent out. As regards that, not only military but State and political affairs enter into it. It is difficult to say whether the Force originally sent out might have been considered adequate; so much depends on the information the Government was in possession of to guide it in weighing the probabilities of the Orange Free State remaining neutral, and the reliance to be placed on the loyalty of the Dutch in the Cape Colony and Natal. Further, to answer this question I must know whether it was intended from the first not only to defeat the Transvaal Forces in the field but to subdue and occupy the country; if it was so intended the Force sent out with Sir Redvers Buller was manifestly inadequate. I narrow my evidence with regard to this point to my own experience. With my Division I was strong enough to fight and defeat and follow up the enemy opposed to me from the time we left Modder River until we got to Bloemfontein. Afterwards the character of the enemy's opposition changed into a guerilla warfare. I became responsible for a large extent of country from the Orange River close up to the Vaal. To carry out the subjection and occupation of this country I required troops to occupy every strategic point, drifts and towns and the whole line of the railway with its numerous large and important bridges. These strategic points had to be fortified, supplies and ammunition had to be thrown into them not only for the troops themselves but to help Flying Columns. The above measures were but a part of a general scheme; they would not in themselves have had much effect unless Flying Columns were organised to move about, following up any gathering of the enemy and engaging them. The strength at my disposal was altogether inadequate. I may here say that after the destruction of the Rhenoster Bridge and the captures north of Kroonstadt about the middle of June the enemy poured down into the Colony and was alive all along the line of the railway. With the Force at my command I endeavoured to carry out the subjection of the country; I occupied a number of places, got supplies into them and organised Flying Columns, which were successful in harassing the enemy. Throughout the months of June and September the enemy increased in numbers and enterprise; my operations were limited by the number and strength of the columns I was able to organise, and latterly so vital was the safeguarding of the railway owing to the constant attacks on it that I had to limit the operations of several columns to its vicinity. I was in continual communication with Lord Roberts since about the 18th June; he was made aware of every step I proposed to take and of the results. I got the fullest support both moral and material, but all he could spare and all I could ask for, though willingly given, were altogether inadequate, particularly so as the attacks on the railway became constant. I felt that my greatest strength should be utilised in guarding the one material necessary advantage we had gained, namely the line of the railway. That settles that question.

Then there is a question about the quality of the troops, and I take first the quality of the men of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces in respect of shooting capacity; the Regulars I put down as fair and the Auxiliaries indifferent, as far as I could ascertain.

Then as to horsemanship, the Regulars, Cavalry, and Artillery were good; the Mounted Infantry (newly

formed), bad; latterly much improved; and the Auxiliaries indifferent generally.

Then as to marching: Regulars, good; no complaints of the Auxiliaries.

Then as to horsemastership, the Artillery had some knowledge and aptitude, but the remainder of the Army (Regulars and Auxiliaries, were, in my opinion, bad horsemasters.

Then there is a question about entrenchment and cover. We were generally the attackers; entrenchments do not lend their aid to the attackers to the same extent as to the defenders. I believe, however, in the early part of the War our men were far behind the enemy in their appreciation of and in the construction of defensive works.

16924. But they improved?—Yes, they improved. As the War progressed we copied the Boer methods, and our defensive works were excellent. This was attained by eliminating all cut and dried systems and measurements and allowing the instincts of self-preservation full scope; no questions as to 18 inches or 2 feet were ever thought of. In regard to cover our troops failed from lack of power to observe; they exposed themselves to the enemy's view. The British soldier we recruit as a rule has very little imagination; he finds it very difficult to realise that if he does not see an enemy standing up or on the sky-line he may be hiding behind a rock, this notwithstanding the training at Home, the Officers' Lectures and other means of inculcating this knowledge in the men. The fact is his mental perception is not up to requirements, nor is his education.

Then there is the question of the general physique, and it was apparently good as regards the Regulars, but the heavy sick lists suggest that our soldiers do not come from the healthier classes. The same may be said of the Militia; the Volunteers and Yeomanry seemed healthier.

As to morale, taking the Regulars, considering the disadvantages of our military system in reference to the class our recruits generally come from, the morale was good. It was so in spite of many causes why it might be only indifferent. The chief factor in producing what is good in the morale of our Regular troops is our regimental officer and the relations which exist between him and his men. The Militia did not, and could not be expected to, come up to the Line, but considering everything they came favourably out of a severe test. The Volunteers joining their Line Battalions, with extraordinary quickness assimilated all that was good in our regimental system, of which they form part; and I am bound to say that the Volunteers contributed to it with their many fine qualities; they were intelligent and patriotic and fell into disciplinary order at once. It was necessary, however, to keep them associated with their Line units. All our Forces improved in the course of the campaign.

Deductions as to the Future Training of our Men—The broad deductions I draw are (1) that men and horses should be trained from start to finish by their immediate Commanding Officers and Squadron and Company Commanders and subordinates; (2) that specialists from high to low should be abolished. I do not refer to technical matters. I would here quote that after the manoeuvres of 1895 at Aldershot the Duke of Connaught recommended this, and he said that not only in regard to military training, but in other respects the influences would be all for the better if the men were trained by the officers: his words are: "In my opinion nothing but good to the Army and the officer will result from the officers undertaking the training of their men themselves." Another deduction is (3) that the Reservists should be brought up yearly for ten or twelve days; (4) that field firing should be developed; (5) that, assuming that it is not intended to again make attendance at school compulsory, some inducement in the shape of a money grant be given to all who educate themselves and thus become more intelligent; and (6) Brigade and Divisional manoeuvres should be part of the annual training. In my evidence before the Commission on the previous occasion, I went fully into the question of the soldier's employment in duties not military, and I need not go into that again.

As to the Staff, the servant is very much what the master makes him. A Staff Officer, provided he is well educated with Staff College or Staff Service training

and active, becomes very much what the General makes him. My own experience of our Staff Officers is entirely favourable. I was the head of a large staff at Aldershot. My Staff in South Africa was a comparatively large one, and in both places I was well served. I had full powers to change, and varied and important as were the duties the Staff was equal to them, and I only had to find fault in one case. They were exceptionally good; I practically selected my own Staff; they were adaptable men, and equal to most duties.

16925. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is that Aldershot you are speaking of when you say you practically selected your own people?—I selected them when I was going to Africa; when I went to Aldershot I was allowed to nominate (which is a better word than select my own Staff, and the officers I said I would like to go down with me to Aldershot were appointed. I expected I would be eventually sent to South Africa if reinforcements went, and I took the best men I could find. The circumstances of our Army system and the laws governing or rather limiting Army training and exercises on a useful scale in this country limit the training of the Staff. The individuals are good, but the system of working a Staff is of the first importance.

16926. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You say the opportunities are limited; how would you remedy that?—I hope that the officers who have now been trained as Staff Officers will eventually become Generals, and that they will know how to work their staff.

16927. From their experience in the War?—From their experience in the War, and at home.

Then I come to the supply of ammunition. As far as the provision by the Ordnance was concerned, it was always ample in my experience; the amount of reserve ammunition accumulated at Bloemfontein was enormous, and in good condition. I say the same with regard to equipment, and with regard to food and forage. As regards the provisions of the latter, we were at times short of both, owing to transport being insufficient, particularly in the opening part of the campaign.

Then the next question of importance is as to the horses. In the opening phases of the war the numbers were limited; horses and mules were good, but suffered naturally from being underfed; being pushed into work hurriedly, after a long sea voyage, and in some measure from bad horsemanship. From May, horses in very large numbers arrived at Bloemfontein; it was most difficult when a trainload arrived after perhaps 20 days at sea and seven or eight days in the train, to judge what their condition was when purchased. The whole subject has been so thoroughly gone into in the Inquiry on the administration of the Army Remount Department that I can add little to it.

There was a question as to traction engines, but I have already reported twice on the traction engines, and I am ready to do it again. I daresay you have had it before from others.

The next question is as to the Medical and Royal Engineer services. The Royal Engineer services were adequate. The Medical services were gradually brought up to a state of efficiency and sufficiency. I gave very full evidence before the Royal Commission on South African Hospitals, so that I need not go into that. As a subordinate official, I feel that I should not give expression to opinions which have been discussed and decided by the Commander-in-Chief without his special consent.

As to Cavalry, the experience of the War has not tested so much its organisation as its training and armament, and the remarks I have already made on this head need not be repeated.

As to Artillery, I think, speaking generally, the organisation stood the test of the War. The question of an improvement in the armament is under consideration; indeed, it is practically decided. But these questions are apart from organisation. There are questions regarding the ammunition parks and columns under discussion, but they are comparatively small. I do not suppose you want to know about them.

As to Infantry, as far as our military system as a whole admits, the organisation for war is good. I would prefer three Brigades to a Division. The Army Corps organisation was not tested in the South African War. It was not applicable.

As to Mounted Infantry, Mounted Infantry in force

became an absolute necessity if we were to meet our opponents on anything like equal terms; this became clear the more they became disorganised, and refused to meet us in a pitched battle. I believe in every future war Mounted Infantry will be most useful. The late Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, long since foresaw the value of this adjunct, and always advised us not to wait on other nations but to take the lead in recognising it. The Minutes in the War Office will show that. We did this to a certain extent, and, for operations in Europe, to a fairly sufficient extent in comparison to our army strength. The fact that it was part of our system was an immense advantage to us. I mean that we were able to send the men into the cadres quicker; we were able to train men quicker than if we had been just beginning it. I think the particular conditions of the South African War called for a much larger proportion of Mounted Infantry than would be required in European warfare. The Mounted Infantry, considering the difficulties were organised with great success. The chief factor was the officers. Fortunately, we have in our Army a large number of officers with all the characteristics necessary for the forming of such a force; they ride, they understand horses, they are adaptable, and when placed in positions of responsibility they rise to the occasion.

16928. (*Viscount Esher.*) Are there enough of them?—I think so. We would have to fill up their places in the regiments; that is the difficulty.

16929. That is the precise point, that you have to fill up their places in the regiments?—That is the very great difficulty; not only would we have to fill up their places in the regiments, but every regiment on mobilisation is very short of officers. I think I explained that in my evidence on the last occasion.

16930. You did upon that point, but the moment you take away officers again for Irregular Corps, and so on, it is a further drain upon the Regular battalions of the Army?—Yes, it is a further drain, but there they are; they are able to do it.

16931. Are you doing anything to obviate that? Are you considering any schemes?—As to a reserve of officers.

16932. Yes?—We are considering a scheme as to a Reserve of officers, to take young men that are practically not in the Army at all now, but to give them a month's training and give them a uniform and rank, and all that, and put them into a Reserve of officers. It is a makeshift, but it is the least expensive one that we can adopt, and the only fault I have to find with it is that I am afraid it will hurt the Auxiliary forces, the Yeomanry, Volunteers, and Militia, as officers will go into the Reserve of officers instead of going into the Regular forces.

16933. Have you considered adding to the establishment of officers in the line battalions?—We have considered it very much, but told you in my evidence before, when you said you had heard a great deal was going to be done that nothing would be done, and I think I was right.

16934. Nothing has happened since then to make you alter your opinion?—Nothing whatever, either as to officers or the provision of the men, saving them from doing these civilian duties.

16935. (*Chairman.*) When you were speaking of the inadequacy of the forces, you mentioned that your duty from Bloemfontein was to protect the railway?—No, it eventually ended in that because I could not occupy the country. I found the Boers so aggressive and pouring down to such an extent, the railway and the bridges being continually blown up, that I was partially obliged to give up most of the places I occupied, towns away from the railway, and to concentrate everything on the protection of what I thought was the one important point.

16936. I did not mean to put it in any way controversially; I only meant that the protection of the railway was under your orders at that time?—Quite so.

16937. Were not the troops you had to a large extent Militia?—Yes, to a very large extent Militia.

16938. We had evidence, I think, that some of the difficulties in protecting the railway arose out of that

Lieut.
General Sir
Thomas
Kelly-Kenny,
K.C.B.

25 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, K.C.B. fact, viz., that the Militia were not equal to Regular troops?—Well, I said that in my evidence, they were not equal and you could not expect them to be equal, but considering everything, they did as much as, and perhaps more than, I anticipated.

25 Feb. 1903. 16939. But the fact that they were not so well trained troops as the Regulars made your task more difficult?—Certainly.

16940. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Did you see much distinction in quality between the Reservists and the men who had been serving up to date?—I think there was a distinction in the older Reservists, the Section D, but in the case of the others who had not left the ranks long I did not see very much.

16941. You did not hear of any difficulties as regards discipline?—I did with regard to Section D—in fact I experienced them myself; when they came up they grumbled a great deal.

16942. But the other sections were quite up to the mark of the soldiers who were in the ranks before?—I think so.

16943. They had not lost their military habits?—No, they had not; I could not trace anything against the Reservists I had.

16944. Except Section D?—That is so.

16945. (*Chairman.*) We had some evidence with regard to the large proportion of Reservists in some regiments being detrimental to discipline?—I could quite understand it with a very large body of Reservists coming in perhaps, but I did not experience it in my own Division.

16946. We heard of cases in which there were 60 per cent. of Reservists in a battalion; do you think that would tell against discipline for a time?—I should not say that it would. I quite think that we ought to expect 50 per cent. of Reservists in the ordinary way.

16947. It was merely for a time until the men became accustomed to their duties.

Viscount Esher. And especially to the non-commissioned officers; one of the principal difficulties was that the non-commissioned officers found great difficulty in dealing with the Reservists, many of whom had probably served with them already in the ranks and been senior to them?—It was not so much the difficulty of dealing with Reservists but we had no instrument to deal with them. The difficulty of punishing men in the field is very great.

16948. (*Sir John Edge.*) What did the Section D men grumble about?—They first said they never knew they were to be sent out at all; a great many of them came to me about that, but of course if they had read their undertaking that there signed they would have known that. I suppose they were as a rule more married men amongst them than in Section B; they had settled down with their wives and their pipes more; but I certainly noticed it.

16949. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Had the earlier sections lost their practice in shooting?—I could not say, it is so difficult to tell.

16950. We ought to ask colonels of battalions questions of that sort?—Considering that very few people ever saw a Boer it is very difficult to tell whether they hit him or not, or where they hit him.

16951. (*Chairman.*) You say you want the Reservists brought up yearly for 10 or 12 days; what is the object of that?—To keep them up in their military habits and training and shooting, shooting mostly. In fact it is done in every other Army in Europe.

16952. That means that you think they were not so good as they might have been in those respects?—Yes, I think they would be the better for it. For example, of the Section A people, we had very few indeed, and our Reserve system was not quite in full swing. Anticipating this three years' system, I would not think that a man who had served for eight years need be called up, but I am perfectly certain that the three years' man must be called up if it is desired to count him as a soldier; he must be called up after five or six years, and the D people certainly ought to be.

16953. (*Viscount Esher.*) In the War Department when you attempt to initiate a great scheme of re-

organisation, like the Army Corps scheme for example, whose business is that, and who does the actual work? Who draws up a scheme of that kind?—That particular thing was done before I came to the War Office.

16954. But what special Department is there? Is it the business of the Adjutant-General, or the business of the Commander-in-Chief, or that of the Secretary of State, or of the civilian Under Secretary of State, or whose business is it to draft or initiate a great scheme, or any scheme, in the War Office?—I think anybody might do it, and then the Secretary of State would consider it, and no matter who does it, whoever originates it, everybody has a share in it. It is sent round. As regards this particular scheme I do not know, as it was done before I was at the War Office, but I imagine that it was not new. I think it was a revival of the old Army Scheme prepared by Colonel Hume a long time ago.

16955. It is not the particular thing I want to get at but the principle. You are very familiar with the German Army; supposing there was an idea in Germany of converting their system of Army Corps into a totally different system, whose business in the German Army would it be to draw up a scheme of that kind?—That would be the General Staff.

16956. That is to say, something analogous to our Intelligence Department?—Well, I would not like to say that, we have nothing quite the same, but at present the Intelligence Department is responsible for organisation. That is since the late Order in Council, and that would give the Director of Military Intelligence the responsibility, but up to 1901, the Adjutant-General or Commander-in-Chief was responsible.

16957. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Now it is the Intelligence and Mobilisation Department?—Yes.

16958. (*Viscount Esher.*) Take questions which are arising now in connection with the organisation of those Army Corps; is much of that work done by Sir William Nicholson and his Branch?—What sort of questions?

16959. I suppose questions do arise as to the actual organisation of these Army Corps themselves, or is the organisation absolutely settled?—Yes, it is all settled. The principal thing since I have been at the War Office has been the decentralisation, and that is all Adjutant General's work; for instance, giving the Army Corps a general power to do things that hitherto have been done at the War Office.

16960. You mean that Sir William Nicholson would have nothing to do with that?—That is so.

16961. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That is executive work?—That is executive work; that is Adjutant-General's work.

16962. (*Viscount Esher.*) Supposing such a question as this arose, as to whether it is desirable or not to have a representative of the Financial Branch of the War Office in each Army Corps District (we know there is such a thing), but supposing that question arose as to whether it was desirable or not to retain it, would that discussion be initiated in your Branch or in Sir William Nicholson's Branch?—In neither. I think it would originate perhaps with the Financial Secretary, and then it would be discussed at the War Office Council. That is the line it would take. It would not be initiated in either branch you have named.

16963. Supposing, on the other hand, this question arose, as to whether it was desirable or not to locate permanently an Army Corps in South Africa?—That would be under Sir William Nicholson's Branch, Military Intelligence; he would be in touch with the politicians, and it is the Colonial Office that would know if there was trouble in South Africa. If it was on a question of training it would be my Department.

16964. I do not mean in connection with any idea of hostilities; I mean training?—With an Army like ours a large force like an Army Corps, could not well be taken away and sent for training without considering the political situation.

16965. That is not my point?—If it was for training alone, and if other things did not arise that would be the Adjutant General's business. If no question arose as to the safety of the country or denuding the

forces at home or in India, the Adjutant-General would do it.

16966. But all those questions would arise?—Yes.

16967. Therefore you mean that under those circumstances it would be Sir William Nicholson's business?—He would originate that, but it does not at all follow that it would not be sent round to everybody in the Office, because it is such a complicated matter, the shipping, the transport, the numbers, the drafts, the effect it would have on the depôts at home, all that would have to be

considered, and therefore it would have to go to the Quartermaster-General, and it would have to come to me.

16968. It would not under the present circumstances be discussed by you verbally, but you would all write minutes on it?—We would write Minutes on it, and it would then be discussed at the War Office Council when it was ripe.

16969. It would be discussed at the War Office Council?—Oh, yes.

Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, K.C.B.

25 Feb. 1903

FORTY-SECOND DAY.

Thursday, 26th February 1903

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Major-General Sir H. E. COLVILLE, K.C.M.G., C.B., called and examined.

16970. (*Chairman*.) You went to South Africa with Sir Redvers Buller's force?—Yes, with the Guards Brigade in Lord Methuen's column.

16971. And in Lord Methuen's column you commanded the Guards Brigade?—Yes.

16972. And afterwards you were appointed to command the 9th Division?—Yes.

16973. You have been good enough to prepare a statement based upon the Memorandum (*vide Appendix, page 575, post*) which we sent to you?—Yes.

16974. If you have no objection we will take that as an answer and insert it in the evidence:—

1. The principal engagements at which I was present were:—

- (a) Belmont.
- (b) Modder River.
- (c) Magersfontein.
- (d) Paardeberg.
- (e) Poplar Grove.
- (f) Sanna's Post.

(g) Operations of Ninth Division between Ventersburg and Heilbron.

(a) At Belmont the Infantry and Artillery were ample for the purpose, but the Cavalry (two or three hundred lances) was insufficient for effective pursuit, and the enemy was able to retire at his leisure. Lines of wagons were seen filing off unmolested. With a Cavalry Brigade and a Battery of Horse Artillery, well handled, this battle might have resulted in a defeat of the enemy almost as decisive as that at Paardeberg.

(b) At Modder River I consider that we were deficient in Infantry and Cavalry. As I believe that we considerably out-numbered our opponents, it is possible that under European conditions of warfare we might have been strong enough to hold the enemy in front, and detach a sufficient force to outflank him, but owing to the mobility of the Boers, who were nearly all mounted, and the very extended front compared to their strength which this enabled them to cover, practically the whole of our force was used up in holding the enemy in front, and this in such an extended line that we were lacking in the solidity necessary to push home a frontal attack at any point.

As at Belmont, our lack of Cavalry enabled the enemy to retire unmolested. A Cavalry brigade with its battery at Modder River probably would

not have enabled us to capture a great number of prisoners and stores, as we might have done at Belmont, but would undoubtedly have rendered the enemy's position untenable and forced them to vacate it early in the day. This would have had very important bearings on the campaign, as the strain of the long day at Modder River undoubtedly demoralised the troops, and so made the further advance towards Kimberley more difficult.

(c) At Magersfontein we had sufficient Cavalry and Artillery, but insufficient Infantry. After the repulse of the Highland Brigade the Guards Brigade had to hold nearly the whole line (about five miles) between Magersfontein and the Modder River. The extension which this necessitated was the utmost by which the enemy could be held in check, and was too great to allow of an effective advance against an entrenched position; it precluded the possibility of detaching any considerable portion of the Brigade to reinforce the Highlanders.

The advance of the Ninth Division from Enslin to Jacobsdal was on the exposed flank of the Army, and during it no mounted troops except a few raw City Imperial Volunteers were under the command of the General Officer Commanding. I consider that the loss of the convoy at Watervaal Drift, which had such deplorable consequences, was chiefly due to this lack of Cavalry.

(d) At Paardeberg I consider that the force was sufficient to surround and hold the Boer laager, but the lack of a pontoon train caused considerable delay in crossing the river.

(e) At Poplar Grove I had only experience of the work of my own division, which was fully strong enough in Infantry for the task it was called upon to perform, but the total absence of Field Artillery and lack of Cavalry practically nullified the work of the Infantry. I had no Cavalry, but de Lisle's and Henry's Mounted Infantry were nominally attached to me under independent orders from the Chief of Staff.

(f) At Sanna's Post I had sufficient Infantry but no cavalry. When the Ninth Division arrived at Boesman's Kop, the captured guns, etc., of the Second Cavalry Brigade were being taken over the Waterworks Drift eight miles distant. A Cavalry force could have overtaken them, but an Infantry one, especially one already fatigued

Major-General Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B.

26 Feb. 1903.

Major
General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G. C.B.,
26 Feb. 1903.

after a good march, could not. As at Poplar Grove, Mounted Infantry (Colonel Martyr's) had been nominally attached to the Ninth Division, but had moved under direct orders from the Chief of Staff, and, at the time the Division arrived at Boesman's Kop, were at Watervaal Drift (six miles distant). The Artillery was sufficient, but owing to the lack of a mobile escort, was useless. This was one of the occasions on which long range guns were required. Unfortunately, it was the only one on which the battery of 4.7 naval guns, usually attached to the Ninth Division, was absent.

(g) During the minor operations between Ventersburg and Heilbron, the Ninth Division, although only consisting of one Brigade, was strong enough in Artillery and Infantry, but its operations were rendered futile by lack of Cavalry; not only did the usual scouting done by Cavalry fall on the Infantry, thus wearying the men out, but all victories were rendered abortive by inability to pursue.

2. I consider that the shooting was bad. This was due:—

- (a) To the fact that all training in the attack had been by volley firing only, with the distance named by the Company or Section Commander.
 - (b) To about two-thirds of the force being reservists who had had no recent training.
 - (c) To the insufficiency of ammunition allowed for training.
 - (d) To want of field firing ranges and the levelling tendencies of the school of musketry.
 - (e) To the invisibility of the enemy.
- The marching was bad at first, owing to
- (a) To the number of reservists.
 - (b) To the men being fresh from shipboard.
 - (c) To the sand and heat of the Karroo.

Later in the campaign the marching became good when the men had serviceable boots. As they wore out an increasing proportion of men fell out after each march, and a long one always had the effect of overcrowding the ambulances next day.

Horsemanship, etc.—I have no experience of this.

Improvised entrenchments were always well and readily done. The men threw away their Wallace equipment at first, but were soon anxious to pick up a fresh one. I consider that, in deliberate entrenchments made under the superintendence of officers, regulations as a rule were too rigidly adhered to, and that sufficient allowance was not made for the varied conditions of the ground. At first officers and men were very stupid about taking cover. I have seen men halted on a rise in full view of the enemy when a few paces forward or backward would have placed them in shelter, the reason being that to have taken this step would have broken the dressing of the line. I have, too, frequently seen an outpost sentry in khaki posted on the enemy's side of a dark bush, when he could have seen equally well through it and been himself unseen, but all this rapidly changed as the war progressed, and by the time I left South Africa I consider that our men were quite as good as the enemy in this respect.

With regard to future training, believing as I do that the art of fighting can only be learnt in the field, I am strongly in favour, at home, of doing all that is possible to maintain discipline and *esprit de corps*.

In any force the percentage of men utterly reckless of their lives must be small, that of men who do their duty without flinching comparatively large, while there must always be a certain percentage of cowards. With both these latter classes discipline and *esprit de corps* are of the utmost importance; the higher the standard of both in the average man, the greater his effort; while nothing but the ingrained instinct of obedience and fear of ridicule of his comrades will drive the coward on. Throughout the War I noticed that the higher the discipline of the regiment, the greater the strain it would bear. The unfortunate incident at Magersfontein, by touching the Highlanders' pride, made them, in my opinion, the finest body of men in the Army.

The question of intelligence *versus* discipline is an extremely difficult one. The best army would undoubtedly

be one formed of highly intelligent and thoroughly disciplined men, but bearing in mind the classes from which our Army is recruited, I fear this is impossible; and believing as I do that a stupid man who thinks for himself is the worst possible sort of soldier, I believe that intelligence should be sacrificed to discipline. Nevertheless, I think more might be done by captains of companies. I look upon them as the most important men in a battalion, and I consider that they should all be selected and given every opportunity of handling their men independently. Apart from the utility of a really good man in training a company in peace time, it is little short of murder to place the lives of 100 men in the hands of any man merely because he happens to be the senior. Being strongly impressed by the importance of discipline, I am in favour of a fair portion of the soldier's time being devoted to close order drill as the best means of instilling automatic obedience, and also of the closest attention being paid to cleanliness, smartness, etc.—all means to the same end—and also encouraging *esprit de corps*.

Shooting is, of course, of the utmost importance, and it is hardly possible to devote too much time to that, while a man who cannot march is practically useless. I consider that every man's marching power should be tested—i.e., that all soldiers should go through a progressive course, and those who cannot reach a certain standard should be drafted. But, having once proved his efficiency, I am no believer in the utility of attempting to keep man or any other animal in a perpetual state of high training which can only end in staleness or possible breakdown. Men should have sufficient practice in extended order movements, outpost work, etc., to prevent them feeling lost when they cease to be touching their comrades; but the conditions of warfare, especially in our Army, must necessarily vary so much that I have no great faith in the utility of constantly practising an attack formation on definite lines, which in all probability will be found unsuitable to the conditions of our next war.

While a strong advocate of smartness and unbending discipline, I am inclined to think that the former quality has been given undue weight in the selection of Non-commissioned officers. In battle a great weight of responsibility often falls on these men, and it is of the utmost importance that they should be quick, intelligent, resourceful, and have an eye for country. In England I believe that reconnaissance classes form the best means of testing these qualities, and, while holding that it is a waste of time to continue this instruction with men who do not show an aptitude for the work, I am in favour of giving every encouragement to such privates as do, and, if they possess the other necessary qualifications, selecting non-commissioned officers from men who have shown aptitude in this direction.

3. The success of any system of training regimental officers must necessarily depend to a great extent on themselves. No system, however good, will force the requisite knowledge into a man who does not want to learn or is indifferent to learning, and it appears to me that the first problem is to find a sufficient inducement to exertion.

The pay of an English officer in the lower ranks is poor, and his expenses are considerable compared with other professions. In the days when trade was thought derogatory to a gentleman, young men of good position had little choice of a profession, but now it is open to anyone to become a civil engineer, to go into the City, the wine trade, the motor-car business, or any of the hundred and one means by which money may be earned by hard work. The Army, on the other hand, has so far been looked upon as a profession in which money will be spent rather than gained, but one in which the work is light and the amusements many; and it has consequently chiefly attracted young men whose inclinations were towards a pleasant, easy life. Many of them are intelligent and some ambitious, and if the public opinion of the Army could be turned to favour work, it is possible that a certain proportion of them would devote their energies to their profession with a fair amount of success; but I do not believe that the Army will ever become a working profession until inducements are offered which will enable it to compete financially with the many trades open in civil life. Whether such financial encouragement would lower the tone of the Army is an open question. Personally, I do not think it would.

Assuming that by some means officers have been induced to take full advantage of the instruction open to them, I consider that the three most important points are :—

- (a) That they should have as little to unlearn as possible.
- (b) That whatever instruction is given them, it should be thorough.
- (c) That they should be encouraged to act on their own initiative and take responsibility.

(a) It is my experience that the best officers are those who join young, direct from a Public School, and that anything which a young officer has learnt or thinks he has learnt, before he joins has to be eradicated by a laborious process. The ideal young officer (as far as this subject is concerned) would be one who joined having acquired a habit of work, no matter at what, and who had an open mind to receive the new teaching in store for him.

(b) At present, perhaps partly due to the fault of the teachers, and partly to that of the pupils, there is a want of thoroughness in the training of regimental officers. They pass examinations, it is true, in a variety of subjects, from interior economy to temporary bridge making, but, as far as my experience goes, only a very small percentage become experts in any one of them, and I think this is due to the levelling-up process, which makes it necessary for all to pass a certain standard in each subject. There are, of course, certain subjects, such as drill, military law, keeping accounts, etc., which it is imperative that all officers should know; but many of the best company officers are wholly unfitted by nature to make a map or draw up a tactical scheme, and, in my opinion, it is a waste of time to engage them longer in such pursuits than is necessary to discover their inability. On the other hand, officers showing marked inclination towards special branches of military knowledge might perhaps be excused a certain amount of drill, be given fuller instruction in their favourite subject and be allowed to gain marks which would be counted in their favour later on, say, at the Staff College.

(c) The greatest fault of our officers, as far as my experience goes, lies in their want of initiative, and I believe this to be entirely the fault of their superiors. In an army which was officered from the ranks, this would be excusable; the necessary discipline of the private must crush individuality, and a private risen to command can hardly be expected to shake off all the influence of his early training. But with a young man fresh from a public school it is just the contrary. He may be lazy and pleasure-seeking, but he is full of ideas; yet should he venture to take any line of his own, say at a field day, it is a certainty that before he has gone many yards, every senior officer within range will be thundering at him, and, after a few such attempts, he gives it up and in time he becomes one of the thunderers. As long as there are men in command who have been brought up in this school, it will be very difficult to change the system; but, in my opinion, all general officers should be strongly urged to check undue interference on the part of officers commanding battalions. It is far better that a young officer should make a few mistakes and learn their consequences for himself, than that he should be so constantly nursed against the possibility of making one, that he becomes a mere puppet, unable to move unless a senior is by to pull the strings.

I have had no experience of Staff College training, except by its results, and of these I cannot speak too highly. Whether the system is the best possible, I do not know, but I have no hesitation in saying that for staff work a Staff College Officer is simply invaluable, and I would never willingly take an officer on my staff who had not been through the College. Every car

should be taken that only the best officers are allowed to go to the Staff College. A Commanding Officer is now required in his annual confidential reports to name the three officers whom he considers the best. Considering the very limited number of vacancies in the College, compared to the total of officers in the Army, I think one would be sufficient, and it should be impressed on Commanding Officers that what is required is not the best Company officer, who might be a great loss to his battalion and no addition to the staff, but the best probable Staff Officer.

With regard to the duties of officers, I can only say that the allotment of duties as laid down by Regulations appear to me quite satisfactory, but I should like to record my experience that those battalions in which the officers' duties are exceeded by the adjutant are generally the worst, and the best are those in which a free hand is left to captains of companies.

As far as my experience goes, the supply of ammunition in the field was satisfactory, but that its conveyance to the firing line was a source of great danger and difficulty is shown by the fact that by far the largest proportion of men mentioned by commanding officers for conspicuous gallantry were ammunition carriers. At Modder River a very large percentage of the wounded were ammunition carriers. At first the supply from home was inadequate. On the second day at Magersfontein G Battery, Royal Horse Artillery had only six rounds per gun left, and the Field Battery about 12; and I believe at that date there was not another round left in Cape Colony.

Equipment reached the Ninth Division at irregular intervals, and sometimes articles of clothing, such as boots, were completely worn out before they arrived. Our food supply was extremely irregular. The greater part of the march from Modder River to Bloemfontein was done on half rations, and after leaving Bloemfontein the Ninth Division rarely got a full ration.

The quality of the supplies was good, with the exception of the "emergency ration" which, owing to its thirst-producing qualities, was useless unless water was plentiful, a rare occurrence on the field of battle, where the ration was most generally required.

I know of no delay or failure on the part of the contractors.

I have no knowledge of the numbers or the quality of horses.

5. I only had experience of ox and mule transport. The former has, possibly, advantages on a Line of Communications in safe country, but in touch with the enemy I greatly prefer the latter. The ox, or at all events the South African one, has the peculiarity of only eating by daylight, and consequently soon starves if marched all day. This necessitates either night marches, which are very trying for the troops, or having to detach a force as escort for the ox convoy if it marches separately. It also takes more room on the road than mule transport. Mule transport can start at a convenient hour for the troops but requires about an hour's halt in the middle of the day for watering, but this is generally also required by the men. The only thing to be said in favour of ox transport in South Africa is that the oxen were generally in better condition than the mules, and could be more easily replaced. The bad condition of the mules, however, was due to the fact that they were put to work before they had recovered from the voyage, and were never given time to get right. During the march to Bloemfontein, too, they were half starved. A scale of transport and mobilisation equipment necessary should be carefully thought out for every country in which our Army is likely to fight, and the loads allotted to each wagon should be adapted to the state of the roads and tracks in that country. Apart from the bad condition of the mules, our wagons were always overloaded. Sufficient transport was never available, and the mobilisation equipment taken out was to a great extent left at Cape Town and Orange River.

6. I have no experience of any hospitals except my own divisional ones, and these were not completed till within about three weeks of the break up of the Division.

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.
26 Feb. 1903.

Major-
General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K. C. M. G., C. B.
26 Feb. 1903.

As far as they went they were excellent, but the medical officers were short-handed and insufficiently equipped throughout. We had rarely enough ambulance, and wounded often had to be carried in transport wagons. I have known a case of a large hospital after an action wholly destitute of medical comforts. I consider the work of the medical staff in action to be deserving of the highest praise. I have seen great, and I think needless, suffering to wounded men by being kept on stretchers in the sun all day. I think some light awning is urgently required for hospital stretchers.

In all respects, bridging, ballooning, road-making, improving water supply, and in their many duties, I found the Royal Engineers thoroughly satisfactory. My only criticism of them is that which I have already made regarding entrenchments, that in defensive works they sometimes followed the regulation type too closely, without making sufficient allowance for the nature of the case.

7. Under the peculiar climatic conditions of South Africa the short range of our field guns compared to those of the enemy often placed us at a disadvantage, and there were many occasions on which the 4·7 naval guns, with a range of 10,000 yards attached to my Division, were of great service, but South Africa is probably one of the few countries in the world in which firing at such a range would be effective. On the other hand, as far as my experience goes, the argument that increased weight of artillery would impair its effectiveness in reducing its mobility does not hold good. In support of this I may say that my naval guns, each drawn by 36 oxen, never once failed to be on the spot when they were wanted. I believe it is generally admitted that the effect of artillery fire is more moral than actual, and such is my experience. The number of the enemy killed and wounded by our artillery fire was undoubtedly very small, but, on the other hand, it was most useful in keeping the enemy's guns at bay, in dispersing flank attacks, and in covering the advance of Infantry. I believe the latter to be its principal rôle, as it is only under the cover of an overwhelming fire that Infantry can hope to advance in the open under modern conditions.

I think our Artillery often wasted its energies in attempting to produce an actual, instead of a merely moral effect. At Modder River the Artillery expended a great amount of ammunition on certain houses in which I believe there were no Boers, but although they were in a position to enfilade the enemy's trenches, hardly helped the advance of the Infantry at all. Magersfontein Kopje was bombarded for several hours on the day before the battle with no result, and Cronje's laager at Paardeberg was bombarded for a week with little result; but the covering fire of the Artillery at Belmont enabled the Coldstream Guards to take one of the most difficult positions with little loss, and the covering fire of the naval guns enabled the Black Watch to assault a position of very great difficulty at Vet River (Baviaansberg) with the loss of one man wounded. At Blaauwburg the Artillery enabled the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders to do the same.

The Lee-Enfield rifle is in my opinion an excellent weapon. Its range was sufficient and its trajectory low enough. For certain purposes, such as the defence of a small isolated post, it is probable that quicker loading, such as that employed on the Mauser, would be an advantage. The quick loading of the Mauser undoubtedly enabled the Boers to pour out a terrific fire at times, but it will be rare for the British Army to act purely on the defensive as they did, and sit in trenches surrounded by boxes of ammunition. Given perfect fire discipline, a very quick-loading rifle is undoubtedly an advantage, but failing this the supply of ammunition in the firing line is a work of such difficulty that it is doubtful whether we should put into the men's hands the means of expending their ammunition more rapidly than at present. The machine guns were frequently of use in the flank, both in warding off flank attacks and in covering the advance of the Infantry. The Vickers-Maxims were also useful for the same purpose, but their effect is more moral than actual. Owing to the stream of dust they raise, they form excellent range-finders, and I think one should be attached to every battery of artillery for this purpose.

With regard to the organisation of the Army, I believe that the system as laid down by regulation at the beginning of the War was as good as it could be. Where

it failed it was not the fault of the system, but because, for various reasons, it was either found to be impracticable or thought inadvisable to carry it out.

With regard to the employment of the different arms, I had little experience of the employment of Cavalry. Our Artillery was, I think, at first too concentrated. The Boers rarely had more than one or two guns in a position, which were so skilfully masked that we rarely succeeded in putting them out of action, while our batteries or brigade divisions afforded them an excellent target. Towards the end of my command I rarely had more than two guns together, and found this worked well.

I found our Field Artillery drill too slow and cumbersome. In the case of the officer in command of a force telling his Commandant Royal Artillery to open fire on a certain spot or body of the enemy, the proceeding is for the latter officer to ride forward accompanied by a trumpeter, two range finders, and two or three other mounted men; having selected a suitable position, a message is sent to the battery or brigade division to come up, and the range is taken by the range finders; all this is seen by the enemy, and if he is a mobile one, such as we had to deal with in South Africa, he has probably got out of range by the time the battery gets into action. Owing to their absence of ceremonial, I usually found that the naval guns, which moved far slower than the Field Artillery, got more shots into the enemy. Their procedure was to move up a slope all together, until the muzzle of the guns just topped it, and then, judging the distance, to fire at the enemy without a moment's delay.

With regard to the employment of Infantry, it should be borne in mind that the conditions of warfare in South Africa were wholly exceptional, and it is unlikely that they will ever be reproduced. The enemy was an armed, mounted nation, of men mostly accustomed to an open air life, and knowing every inch of the country they were defending. The fact of being mounted, combined with their knowledge of the ground, gave them extraordinary mobility, and enabled a small force to safely cover a great extent of ground, with the certainty of being able to concentrate rapidly at any threatened point. Had we ever been able to concentrate an overwhelming force on a given point, the enemy's extended front would have been covered by an opposing force drawn up in the regulation three lines, and the attack would have proceeded in the usual way. Had this been done our losses would undoubtedly have been terrific, but in such an engagement as that at Modder River (a good one to illustrate this side of the question), I believe we should have been successful. As it was, however, in the example under consideration, a front which would have normally taken three divisions had to be covered by one, with the result that the three lines were practically merged into one, gradually thinning, with no hope of reinforcements, and, lacking the impetus which they would have given, it was unable to advance. At the date of the Modder River battle we had not yet learnt enough of our enemy to trust ourselves to the extreme extension which was adopted later, and which enabled even a small force to hold a wide front and still have troops to spare for a turning movement. These latter tactics, the natural outcome of the enemy's peculiarities and our own insufficient strength, were undoubtedly the best for the class of warfare in which we were engaged, but I have grave doubts whether they will prove to be the best in future wars. The Boers had certain qualifications which gave them great superiority in the defence, but they had also certain weaknesses, chiefly due to want of discipline, which rendered their defence weak in one respect, and made them almost powerless in the attack. While their mobility, elasticity, and intelligence made it safe for their leaders to trust to individual initiative for the prompt strengthening of a threatened spot, their general discipline was not good enough to allow of an orderly movement to a flank of a large body in the stress of battle, and thus our flank attacks were rarely opposed. Again, the feebleness in attack allowed us to hold a front with a handful of men, who would have been powerless against such a counter attack as might reasonably be expected from European troops. I do not think, therefore, that our tactics in South Africa, successful as they eventually were, have by any means solved the difficult question of how to reach the enemy's position in face of modern smokeless magazine fire. There is one point however

on which my experience in South Africa has convinced me, and that is that we must not disregard the confidence which companionship gives to human beings, and may take it for granted that whether a close formation is wasteful of life or not, with a thin one (*i.e.*, one in which the men are beyond easy speaking distance) they will never be induced to advance beyond a certain point. When it can be carried out, a turning movement is undoubtedly the best solution to the difficulty, but its practicability must depend partly on the enemy and partly on the position. In one in which the attacker holds interior lines, it will generally be favourable; in one in which they are held by the enemy it will be difficult. In such a case when a frontal advance may be forced on the attacker, I believe, from my experience in South Africa, that the end can only be gained by never allowing any portion of the attacking force to advance unless covered by such an overwhelming fire from the stationary portion that the enemy's fire is paralysed. Machine guns at the flanks are very useful for this purpose. I speak, however, only from my knowledge of the Boers; possibly against highly-disciplined troops even this would be ineffectual.

I consider that the art of crawling, as practised by deer-stalkers, should be taught; on occasions such as the engagement at Modder River and Paardeberg, when the troops lay for hours unable either to advance or retire, it would have been invaluable, and no matter how slow this progress might have been it would probably have enabled them to reach within striking distance of the enemy, had they resorted to it. On both these occasions I noticed that as long as the men remained lying down the Boer fire was very desultory, but if one man rose it brought down a hail of bullets on the line. Yet I have never seen a soldier attempt to move from one place to another except upright. While still in command of the Guards Brigade I tried to have the men taught to crawl, but they were extraordinarily awkward at it, and I do not know if the practice was continued.

I consider that every company should have three officers, and that transport and signalling officers should be supernumerary.

I think a brigadier should always have a battery at his command; without one, he often has to feel for the enemy with his Infantry, and lose men unnecessarily. These batteries could always be concentrated with the divisional artillery if necessary.

I never saw a division complete up to its establishment; there was always a shortage of hospitals, transport, and mounted men.

In future, I think, a division, with increased number of mounted men and guns, is a large enough command for our army; an Army Corps is too cumbersome for one man to deal with. The larger the force under one command, the greater the necessity for depending on the telegraph, a most frequent source of danger and delay. This appears to me to be in accordance with modern tendencies. In the lower commands the exigencies of modern warfare have forced on us the splitting up of responsibility; it is only in the higher ones that the reverse action has taken place. With the enormously increased area of a modern battlefield the section commander has grown from a nonentity to a person of great importance, yet under the same conditions in which considerable organisation is required to command even one division, three divisions have been placed under one command.

As an example of the disadvantage of this system, I would cite the engagement at Poplar Grove, in which Lord Roberts was in command of three divisions, and was therefore in the position of an Army Corps Commander. As the Commander-in-Chief was personally directing the operations, generals of division had not the freedom of action which they would have had in an army in which the division was the highest command, and only a general idea was issued by the Commander-in-Chief; on the other hand, the extent of ground covered—some 14 miles—made it impossible for the Commander-in-Chief to keep in touch with the whole of his command and issue orders to meet each fresh contingency as it arose.

I should like to draw attention to the great use my signallers were to me throughout the operations. Under the conditions of modern warfare, it is often impossible to convey messages by any other means, and I would strongly urge that a certain proportion of brigade and

divisional signallers should be mounted. General officers commanding these bodies are frequently obliged to move rapidly from one point to another of the field of battle, and their signallers being on foot, they are often deprived of their services at the most critical moment.

With reference to the last paragraph of your confidential memorandum, I submit the following *precis* of evidence which I beg to be allowed to give before the Royal Commission, on incidents in connection with which I have incurred the censure of the Commander-in-Chief.

SANNA'S POST AND LINDLEY.

On the 30th March, 1900, at Bloemfontein, I received the following written orders from the Chief of the Staff:—
"O.C. Ninth Division.

"The Division under your command will march at daylight to-morrow to Watervaal Drift on the Modder River, N.E. of Bloemfontein (distance 21 miles). The enemy is reported to be in force on the Leeuw River, and to be advancing S.W. by Thabanchu by Brand's Drift.

"Colonel Martyr's Mounted Infantry from Roodvaal has been ordered to move at daylight on the same point and will be under your orders.

"You will march with four days' supplies complete, and any extra baggage may be left under a guard on your present camping ground.

"By order,
"(Signed) KITCHENER, M.-Gen.
"Chief of the Staff.

"Bloemfontein, March 30th, 1900."

(See Appendix I. A., page 296).

I also received verbal instructions from Lord Roberts to the same effect, with the additional information that General Broadwood's Cavalry Brigade, which was retiring on the Modder River from Thabanchu, would be added to my command as soon as I effected a junction with it. He gave me orders to attack the enemy, chiefly using this Cavalry for the purpose, and to avoid, if possible, becoming seriously engaged with my Infantry.

On the morning of March 31st the Ninth Division left Bloemfontein at 5.30 a.m. (*i.e.*, half an hour before sunrise). Just before reaching Springfield, seven miles from our camp, artillery firing was heard in the direction of the Modder River, and I learnt from the Commandant of that post that General Broadwood's brigade was reported to be heavily engaged between Boesman's Kop and the Modder. I accordingly borrowed from him the few mounted men that he had available as an escort for my guns, and pushed on with them and my staff to Boesman's Kop, leaving word with General Macdonald (my senior Brigadier) to follow as fast as possible with the Infantry.

I reached Boesman's Kop at 11.15 (See Appendix I. A. and II., pages 296 and 298), and the firing had then ceased. I found there Colonel Martyr, who informed me that the 2nd Cavalry Brigade had been cut up and had lost some guns, and were halted about two miles to the eastward. His Mounted Infantry were, he reported, holding the Watervaal Drift, the spot at which they had been ordered to meet me by the Chief of the Staff. From the Kop a good view of the position was obtained. Eight miles distant to the south-eastward the chimney of the Waterworks was visible, and near it clouds of dust evidently raised by a considerable force, while the absence of dust between the Waterworks and the Kop showed that no movement was taking place nearer to us. On the further side of the Modder to the north-eastward two guns were firing, as Colonel Martyr informed me, at his troops at Watervaal Drift. Between Boesman's Kop and the Waterworks I could see two depressions, which reference to the Intelligence Department map showed to be cut by streams flowing into the Modder at a point to the south-east of Watervaal Drift.

Both from Colonel Martyr's report and the evidence of my own eyes, it was plain that (a) the enemy was retiring, presumably with the captured guns, etc.; (b) that the 2nd Cavalry Brigade was halted unmolested; (c) that the retiring enemy had got seven or eight miles start of me. As General Broadwood's force was safe, my one task was to attempt the recapture of the guns.

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.
26 Feb. 1903.

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville.
R.C.M.G., C.B.
26 Feb. 1903.

Even had the Ninth Division reached Boesman's Kop at the same time that I did, any attempt to pursue a mounted force, having at least seven miles start, with a dismounted one, would have been futile under the most favourable circumstances, but the division had not arrived, and did not close up till noon, and it was certain that the Boers would not neglect so obvious a precaution as a rear-guard. Such a guard, even if composed of only a few hundred men, would, I knew from experience, be able to delay us considerably at each of the spruits which intervened between us and the Modder, and would have made the passage of the river itself a lengthy operation. On the other hand the passage of the Modder at Watervaal Drift was already held by Colonel Martyr's mounted infantry, and the road to it was unimpeded.

I therefore determined to cross the Modder at Watervaal Drift, and if possible cut into the enemy's line of retreat, which was more likely to be to the northward than to the southward. If I read the following telegram, which was received during the afternoon, aright, my judgment at the time coincided with that of Lord Roberts.

"The enemy will endeavour to delay you in spruit in order to give themselves time to carry off the guns; it is very desirable therefore that you should make a turning movement, which will enable you to act on their line of retreat. French's Cavalry Brigade, which should shortly be with you, will help to this end. Acknowledge receipt of this." (See Appendix I. A., page 296.)

But although I looked upon this line as the more hopeful of the two, I felt that my chances of overtaking the Boers with a fagged infantry force were slender, and my chief hope lay in the co-operation of the cavalry. I therefore sent my Deputy Assistant Adjutant General, Captain Ruggles-Brise, to summon General Broadwood to Boesman's Kop. As this action has been censured by Lord Roberts, I should like to state (a) that Boesman's Kop was the only place in the neighbourhood from which a good view could be obtained and the general situation explained. From the depression in which the Cavalry Brigade halted, the view was extremely limited. (b) The Cavalry Brigade was unmolested and was under cover of my guns. (c) It seemed to me desirable that I should remain in a position whence a general view of the field of operations could be obtained, and where I should at once be aware of any fresh development. (d) Had I gone to General Broadwood I could not have returned before the arrival of the remainder of my division, and while no inconvenience could have been caused by General Broadwood's temporary absence from his command, delay and unnecessary fatigue of the troops would have resulted had I been absent when the other Brigadiers arrived.

Captain Ruggles-Brise brought back a message that General Broadwood was unable to come. He also reported that he had been himself to the outpost line and had seen no signs of the enemy.

In the meantime the infantry of the Division had arrived, and after a necessary halt (See Appendix VII., page 299)—the men had breakfasted at 3.30, and had marched 13 miles on a very hot day in worn-out boots—the force proceeded to Watervaal Drift. Colonel Martyr's Mounted Infantry had been driven from this, but after some slight resistance we gained the further bank of the river. General French's Cavalry did not arrive until 10 o'clock on the following morning. He was senior to me, but agreed with me that it was then too late to attempt a pursuit.

In his telegraphic despatch of April 1st, on these operations, Lord Roberts said:—

"On hearing this morning that Broadwood was hard pressed I immediately ordered French, with the two remaining Cavalry brigades, to follow in support of the Ninth Division. The latter, after a magnificent march, arrived on the scene of action shortly after 2 p.m."

On my return to Bloemfontein, Lord Roberts, who had previously seen General Broadwood, expressed approval of my action, and ten days later informed me through his military secretary that he had not changed his mind. (See Appendix VIII., page 299.)

On the 24th April, I was ordered to occupy the Waterworks with the Highland Brigade, my other brigade, the 19th, having been detached. I was afterwards informed by Lord Roberts that this reduction of my command was in consequence of my action at Sanna's Post, but I was not aware of this at the time. From the Waterworks we marched to Winburg, and while there, on the 16th May, I received the extract from General Broadwood's despatch given in Appendix I. B. (page 297), with a covering letter asking for explanations, and sent the memorandum, Appendix I. C. (page 297).

On the 19th May I received the following telegram from the Chief of the Staff:—

"Now that the 12th Brigade has commenced to arrive, the remainder of the Ninth Division will march to Ventersburg, whence your command will move on Lindley under further orders, which will be sent you. You should arrange for supplies for this march from Winburg. The 5th Battery R.F.A. has been ordered to be railed to Winburg to accompany you, and you should await its arrival before marching. The Field Hospital, Highland Brigade, and the detachment, 62 all ranks, E. P. Horse, have been ordered to march from here to Ventersburg, starting to-morrow morning; these should arrive 21st at Ventersburg. The 13th Battalion of Yeomanry from Bloemfontein has been ordered to join you at Ventersburg, and you will receive further information as to the date of its arrival there."

On the following day (May 20th) the Chief of the Staff telegraphed:—

"Only two companies of 13th Battalion Yeomanry and possibly one mounted company Lovat's Corps will be able to join you at Ventersburg by the 23rd, but the other two Yeomanry companies will follow as soon as possible."

Later on the same day I received from the Chief of the Staff "further orders" promised in the telegram of the 19th. The message, which was in cipher, ran as follows:—

"From Ventersburg the Highland Brigade march to Lindley, and thence to Heilbron. Regarding supplies D. of S. will communicate with you on the subject. Take as much as you can from Winburg. Brigade will be concentrated Ventersburg twenty-third, reach Lindley twenty-sixth and Heilbron twenty-ninth." (See Appendix I. A., page 296.)

I reached Ventersburg on the 23rd and found that the Highland Brigade Field Hospital and other items promised had arrived, but not the Yeomanry, and acquainted the Chief of Staff of the fact, but received no answer to my telegram till June 20th. (See Appendix IX., page 299.)

On the morning of the 24th May, we marched for Lindley, which we reached on the 26th, after some opposition. On the morning of the 27th, we left Lindley and bivouacked for the night on the further side of the Rhenoster River, at a spot shown on the Intelligence Department map to be 28 miles from Lindley, though I do not think it was so far. During the greater part of the march we were in touch with the enemy, who opposed our advance and harassed our rearguard.

On the following morning, May 28th, an orderly handed me the following memorandum:—

"Colonel SPRAGGE to General COLVILLE.

"Found no one in Lindley but Boers; have 500 men, but only one day's food; have stopped three miles back on Kroonstad road. I want help to get out without great loss.

"B. SPRAGGE.
Lieutenant-Colonel."

"May 27th, 1900.

This was, as I have said, the morning of the 28th, and I was due at Heilbron, two marches distant, on the 29th; therefore, under the most favourable circumstances, I could not return to Lindley and obey the orders given me in the Chief of Staff's cipher telegram of the 20th. I accordingly determined to push on, and sent a message back to Colonel Spragge, informing him of my intentions, and telling him that, if he could not join me by road to Heilbron, he should fall back on Kroonstad, living on the country and, if necessary, abandoning his wagons. (See Appendix III., page 298.) This message failed to reach him.

Remarking on this decision, in his despatch of the 19th July, 1900 (*Appendix I. A, page 297*), Lord Roberts says:—

"The arrival of the Highland Brigade at Heilbron on the date specified was obviously a matter of minor importance to the relief of the 13th Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry, and in my opinion Lieutenant-General Colville displayed a want of military instinct in deciding to continue his march instead of returning to the assistance of the Yeomanry."

With all respect I would submit that, although our arrival at Heilbron on the date specified was a matter of minor importance, it was impossible that I should have been aware of that fact. With the exception of the information given in the above quoted telegrams, I was in total ignorance of the Commander-in-Chief's intentions, which I could at the best only guess at from the disposition of his troops (*Appendix X., page 299*). disposition which favoured the supposition that a large combined movement was in progress—a supposition further favoured by the very precise character of my instructions, which ordered me to make a forced march through an enemy's country, in which unforeseen delays were likely to occur, yet definitely laid down the exact dates at which I was to reach given points. Had it been merely intended that my force should clear the country between Ventersburg and Heilbron a more usual form of order would have been that I was to proceed to Heilbron as quickly as possible. While fully admitting that general officers in the position which I then occupied may be expected to exercise their own judgment in emergencies, and on occasion take the responsibility of acting contrary to orders, I would submit that in order to make them do so with advantage they must be kept informed of their chief's general intentions.

On the 29th January I reported myself to Lord Roberts at Pretoria, and he informed me that as he was dissatisfied with my conduct both at Sanna's Post and with regard to the Yeomanry, he must relieve me of my command, and asked me what I wished to do. I replied that I wished to return to England, and to this he consented. (*See Appendix I. A., page 296*)

After the correspondence given in Appendix I. (A.) (*page 296*), had been before the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief, I received an official letter from the Adjutant-General on the 15th September, 1900, directing me to resume the command of the Infantry Brigade at Gibraltar, to complete my period of service therein, exclusive of the time I was serving in South Africa (*See Appendix IV., page 208.*)

On the 21st December, I received at Gibraltar a letter from the Adjutant-General informing me that:—

"The Secretary of State having discussed by telegraph the incidents of the surrender of No. 13 Imperial Yeomanry Battalion, concurs with Lord Roberts that you were mainly responsible for the surrender, and has reluctantly come to the conclusion that you cannot be permitted to retain your command." (*See Appendix V., page 298.*)

It further directed me to hand in my resignation to General Sir George White and "quit Gibraltar." Having respectfully declined to hand in my resignation, I was informed by Sir G. White that on the terms of the Adjutant-General's letter to him it was his duty to see that I left the garrison, and that my command had in fact ceased.

Since my return from South Africa, I had from time to time seen allusions in the Press to a message which I was alleged to have sent to Colonel Spragge and which was supposed to have caused him to push on to Lindley. I attached little importance to these statements at the time, but on my return to England in December I received a letter (*Appendix VI., page 299*) from my late Deputy Assistant Adjutant General for Intelligence, Major Count Gleichen, informing me that he had spoken to a member of Colonel Spragge's force, who had actually seen a telegram signed Colville or Colville, dated Lindley, 23rd May, and which was to this effect:—

"I am greatly in want of mounted troops, come to me here at once."

As I most positively state that I sent no such telegram, and indeed could not have done so if it was dated as

stated, I beg that the Royal Commission may make enquiries into this matter, and peruse the evidence given before the Court of Inquiry on the capture of the 13th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, as although it has never officially been brought against me, the imputation of having sent such a telegram undoubtedly hangs over me, and whether I have been officially absolved on this score or not, I believe that in the eyes of the public I am still suspected of having forced these men into the predicament from which I refused to extricate them.

In conclusion I may state that all facts concerning the Ninth Division are thoroughly well known to Colonel Ewart, my late Chief Staff Officer, now Assistant Military Secretary at Head Quarters.

16975. We of course can ask any questions and you can make any additions you please as we go along. With regard to the adequacy of the forces you point out various particulars in which you think the force was inadequate at the different engagements?—Yes.

16976. In Lord Methuen's column I suppose it was very much a question of the want of mounted men?—Entirely, I think. At Belmont the Boers escaped chiefly from want of a Cavalry Brigade; I had not very much to do with Graspan myself, but I know that it was equally so there, and that the cavalry actually had to hide while the Boers were streaming away in their wagons, they were so weak. At Modder River there was not the least doubt that a good Cavalry Brigade would have driven the Boers away very early in the day. They could have got round their flank and they would never have held the position.

16977. Of course that would have had a very important bearing upon the campaign?—Yes, if we could have got across Modder River early in the day I think we could probably have advanced towards Kimberley the next day; as it was, it was such a very hard day that I do not think it would have been possible.

16978. At Magersfontein, on the other hand, it was the Infantry that you considered was insufficient?—Yes, I do not think we had quite enough Infantry to cover the whole ground between the kopje and the Modder River. My brigade was extended for a good four miles, and we had only just enough men to hold the ground, without having any to spare to reinforce the Highlanders.

16979. How is it that you can say there were sufficient Cavalry?—We had been reinforced by General Babington's Brigade before Magersfontein; we had then got a whole Cavalry Brigade with Horse Artillery.

16980. So that if you had had to continue your advance to Kimberley, that would have altered the conditions?—Entirely.

16981. On the advance afterwards you again attribute the loss of the convoy to the want of mounted men?—Yes, it did not enable us to scout to the flanks. We had no idea of what the enemy was doing, and we were on the exposed flank. We marched round two sides of an acute angled triangle, of which Watervaal (the scene of the capture) was the apex, and Modder River Station and Jacobsdaal the extremities of the base, and I had no Cavalry to see what was going on upon my flank. Lord Roberts had little either; the whole Cavalry, practically, was away with General French.

16982. It had gone on to Kimberley?—Yes.

16983. At Paardeberg you think the force was sufficient to surround the enemy?—Yes, to surround it, not to take the laager.

16984. Not to force it?—Not to force it; we had sufficient to surround it, and, in fact, we did surround it and held it.

16985. In your subsequent operations I think again it is chiefly a question of the want of mounted men?—Yes.

16986. Is there anything you would wish to add to what you have written here on those points?—No, I do not think so.

16987. Then as to the quality of the men, which is the next head of our memorandum, were you satisfied with the quality of the men generally?—Yes, thoroughly. I think the behaviour of our troops was magnificent.

Major-General Sir
H. E.
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26 Feb. 1903.

Major-
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As far as marching was concerned, when they came off ship they were not very good, but they soon got better; as their boots wore out they got bad again, but on the whole I think the marching was good, and the pluck was undeniable.

26 Feb. 1903.

16988. Their shooting was not good?—Their hitting was bad, but of course the enemy were very invisible. I think their shooting was as good as the Boer shooting, but it was bad; I mean we killed very few men comparatively.

16989. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Did you not think much of the Boer shooting either?—No; I think the Boers had a certain number of picked shots who did great damage, but I think the rank and file of the Boers were bad shots, in fact, I do not think they aimed, and that many of them just held their rifles over their heads in the trenches and did not aim at all. At Paardeberg (the last day) they were shooting into Lord Robert's camp two miles away, instead of at us at about 90 yards distant.

16990. (*Chairman.*) You think the shooting of the Army would improve if the training was better adapted?—Yes, I believe the supply of ammunition has been increased since those days, but I do not think the men can have too much training in shooting. I think marching and shooting are the most important things.

16991. Can you get the men trained for the sort of work you had in South Africa by the practice at targets?—By field firing; I think field firing practice ought to be extended very much. I do not think the ordinary target practice at the known distances is very much good after the first stages; of course it teaches a man to handle his rifle, and then, as I think I have said, all our training before had been in volley firing at a known distance, or a distance named by the section commander, and of course the great extensions we had in South Africa made volley firing impossible. It was all independent firing out there, and therefore they were doing the attack under new conditions.

16992. And judgment of distance was also poor?—Yes. Of course under the system at home the distance was judged by the company officer or the section commander, whereas in independent firing they had to judge it themselves.

16993. Did they improve in that respect?—Yes, they improved in every respect enormously.

16994. You found that the Reservists wanted more training?—Yes. Of course they had got very slack. Some of them had been two and three years away from the colours and naturally they had got slack. They had "lost their eye" to a certain extent.

16995. Did they soon fall in?—Yes, I think they all fell in very well.

16996. And you were satisfied with them as Reservists?—Yes. I do not think they ever marched quite so well as the other men, and they were rather more inclined to fall out, I thought, but there was really not very much difference, and they were all very good.

16997. And the same remark practically applies with regard to taking cover, that the men improved?—They got very good at that towards the end.

16998. As regards future training you say you are strongly in favour of maintaining discipline and *esprit de corps*?—Yes, my experience is that the discipline is the most important thing, and that the best disciplined regiments always stood any shock best.

16999. And for the independent work of which you have been speaking, you require a well-disciplined man?—A well-disciplined man is certainly required to get him to push on. I do not in the least underrate intelligence, and if both can be obtained I would certainly have them, but my personal opinion is that nothing is more important than discipline.

17000. But there is no reason why the intelligent man should not be a disciplined man also?—No, there is not, but I am afraid the class from which the Army is recruited is not naturally a very intelligent one, the ordinary farm labourer, and so on. The Engineers, I think, are most excellent men. They are both intelligent and disciplined, but I do not think we would ever quite get the rank and file of the Army up to the standard of the Engineers, whatever we did.

17001. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Because they are not so highly paid?—And also that they are not so well educated to start with.

17002. If you paid the Infantrymen the same money as the Engineers are paid, do you think we could not get them?—We might. I suppose it is all a question of money.

17003. (*Chairman.*) How will you encourage *esprit de corps*?—By all the little things that soldiers like, such as distinctive uniforms, and there is a great deal in the officers; officers can do a great deal by letting the men always know that their particular regiment is the best in the service and making them thoroughly believe it.

17004. You do attach importance to distinctive uniforms and things of that kind?—Yes, I do; I think the men certainly think a great deal of them.

17005. And the regimental name also?—Yes, that is, of course, almost forgotten now. I think it was important for a certain number of years, but I do not know that it is not nearly forgotten now.

17006. Is it really forgotten?—I do not say altogether, but it is becoming forgotten.

17007. I see constantly mentioned in the despatches, "The Black Watch" and "The Seaforth's"?—Yes; the "Black Watch" was the "Black Watch" even when it was the 42nd. It is remembered, but I do not think it is so strong as it was ten years ago. Personally I like the old numbers, and I think the men like the old numbers best.

17008. Do they like the territorial names, do you think?—I do not think they like them so much as their old names. I think it lies more with the officers than with anybody else, and the tone of the regiment—letting everybody in the regiment know that their particular regiment is the best.

17009. And you attach some importance to the position of non-commissioned officers,?—Yes, I think they are very important in the field; when a battalion is very much scattered it is possible that all the officers may be killed and quite a junior non-commissioned officer may have to take command of a section, or even a company.

17010. In any system of training for the future, importance must be attached to the individuality of the regimental officers?—I think so, certainly.

17011. You think the English officer is underpaid?—I think he is underpaid compared to other civilian employments; of course he is not underpaid compared to Continental officers.

17012. But it tells upon the Army as a whole as a "working profession," I think you put it?—I think when a boy has to make up his mind what he is going into, if he wants to earn a decent income he goes in for some civil employment; if he wishes to live a nice easy life, with a certain amount of honour and glory and not too much hard work, he goes into the Army, and, having made up his mind that he is not going to make any money out of it, he rather thinks it is his right not to do too much work. That is my impression.

17013. You say he has got to unlearn a good deal; what do you mean by that?—I think that young men who join rather late, say at 23, have got very fixed ideas about things and perhaps they have learnt a little drill somewhere, either at a Public School or in a Volunteer Regiment or something, and it is not good drill, and generally they have to be put through the sergeant-major's hands and made to unlearn it again. They are too full of ideas, and I must say I like to catch them young.

17014. You would prefer to catch a boy from the Public Schools rather than to send him through the University?—I should personally; my experience is that a boy who comes straight from the Public School is more adaptable than the boy who has rather formed his habits at the University.

17015. You think the standard they have to work up to is too uniform?—Yes, I do not think it allows for individuality quite enough; a certain number of people are excellent company officers, very good leaders of men, the men like them, and they can do the regimental work very well, but they have not quite brains enough

for staff work. It is a great pity to get rid of those men because they do not know very high tactics and strategy and all the rest of it; they are quite good enough for their position, perhaps better than the highly educated men.

17016. As company officers?—As company officers; they are not fit for anything else.

17017. But surely they are not got rid of now?—No, but they are all trained up to be Staff Officers you may say.

17018. Surely it is only the men who show some power that go to the Staff College?—I am not talking of the Staff College; I am speaking of the ordinary examinations for promotion, I think that people are plucked in those for weakness in strategy, and so on, when they might very well be allowed to stay where they were as company officers. Of course they are quite unfit for anything else. I am not speaking of the officer commanding a battalion; he of course must know his profession thoroughly. The man I am speaking of is an unambitious man who would probably never want to command a battalion, but he likes his company and his company likes him, and he does all the actual routine of the business very well and takes an interest in it.

17019. Would not a man of that kind now stay on in his company until a certain age, at all events?—Yes, he would. What I meant was that I think if that man was given more time to devote himself to his company and to taking the men out and practising them instead of having to worry himself over books which he will never understand, his time would be better employed.

17020. I see; you would prefer that he should not go through the work of the examination at all?—When it is discovered that he is not suited to it.

17021. But an officer might elect to remain as a company officer?—Quite so.

17022. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you think they would to any extent?—I think there are a certain number of men who hate anything but their companies. I have met a great many who have no further ambition than this: "I love my company, and my company likes me, and that is all I want." Of course it is a peculiar type of man but he is a very useful man in his way. He is the class of man who makes a good country squire.

17023. (*Chairman.*) But the great fault you say, as many others have said, is the want of initiative?—I think so undoubtedly.

17024. How would you get over that?—I think by not worrying the young men when they join about every little thing they do out of order; in manoeuvres and at every field-day you will see a boy taking his company somewhere that he thinks would be a good place to take it to; he has some little trick of his own to get the better of the enemy, but everybody gallops at him and asks him what on earth he is doing, and he is never given any chance of finding out whether he is right or wrong.

17025. (*Sir John Jackson.*) And with a view to encouraging him would you overlook mistakes at that stage?—Yes; when he finds that the result of his action has put him in a hole, he learns for himself very much better than by being told not to do it before he starts.

17026. (*Chairman.*) You yourself did not go to the Staff College?—No.

17027. But you have a high opinion of Staff College officers?—Very, from my experience of them.

17028. Had you Staff College Officers on your Staff?—Yes, nearly all of them were Staff College officers.

17029. And you found yourself well served?—Very well served.

17030. But there was difficulty in South Africa, was there not, in always finding a sufficient number of Staff College officers?—I think there must have been. I was very lucky in that way, and my four most important Staff Officers were all Staff College men.

17031. As regards the next head of our Memorandum about supplies; I think you have nothing which you

would wish to call attention to?—No; as far as quality was concerned they were excellent, except the emergency ration, which was very salt.

17032. That was the tinned meat?—Yes, it was a sort of long sausage-shaped thing in tin, and one end was chocolate and the other was pemmican. It is a very good thing if there is plenty of water about, but the men could not eat it if their water was running at all short.

17033. When was the emergency ration supposed to be used?—In the middle of a battle; take Paardeberg for instance, that was the sort of day when they would certainly want it, because at Paardeberg the men had not any breakfast, and it was a very long day without food, but I do not think any of them could touch the emergency ration. At Modder River I saw a good many men trying to eat it, but they could not, and at Magersfontein the same.

17034. Is it served out before an engagement?—They carry it with them.

17035. Every day?—Yes, but they are not supposed to use it until they are told they may.

17036. If you can bring up the other rations they are supplied with them?—Yes.

17037. As to transport, have you any additional remarks to make?—I think I have said that the wagons were nearly always over-loaded. I think that was chiefly due to the load being calculated for a good European road, and not for the very rough tracks we had there. As I say, on the whole I found the mule transport more convenient than ox transport.

17038. For the mule transport you have to carry the forage?—Yes; of course they do graze them; all our time at Paardeberg there was hardly any forage for them, and they had to get what they could off the very bare grass there.

17039. Then the ox has advantages?—The disadvantage of the ox is that he will not eat at night, and therefore it is necessary to halt in the middle of the day, certainly two or three hours, in order to give him a chance of grazing.

17040. That means night marching?—Yes, which is very tiring to the men.

17041. You found the hospitals undermanned?—Not so much undermanned, but we never had our proper hospitals. A Division is supposed to have its divisional hospital, and there are two brigade hospitals, and then there are the two bearer companies. It was only quite up at the end that I even got one of my brigade hospitals, and I never had a divisional hospital the whole time. We never had our full complement of hospitals.

17042. There was great pressure on hospitals at that time?—Enormous pressure.

17043. As to guns?—Of course there is no doubt our guns were outranged by the Boer guns. I do not think practically that the Boer long range fire did us much damage. I never remember a case of anybody being even hit by one. It was very alarming at first.

17044. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You would not say that the practical effect of the Boer guns being of a longer range than ours was very great?—No.

17045. It was greatly overstated in the papers at the time?—Yes, there is no doubt that they dropped shells into us at a range that we could not reply to, but I never saw anybody hit by them. It looked alarming, but I do not think the effect was very great.

17046. I suppose, on the other hand, our lighter guns had greater mobility?—Yes; but as I have said, it is extraordinary how those 4·7's, drawn by oxen, did get about; they were always there when they were wanted. I had a battery of naval 4·7 guns, drawn by 36 oxen each; it seems an extraordinarily cumbersome thing, but they were always there when they were wanted.

17047. (*Chairman.*) The effect of the long range guns of the Boers was moral rather than actual?—Yes.

17048. How is it that if a shell dropped among you it did no harm?—I cannot explain it. There was the

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.
26 Feb. 1903.

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.

26 Feb. 1903.

case at Poplar Grove, where the Boers got the range of my naval battery exactly, and they dropped shells into the battery for a good hour. I asked the officer commanding if he thought he ought to change his position, and he said he did not mind in the least, and he stayed there, and they dropped shells among that battery and never even touched a man, a mule or a wagon, or anything else. It was not that they were firing badly, they were firing very well, and they probably thought they were doing tremendous execution, dropping shells into the middle of us.

17049. Was that shrapnel?—That was segment shell

17050. Did the shells burst?—Yes, they burst.

17051. And still did no damage?—No, it so happened that for a whole hour making good practice then never hit a thing.

17052. I suppose the same thing may have happened with our shells?—I should think so undoubtedly.

17053. That goes against the effect of all artillery fire?—I think the moral effect is enormous.

17054. But the actual effect for all artillery fire, would, in your opinion, be rather poor?—I am only judging by my experience there. I do not think it had much effect, but for covering an advance of infantry there is no doubt that its use is very great.

17055. Because it makes the opponents take cover?—Yes, and also makes their firing wild. Of course, in European warfare, the other side would have a large armament, and we should require our artillery to keep their artillery down. With the Boers, we were firing generally against one gun, or at the outside two guns.

17056. The rifle you had a good opinion of?—Yes, I think it is a very good rifle.

17057. And the machine guns?—I do not think the machine guns are quite as accurate as the rifle. I have seen the machine gun tried very often, and it seems to go dropping its muzzle; the range is found, and then it gradually changes the range. Still, it is very useful, especially on the flank for keeping down the enemy's fire, and I think that is the chief use for machine guns.

17058. And the Vickers-Maxim?—Yes, they are practically as heavy as a field gun, but I do not think their range is as great. I do not think their effect is very great either.

17059. It is more moral than actual too?—More moral than actual.

17060. (Sir John Jackson.) What type of Vickers-Maxim gun is that you refer to, the Pom-Pom?—The Pom-Pom.

17061. (Chairman.) As to the organisation of the Army, you think it was good?—Yes, I think so. Of course the transport organisation had to be changed; there was not enough transport, and therefore the regimental transport had to be taken away, and it had to be turned into Army transport.

17062. You think that was a necessary consequence of the position?—I do not think it could have worked in any other way. I do not think it worked as well, but it was necessary.

17063. What do you mean by that?—That battalions on the lines of communication had their regimental transport taken away from them that they did not want, and it was all pushed forward into the pool, so to speak, with the fighting part of the Army.

17064. Is not that always understood to be a possible course to take, even with a system of regimental transport?—Yes, I suppose it is, but I do not think it is quite as handy. If it is necessary to move in a hurry, instead of having the transport available it is necessary to send to headquarters and go through all sorts of channels before the transport can be obtained. For instance, the day I was ordered out to Sanna's Post, or rather, Thabanchu, I had to go to headquarters and see the Director of Transport, and go through all sorts of channels to collect transport for the next day, whereas, if one had had one's regimental transport, one could have had it there and marched off at an hour's notice.

17065. I think I have been misunderstanding you;

I thought you were arguing against regimental transport?—No, I was arguing for it.

17066. You think regimental transport is the better system?—I do, but I do not think it was possible there.

17067. On the march from the Modder River to Kimberley?—Yes, we had not enough transport altogether, and therefore the transport of the battalions on the line of communication had to be taken away from them—they had no use for it and it was taken away, and the whole thing was pooled.

17068. That might have left the regimental transport with other regiments on the march?—Yes, it might; but that was not done, it was thought better to have Army transport.

17069. I understand the illustration you give goes to this, that it would have been better if the regimental transport in that case, at any rate, had still been continued?—Yes, I think it would have been. I do not think anybody likes doing away with the regimental transport.

17070. Do you think the transport is as well managed regimentally?—I think more so. I think there are regimental officers who take an interest in their particular transport, and I think it is better looked after.

17071-2. Of course, the conditions in South Africa in connection with that question as with others were quite different from what they might be elsewhere?—Yes, they were very unusual.

17073. And not likely to recur?—No.

17074. You have stated it very fully here, and I do not know that it is necessary for me to take you further on it?—I do not think there is anything I wish to add.

17075. You have mentioned that it is very difficult to get a soldier to crawl?—Yes, it is very difficult; he cannot get down, and he is more like a camel lying down than anything else.

17076. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Is that from want of gymnastic exercise?—I think it is from want of practice. The ordinary English farm labourers are not sportsmen as a rule.

17077. You think a Division ought to be the largest command, and that an Army Corps is too large?—Yes, I do, personally. There are a great many different opinions about that.

17078. Why do you hold that opinion?—Because I think that if the General of a Division is given a good idea of the Commander-in-Chief's views he can really get on better by acting independently than by being in the hands of a man who really cannot get at him. The Army Corps' Commander in the field cannot get at his three Divisions. It is as much as the Divisional Commander can do to get at the whole of his Division, and the man who has got three Divisions is practically in the same condition as the Commander-in-Chief of the whole Army, he cannot be everywhere at once, and he cannot see more than the Commander-in-Chief. He has got to work it by telegraph to points which he cannot see.

17079. And it is better to leave the responsibility to the men on the spot you think?—I think so, certainly.

17080. That would imply a full statement of the Commander-in-Chief's scheme?—Of course, very full: with an Army Corps that full statement would be given to the Army Corps Commander, and he would give out as much as he thought fit to the Divisional Commanders.

17081. (Viscount Esher.) In Africa, although nominally an Army Corps was sent out it was never commanded practically as an Army Corps, but was split up into Divisions?—The only time I know of was at Poplar Grove, when Lord Roberst had exactly an Army Corps plus the Guards Brigade; he had three Divisions, so that it was exactly an Army Corps.

17082. It was an accidental Army Corps?—Yes, but it was a very good example, I think, of the difficulties of commanding an Army Corps by one man in action. I admit that for administrative purposes between the fights perhaps an Army Corps would be more convenient, but I think in the fight it is difficult to work under modern conditions. At Poplar Grove we covered about 14 miles of ground, and it is impossible for one man to see the whole of that.

*Major
General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.*

26 Feb. 1903.

17083. (*Chairman.*) And you have to depend a great deal upon signallers?—We cannot even signal; we cannot see what our troops are doing, and we have to depend upon reports, and by the time a telegraph message has been sent to the unit, perhaps the whole situation is changed. I think myself it is better that the Divisional Commander should have a very full general idea of the Chief's intentions, and then be allowed to do his best. That is, of course, what is done in a smaller way now; the Commanding Officer cannot command his battalion in action, it is so extended, and everything is left now to the initiative even of the Section Commander. It is the whole tendency of modern war, I think, to leave the responsibility to the Commander of small bodies and to trust to their intelligence.

17084. When I mentioned the signallers it was because of your statement here that under modern conditions a certain proportion of the Brigade and Divisional signallers should be mounted?—Yes, I think it is very necessary. It happened to me two or three times that I had to change my position rapidly in the middle of an action, and the signallers, being on foot, had to run after me as hard as ever they could, and I was perhaps waiting for half an hour or three quarters of an hour before they could catch one up, and it sometimes happened that I wanted to send an important message before they came, and could not do so, whereas, if I had even a couple of men on ponies to gallop after me I could have done it.

17085. We now have the statement (*vide page 289*) which you have headed "Sanna's Post and Lindley." You quite understand with regard to that matter, Sir Henry, that we are quite willing to accept from you your statement of the matter. We do not propose to go into it in detail either as regards strategy, tactics, or personal conduct, but if this is the statement you wish to put before us on this subject we will accept it?—Yes, that is the statement I should like to put before you.

17086. You say it is the *précis* of evidence which you would wish to give; is there any remark you would wish to make in amplification of it?—No, I do not think there is, except that I would like to say that this is the first official occasion I have ever had of telling my story.

17087. And this is the statement you wish to make upon it?—Yes.

17088. I think the only remark I should like to make is with regard to the penultimate paragraph in which you mention the telegram; of course we are not in a position here to go into details which would involve inquiry in South Africa I imagine, but our position is that we accept your denial of having ever sent that telegram, and we put that on record?—Yes.

17089. And that is what you desire us to do?—Yes. I do not know the actual terms of the telegram. I quote the telegram which was quoted to me by Count Gleichen, and I should like to say, if that is the correct date, and it was dated from Lindley on the 23rd May, on the 23rd May I was at Ventersburg, and therefore could not have sent it.

(*Chairman.*) I think we can say that for our purpose, we are perfectly prepared to accept your denial.

17090. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) You had the 4·7 Naval guns with you and you found them fairly mobile?—Yes, they were always there when they were wanted.

17091. Had you naval men with them—sailors?—Yes, entirely.

17092. Had you any 12-pounder Naval guns?—I had a battery at Poplar Grove for the day, but that is the only time I ever had the 12-pounders.

17093. Did you find them useful?—Yes, they did not happen to make very good practice that day; it was hardly a fair trial as I only had one day of them, but it so happened they did not make good practice.

17094. Was the superior range of any advantage on that day?—Yes, it was; we were able to fire at the Boers retiring on the other side of the river, which we could not have done with field guns.

17095. And that was a considerable range?—Yes, I forget the exact range now, but it was getting on for 7,000 yards.

17096. It was considerably over the range of the field guns?—Yes.

17097. With regard to the 4·7, were you satisfied generally with the shooting of that gun?—Yes, I think it was excellent.

17098. And that was also sometimes at extreme ranges?—Yes, we fired once and did some very good work at 10,000 yards.

17099. In fact you found that gun with its superior range of considerable advantage to you?—Yes.

17100. (*Sir John Jackson.*) With reference to what was said about the shells that were fired not doing damage during about an hour's good practice, how many shells do you suppose in that case you refer to were dropped during the hour?—I should say on an average about a shell a minute, probably more, but certainly not less than that.

17101. Fifty or sixty shells were dropped?—Yes.

17102. Without doing any damage?—None whatever; there was not a scratch on a wagon or a mule either. It was a very extraordinary thing.

17103. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I have no doubt that you have cut down your statement to the fewest words possible, but it necessarily with the appendices covers several pages of print, and I just want to ask you three questions with regard to Sanna's Post and two with regard to Lindley, brief questions, to which you can say "Yes" or "No," or reply to in the shortest possible way. General Broadwood's fighting was clearly over some time before you got to Boesman's Kop?—Yes, I should think I was a couple of miles on the Bloemfontein side of Boesman's Kop when the firing ceased.

17104. While from Boesman's Kop you could see all the country round, you could not have seen anything from where General Broadwood was?—No, I thought so at the time, and I verified it afterwards by passing through the ground.

17105. You lost no time at Boesman's Kop, but went straight to the Drift where you had reason to believe the lost guns to be?—I lost no unnecessary time. I gave the men what I considered was a necessary halt for food after their march, and I marched to Watervaal Drift, the best road to the line of retreat of the guns, but the captured guns were not at Watervaal Drift. There were two Boer guns there firing at our troops.

17106. But you believed them to be on their way, from the dust you saw? I am not sure that I understand the statement fully?—I believed they would probably go to the north (that is past Watervaal Drift). It was only a question of probability. It seemed to me very unlikely that having captured these guns they should take them back into a district which we occupied, and very probable—almost certain—that they would go towards their own headquarters, and therefore their route would be to the left and not to the right, and that, therefore, I had a better chance of cutting into their line of retreat by going to Watervaal than to the Waterworks.

17107. At any rate you believed that to have followed by the Waterworks would have certainly lost any chance of getting those guns back?—Certainly, because apart from the route they were likely to take there were three spruits on the way, and having been at the Modder River and Paardeberg fights. I knew what even a hundred men could do at a spruit in the way of stopping us. I thought then, and I think still, we should have had to fight all day to get to the Waterworks.

17108. As regards Lindley, I gather you had received positive orders to be at Heilbron on a fixed date, and you believed your movements were part of a large operation?—Yes.

17109. Which must not be endangered by a failure on your part to arrive on the specified date?—Yes.

17110. You sent a triplicate message to Colonel Spragge, I think?—I did.

17111. And you believed Colonel Spragge could fall back on Kroonstad with some loss?—With great loss, he said.

17112. And that such loss ought not to weigh against

Major-General Sir
H. E.
Colville,
K.C.M.G., C.B.
23 Feb. 1903.

the risk of causing the failure of the Commander-in-Chief's larger operations?—No, my view was that if he was killed to a man it was my duty to go on to Heilbron.

17113. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You stated that in the latter part of the campaign the marching became good when the men had serviceable boots?—Yes.

17114. Were the boots not of good quality?—I think they were of good quality, but the ground was very rough very often, and the men had a great deal of marching, and naturally the boots wore out, and the fresh supply did not come before they were worn out. There were always periods when we were walking about like beggars, and naturally got very sore heels; and there were periods when we got new boots and were comfortable.

17115. It is of great importance that the boots should be of the very best?—Very great.

17116. But you think there was no cause for complaint with regard to them?—No, I think it was fair tear and wear.

17117. Did you see much of the Colonial forces, that is to say, from the Colonies outside of South Africa, such as Canada and the others?—I had some Canadians with me, and they were magnificent.

17118. They marched well?—They marched well.

17119. Do you know anything with regard to the boots the Canadians had?—No, I do not know the brand, but I inspected my Division at Bloemfontein, and the Canadians were no better off than we were in that respect; all our boots were in holes.

17120. The boots were those that were served out to them in Africa?—Yes, I made almost every man in my Division hold up his feet, so that I could see underneath, and they were all bad; there was hardly a good boot in the Division, at that time. That was about a week after we got to Bloemfontein.

17121. You speak of the emergency rations causing very great thirst; what did they consist of?—I believe it is chocolate at one end, and something like pemmican at the other; it is in two compartments.

17122. So that it would have been much better could they have had fresh meat instead of those rations?—Yes, or even some preparation which was a little less salt. To eat one of those emergency rations produced a raging thirst.

17123. Could the giving of those emergency rations have been avoided? Was it possible to have had other and better rations?—Do you mean on that particular occasion of the fight?

17124. Yes?—I do not think so, because nearly all these fights came as surprises. Of course if one expected a fight, one would order the men to carry cooked rations in their haversacks, but if a fight is not expected it is only giving them rather a nasty meal, instead of a nice hot one. We do not make them carry cooked rations if we can help it.

17125. It was from no defect of transport which could have been avoided?—Not in the least. I think a better brand of emergency ration might possibly be invented.

17126. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would wish to say?—No, thank you, I do not think there is anything else.

APPENDICES.

Correspondence.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE RECALL OF MAJOR-GENERAL SIR H. E. COLVILLE, K.C.M.G., C.B.

APPENDIX I. (A.)

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Under Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Pretoria, 19th July, 1900.

Sir,
Referring to the circumstances under which Lieut.-General Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B., has been ordered home, I have the honour to state that on two occasions he has shown a want of initiative and military capacity, which, in my opinion, rendered it undesirable to retain him in the command of a division in South Africa.

2. His action on these occasions may be briefly described as follows:—

3. At daybreak on the 31st March, the date of the reverse at Sanna's Post, Lieut.-General Colville was ordered with the Ninth Division from Bloemfontein to Boesman's Kop to cover Brigadier-General Broadwood's retirement from the Waterworks. He arrived at Boesman's Kop at noon, but instead of proceeding himself to the scene of action, two miles distant, he sent a Staff Officer to summon Brigadier-General Broadwood to confer with him. Brigadier-General Broadwood could not leave his troops, and, after halting for two hours or more at Boesman's Kop, Lieut.-General Colville moved off towards the Modder River at Watervaal Drift, thus losing all chance of recovering the guns and transport wagons which the enemy had captured a few hours before. Finding that Lieut.-General Colville was not coming to his assistance, Brigadier-General Broadwood had to fall back on Bloemfontein.

A copy of correspondence relative to the occurrences summarised above is appended. It appears that my memorandum dated Kroonstad/the 31st May, 1900, failed to reach Sir Henry Colville, but a copy was sent to him to the 1st July, to the care of the General Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Cape Town.

4. On the morning of the 27th May, Lieut.-General Colville, with the Highland Brigade, left Lindley for Heilbron and bivouacked that evening at Rhenoster Spruit. He had been promised four companies of Imperial Yeomanry, but, owing to delays on the railway, these did not join him at Ventersburg, as had originally been intended; they followed him up, however, and reached Lindley on the afternoon of the very day on which Lieut.-General Colville left that place. At 7 a.m. on the 28th May, Lieut.-General Colville received a message from Lieut.-Colonel Spragge, commanding the Thirteenth Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry to the effect that on approaching Lindley he had found it occupied by the enemy, and had consequently taken up a position some three miles east of the town. Lieut.-Colonel Spragge stated that he had only one day's supplies with him, and asked for help, as he would find it difficult to withdraw without assistance. In the programme of movements which had been communicated to Lieut.-General Colville, he had been told that he should reach Heilbron on the 29th May, and he therefore decided to continue his march, merely sending a message in triplicate to Lieut.-Colonel Spragge, directing him either to join the Highland Brigade at Heilbron by a westerly route, or, if unable to do so, to fall back on Kroonstad. Owing to the vigilance of the Boers this message did not reach Lieut.-Colonel Spragge, the messengers returning later in the day to Lieut.-General Colville. Throughout his march to Heilbron, Lieut.-General Colville was harassed by the enemy, mainly on account of his having no mounted troops; while Lieut.-Colonel Spragge was left to do the best he could, and eventually had to surrender on the 31st May, as Lord Methuen, who made a forced march to his assistance, was unable to reach Lindley in time. The arrival of the Highland Brigade at Heilbron on the date specified was obviously a matter of minor importance to the relief of the Thirteenth Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry, and, in my opinion, Lieut.-General Colville displayed a want of military instinct in deciding to continue his

march instead of returning to the assistance of the Yeomanry, especially as he was without the mounted men, who would have completed his force, and whom he would have obtained had he extricated Lieut.-Colonel Spragge.

5. This being the second occasion on which Lieut.-General Colville had failed to grasp the situation to act with the energy and enterprise which are essential qualifications for command in the field, I felt that I should not be justified in allowing him to remain in the responsible position of a Divisional General. I consequently relieved him of his command and ordered him to return to England.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, *Field-Marshal,*
Commanding in Chief, South Africa.

APPENDIX I. (B.)

GENERAL BROADWOOD'S DESPATCH.

Bloemspruit,
20th April, 1900.

(9.) "About noon a Staff Officer arrived from General Officer Commanding Ninth Division, to say he had reached Boesman's Kop. I suggested that a direct advance on the spruit offered the best chance of assisting. About 2 p.m. I was informed that the Ninth Division had moved towards Watervaal Drift; so seeing any hope of recapturing the guns at an end, I began sending the units to their camps as owing to the loss of the baggage it was inadvisable to bivouac where we were."

Forwarded to Lieut.-General Sir H. E. Colville for explanation, 25th April, 1900.

General Colville reported on the 16th May he had not received copy of paragraph 9, General Broadwood's despatch. A second copy was sent him the same day.

APPENDIX I. (C.)

MEMORANDUM BY LIEUT.-GENERAL COLVILLE.

Military Secretary,

With reference to the extract from Brigadier-General Broadwood's despatch of the 20th April, 1900, given in your memorandum of the 25th April, 1900, the statements in that extract do not agree with the facts as reported to me.

On hearing, at Springfield, of the reverse to Brigadier-General Broadwood's Brigade, between the Waterworks and Boesman's Kop, I ordered Lieut.-Colonel Flint to push on with his Brigade Division, and hastened myself to Boesman's Kop, where I found Lieut.-Colonel Martyr, by whom I was informed that Brigadier-General Broadwood's Brigade was then forming up about two miles to the eastward. I at once sent my Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain Ruggles-Brise to Brigadier-General Broadwood with a message that I wished to see him, and on his return, Captain Ruggles-Brise reported that Brigadier-General Broadwood had replied to this message that he was too tired to come. Under ordinary circumstances I should have taken serious notice of such an answer, but as I gathered from Captain Ruggles-Brise that Brigadier-General Broadwood appeared to be completely broken down under the circumstances in which he found himself and incapable of co-operation, I thought it better to let it pass. I had no intimation of the suggestion which Brigadier-General Broadwood reports that he made "that a direct advance on the spruit offered the best chance of assisting"; but had I received this message it would not have modified my dispositions unless it had been backed by some facts of which I am still in ignorance.

The position was then as follows:—The Cavalry Brigade was concentrated, and safe, within two miles of Boesman's Kop, its baggage and seven Royal Horse Artillery guns were in the hands of the enemy to the east of Klip Kraal, through which the map showed an affluent of the Modder River to run, while another, and presumably smaller,

affluent ran between it and Boesman's Kop. For an hour before the arrival of my Infantry clouds of dust between Klip Kraal and the Waterworks showed that the enemy was busy, presumably in removing the captured guns and baggage, of which the former would obviously be taken away first. A portion of Lieut. Colonel Martyr's Mounted Infantry was in possession of Watervaal Drift, where they were being shelled by two of the enemy's guns.

Although I did not receive Brigadier-General Broadwood's suggestion, the idea of a direct advance on Klip Kraal was one that naturally offered itself, and had the Cavalry Brigade still been pressed, its reinforcement by the shortest possible route would, I consider, have been imperative; but, with its safety secured, the only problem before me was that of, if possible, retaking the guns. Knowing, from experience, that the enemy's guns generally out-ranged those of our Field Artillery, and seeing before me a level plain, intersected by such spruits or river beds, as the enemy has frequently held for a considerable time against superior numbers, and judging that the enemy had had ample time to get the captured guns at all events as far as the Sanra's Post Drift, it appeared to me that were I to attempt a direct advance I must undoubtedly lose heavily, and that the enemy would have every opportunity of delaying me until he got the captured guns to the eastward of the Modder River, whence he would have an unobstructed line of retreat to Thaba'Nchu. There fore, knowing that Watervaal Drift was in our hands, I decided to effect the passage of the Modder at that point, hoping that, with the aid of Lieut. Colonel Martyr's Mounted Infantry, I might cut into the enemy's line of retreat, while with the Infantry I held him in front to the north of Mamena. I accordingly ordered Lieut.-Colonel Martyr to occupy the hills to the north of our line of march, while the Division and guns advanced on Watervaal Drift, and I sent a further message to Brigadier-General Broadwood, informing him of my proposed action, and asking him to co-operate as far as the condition of his horses would permit.

As detailed in my report of these operations of the 3rd April, 1900, on approaching Watervaal Drift it was found that the Mounted Infantry had been forced to abandon it, and that the enemy was in occupation of it, and a hill some two miles to the north, on the east bank of the river. This necessitated a further turning movement, and a considerable expenditure of time, with the result that it was nearly dusk before the passage of the drift was effected, and some of the troops had already done a 22 miles march, a state of affairs which precluded any further action for that day, even had I been strong enough with only about 4,000 men to hold in front the large force of the enemy which was then visible on the hills above the Waterworks, and detach a sufficient force to cut his line of retreat.

As we were coming into action to the west of the Watervaal Drift, I received the following message from the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief:—

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to Lieut.-General Colville.

"3.28 p.m.

"The enemy will endeavour to delay you in spruit in order to give themselves time to carry off the guns. It is very desirable, therefore, that you should, if possible, make a turning movement which will enable you to act on their line of retreat. French's Cavalry Brigade, which should shortly be with you, will help to this end. Acknowledge receipt of this."

This information as to the speedy arrival of the Cavalry more than compensated for the disappointment which the abandonment of the drift by the Mounted Infantry had caused, and I had still hopes of being able to cut into the enemy's line of retreat, until hour after hour passed without any signs of them, and when at length Lieut.-General French arrived with one brigade, at 10.30 on the following morning, I agreed with him that it was too late to attempt a pursuit.

I may mention that the above quoted message from the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief appeared to me to so thoroughly sanction the line of action which I adopted, that in my report on the operations, I did not consider it necessary to give my reasons for it.

Correspondence.

I would also point out that in the verbal instructions which the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief gave me before the Ninth Division left Bloemfontein, he informed me that Brigadier-General Broadwood and his brigade would be under my orders; and had Brigadier-General Broadwood informed me of the reason for his retirement on Springfield, as stated in his despatch, I should certainly have forbidden it; and I beg that I may be permitted to express my opinion that his criticism on my disposition is highly improper.

I have explained above the reasons which then influenced me in making these dispositions, and a fuller knowledge, which I have since gained, of the ground and the enemy's movements has not caused me to modify them, but my judgment may be wholly at fault, and I respectfully await the verdict of the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief.

H. E. COLVILLE, *Lieut.-General,*
Commanding Ninth Division.

WINBURG,
16th May 1900.

*From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to Lieut.-General
Sir H. Colville, K.C.M.G., &c., Com-
manding Ninth Division.*

Memorandum, Army Head-quarters, South Africa,
Kroonstad, 21st May, 1900.

With reference to the attached memorandum, I am of opinion that, on his arrival at Boesman's Kop about noon on 31st March, Lieut.-General Sir H. Colville acted injudiciously in sending his Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General to summon Brigadier-General Broadwood, whose column had been seriously engaged with the enemy and was then halted about two miles to the eastward. If Lieutenant-General Colville had ridden on himself to Brigadier-General Broadwood he could have ascertained at once what the actual situation was, how he could best assist the force which he had been directed to support, and what would be the best chance of recovering the captured guns and convoy.

I am further of opinion that Brigadier-General Broadwood, who had been fighting since daybreak, and whose troops were still within striking distance of the enemy, would not have been justified in leaving his command for the purpose of communicating with Lieut.-General Colville. That Brigadier-General Broadwood should have been worn out and perhaps, to some extent, overwhelmed by the reverse which his column had sustained, is not surprising, and on this account it was all the more necessary that Lieut.-General Colville should have lost no time in acquainting himself with the situation and assuming the initiative.

Even if Brigadier-General Broadwood had complied with Lieut.-General Colville's order to join him at Boesman's Kop, serious delay must have occurred, as the Staff Officer from the Ninth Division had first to find Brigadier-General Broadwood, and the latter would have had to ride back and finally rejoin his troops before any concerted movement could have taken place.

By remaining inactive for some time at Boesman's Kop and afterwards moving on Watervaal Drift, Lieut.-General Colville gave the enemy an opportunity of removing the guns and convoy unmolested. They were not slow to avail themselves of this opportunity, and by the time the Cavalry under Lieut.-General French came up, any idea of turning the enemy's flank or cutting off their retreat had to be abandoned, as during the night the Boers had rapidly retired eastwards.

ROBERTS, *Field-Marshal,*
Commanding in Chief, South Africa.

APPENDIX II.

STAFF CHIEF OFFICER'S TIME-TABLE OF SANNA'S
POST AFFAIR, 31ST MARCH, 1900.

Left Bloemfontein	-	-	-	-	5.30 a.m.
General Colville reached Bushman's Kop	-	-	-	-	
with his Staff	-	-	-	-	11.15 a.m.

General Macdonald, leading Highland
Brigade, arrived abreast of Bushman's
Kop - - - - - 11.40 a.m.

The rear part of Division did not close
up to Bushman's Kop - - - - - till past noon

At 12.40 p.m. General Colville issued orders for turning
movement via Waterfall Drift, and at 1 p.m. Division
was moving.

3.25 p.m. Highland Brigade hotly engaged.

APPENDIX III.

SMALLDEEL, 3 p.m.

GENERAL COLVILLE, Winburg.

May 6th.

You will have to garrison Winburg when Ian Hamilton goes on, and as it is impossible to send you supplies, you must supply yourself from country; make the people bake bread and collect live stock for your wants. Do what you can to repair telegraph line between us, we will also send out from here.

C. of S., SMALLDEEL STN.

APPENDIX IV.

Immediate.

War Office,
London, S.W.
15th September, 1900.

57521
1174

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to inform you that the Commander-in-Chief has approved of your resuming the command of the Infantry Brigade at Gibraltar from the 1st October next, to complete your period of service therein, exclusive of the time you were serving in South Africa, and I am to request that you will hold yourself in readiness to embark in time to take up the duties on the above date.

Please acknowledge the receipt thereof, and return the enclosed form to this Department.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) H. C. B. FARRANT, A.A.G. for A.G.

Major-General Sir H. E. COLVILLE, K.C.M.G.,

C.B., etc., etc.,

Lightwater, Bagshot.

APPENDIX V.

Copy.

Confidential.

War Office,
16th December, 1900

My dear General,

In the temporary absence of the Military Secretary, an unpleasant duty devolves on me

The Secretary of State having discussed by telegraph the incident of the surrender of No. XIII Imperial Yeomanry battalion, concurs with Lord Roberts that you were mainly responsible for the surrender, and has reluctantly come to the conclusion that you cannot be permitted to retain your command.

I am directed to request you will hand in your resignation to General Sir George White on receipt of this letter and quit Gibraltar.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Sir George, but

do not propose to write through the usual channel, as it may be less vexatious to you if the resignation appears to be voluntary.

Yours truly,

(Signed) EVELYN WOOD (A.C.)

Major-General Sir HENRY COLVILLE, K.C.M.G., C.B.
Gibraltar.

Envelope addressed :

CONFIDENTIAL.

Major-General Sir HENRY COLVILLE, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Gibraltar.

E. W.

APPENDIX VI.

Copy.

On my way home between Middleburg and Pretoria on the 10th November, 1900, I met in the train an Imperial Yeomanry Officer—Routledge or Rutledge by name—I think a subaltern, who told me he had been with Colonel Spragge's Yeomanry when they were captured at Lindley, and had been released some little time before I met him.

On discussing the question of the Lindley affair, he mentioned incidentally General Colville's telegram. Knowing that General Colville had sent no telegram in connection with it, I asked him what he meant. He then told me that Colonel Spragge had come to Lindley in great haste from the railway in consequence of a telegram he had received at (I think) Kroonstad. This telegram, which he had seen (Colonel Spragge having shewn it to him) was addressed to Colonel Spragge *by name*—not to "O. C. Yeomanry." It was dated Lindley, 23rd May, and was to the effect "I am greatly in want of mounted troops, come to me here at once—Colville." (I do not know whether the signature was spelt correctly.)

I naturally said at once that this must be a forgery, as we did not get to Lindley till the 26th, and even then there were no telegraph instruments in the office, and the wire was cut. Routledge did not seem surprised, and said they had already (*i.e.*, after their fight at Lindley) had a strong suspicion to that effect, owing to the way in which it was addressed.

He also mentioned that he had subsequently heard that a telegraphist—by name Bell (or something similar)—in the Boer service had played a part in tapping the wires outside Lindley, and was suspected of having been connected with this matter.

(Signed) GLEICHEN, Major, Gren. Gds.
late D.A.A.G., for Intell., 9th Div. S. Africa.

APPENDIX VII.

Cape Town,
Jan. 26th, 1900.

The following instructions by Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief are communicated for the guidance of all concerned.

By order,
KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM,
Chief of Staff.

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE IN SOUTH AFRICAN WARFARE.

INFANTRY.—As it is desirable that full advantage should be taken of the experience gained during the past three months by our troops in South Africa, the

following notes are issued for the guidance of all who may find themselves in command of a force (large or small) on service in the field

Against such an enemy any attempt to take a position by direct attack will assuredly fail. The only hope of success lies in being able to turn one or both flanks, or, what would in many instances be equally effective, to threaten to cut the enemy's line of communication.

An essential point, and one which must never be lost sight of, is the power of endurance of the Infantry soldier. If Infantry soldiers (carrying as they do a considerable weight on their backs) are called upon to march a longer distance than can reasonably be expected from men in a normal state of health, or if they are injudiciously pressed as regards the pace, they will necessarily commence to feel the strain before they reach a point where their best energies are required to surmount the difficulties which lie before them. If at such a period a man feels exhausted, moral deterioration, and the consequences to our arms which such deterioration entails, must readily supervene.

(Signed) ROBERTS,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

APPENDIX VIII.

Bloemfontein,
April 15th, 1900.

Dear Cowan,

I have just heard that it is reported in camp that Lord Roberts was very angry with me for not recapturing the guns taken at Klip Kraal on the 31st ulto. If this is so, I hope I may be told, as it is only by having our mistakes pointed out that we can hope to do better in the future; but, as the Chief's only remarks to me on the subject were that we had made a capital march and that he wished he had sent me off the night before, I hope the rumour is not true.

Yours sincerely,
H. E. COLVILLE.

Bloemfontein,
15th April, 1900.

Dear General,

I have shown your letter to the Chief, and he desires me to say that you must not believe idle rumours. If Lord Roberts had felt as the rumour credits him with feeling, he would have told you so before anyone else.

Yours sincerely,
H. V. COWAN.
General Sir H. COLVILLE, &c., &c., &c.

APPENDIX IX.

Received June 20th.
Cable Cart, 24th Front,
G. O. C., Ninth Div., Ventersburg.
19th May. 24th Yeomanry are so late they cannot catch you at Ventersburg. You must march without them. They will join you later *via* Kroonstad.
C. of S

APPENDIX X.

18 Kroonstad.
G. O. C., Winburg,
C. 1692. 18th May.

Hunter occupied Christiana on Tuesday unopposed and expected to be at Phokwani last night. Stop Methuen occupied Hoopstad yesterday without opposition. Ian Hamilton after trifling affair entered Lindley yesterday.
M. S. C.

FORTY-THIRD DAY.

Friday, 27th February 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
 The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
 The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
 Sir JOHN EDGE.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Lieut.-General Sir J. D. FRENCH, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., called and examined.

Lieut.-General Sir J. D. French,
 K.C.B.,
 K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903

17127. (*Chairman*.) You joined Sir George White's force, I think, on the 15th of October, 1899?—Yes.

17128. And you took command of the Cavalry?—That is so.

17129. You have been good enough to give us a summary of the evidence that you are prepared to give. With your permission we will put it in?—If you please.

The summary is as follows:—

1. Adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field at different dates to the work which they had to do.

(A.) Natal (October 15th to November 4th).

(B.) Colesberg Operations.

(C.) Operations for the relief of Kimberley and culminating in the capture of Bloemfontein.

(D.) Operations culminating in the capture of Pretoria.

(A.) *Natal (October 15th to November 4th).*

War broke out on October 11th, 1899. I reached Ladysmith on the morning of October 16th, and at once assumed command of the Cavalry in Natal, under the supreme command of Sir G. White.

I was in command at the battle of Elandslaagte, and was present in command of the Cavalry at the action of Rietfontein and the battle of Lombard's Kop. I also directed reconnaissances in strength on most other days during my stay in Natal.

I am inclined to the opinion that had a vigorous offensive and pursuit been carried out immediately following the victory of Elandslaagte—in conjunction with the forces at Dundee—the forces might conceivably have proved adequate to the task they had to perform, which I take to have been the keeping open of Ladysmith until reinforcements could arrive.

(B.) *Colesberg Operations.*

In the North of Cape Colony for some weeks after the commencement of the War, there were only a handful of troops.

Only a company of Infantry were at the important junction and depôt of De Aar, and the same number at Naauwpoort. On November 21st the mounted garrison at Naauwpoort numbered 75 men!

The first batch of Regular Cavalry only began to reach Naauwpoort at the end of November, and it was the end of December before the horses were really fit for work in the field.

I deduce from this that in the case of an over-sea expedition, the mounted troops should go first, and had they been so sent at the end of 1899, the strength of the forces under me at Colesberg might have been barely adequate to the work in hand.

The task set me by Sir R. Buller was to turn the enemy out of Colesberg, and endeavour to drive them back over the Orange River. The troops available only became adequate (in point of strength) to this task towards the end of January, 1900 when Lord Roberts had arrived, and laid strict injunctions upon me not to commit myself to any serious engagement.

(C.) *Operations for the relief of Kimberley and culminating in the capture of Bloemfontein.*

On February 11th, 1900, the Cavalry Division started from Modder River to the Relief of Kimberley. The passage of the Reit River was forced in the action of February 12th.

The action at the Modder River and the establishment of the Division on the further bank took place on the 13th.

Kimberley was relieved on the 15th.

The action at Macfarlane's Station was fought on the 16th, and Cronje was headed at Paardeberg on the 17th.

Fighting took place on every subsequent day till Cronje's surrender. Later on followed the actions of Poplar Grove and Driefontein and the capture of Bloemfontein.

The strength of the Division at different dates shows that although the numbers at starting were adequate, there being no reserve of men or horses to keep them up, they were certainly inadequate before the close of this series of operations.

Looking to the future, the remedy seems to be to lay down the rule that when a regiment mobilises the reserve squadron should be simultaneously organised into a depôt and sent to the base over-sea to prepare drafts for corps at the front.

(D.) *Operations culminating in the capture of Pretoria.*

During this series of operations the want of an effective system of pushing up Remounts in working condition was still more felt, and the Cavalry Division was, therefore, very much below the strength it should have been to undertake many of the tasks which fell to its lot.

2. The quality of the men of Regular and Auxiliary forces in respect of shooting capacity, marching, horsemanship and horsemastership, entrenchment and cover, general physique, morale and intelligence, regard being had both to the quality of the men when they arrived in South Africa and to any improvement in the course of the campaign. Any deductions from the experience of the War with regard to the future training of the men may also be suggested.

Shooting.

At the commencement of the campaign, the shooting of our troops was moderate. The Cavalry were indifferently armed. The Lee-Enfield carbine was badly sighted, had a short range, and was a clumsy weapon to shoot with. The sighting and magazines of the Lee-Enfield rifle were also clumsy.

Many of the hurriedly-raised South Africans could not shoot at all, and wasted much ammunition. Some of the over-sea Colonials shot well.

Deductions.

More ammunition must be allowed for peace training. Exercises in "Field Firing" must be constantly carried out.

Miniature ranges must be provided in barracks, and shooting made almost a part of a soldier's daily life.

Marching.

The Infantry when first landed were quite unfit to march. They gradually improved, and after two or three months marched extremely well.

The Cavalry and Artillery were handicapped by unfit and underfed horses and by the excessive weights of saddlery and equipment. This was gradually reduced as the campaign proceeded, the Cavalry discarding even their wallets and carrying only stripped saddles and blankets. (Many casualties were caused by inferior saddles and cheap blankets—a very false economy.)

Deductions.

The question of providing light regimental transport to carry the daily requirements of men and horses is most urgent. The recent war proves clearly that, with the extended operations and increased mobility now necessary, it is impossible for the fighting men of any branch of the service to be loaded up with the paraphernalia necessary for their warmth and sustenance at night. Articles such as picket pegs, blankets, mess-tins, cooking utensils, forage and rations must be carried by some light transport (either wheeled or pack according to nature of theatre of war).

Horsemanship and Horsemastership.

This varied greatly in different classes of troops; it seems best to deal separately with each.

(a.) Regular Cavalry.

Horsemanship was generally good, and improved during the campaign as the men grew accustomed to ride over rough ground.

Horsemastership.

Regimental officers and men were very careful of their horses, but their training, especially in regiments from England, had been too narrow. They understood stable management better than the care of horses in the field. For example, very few officers could, at the commencement of the campaign, select the best grazing grounds, as they were ignorant of the African veldt, nor did the grazing guards understand the art of leaving the horses quiet while grazing. At the commencement of the campaign, partly owing to strict orders re looting, many opportunities of foraging were neglected, and it was very often difficult to obtain an adequate supply of good water when operating in large masses. Few officers or men understand how to feed horses on maize, barley, or wheat, which were often to be found in the farms; they either over-fed them, thereby impairing their digestions and giving them Laminitis, or refused to risk this evil, neglecting available supplies. Towards the end of the campaign officers understood better the moderate use of unaccustomed feed, and how to keep horses fit on whatever supplies were available.

(b.) Mounted Infantry.

At the commencement of the War (December, 1899) excepting a few companies furnished by regiments stationed in South Africa, the men could scarcely retain their seats at a trot over rough ground and were entirely ignorant of the first principles of the care of horses. After three months or so, they improved in riding, but few ever became good enough riders to be fit for scouting work. Units also improved in horsemastership as the campaign progressed.

(c.) Colonials.

The over-sea Colonials were good horsemen, but bad horsemasters. A squadron 1st Australian Horse joined the 1st Cavalry Brigade at Osfontein, on March 6th. It was exceptionally well horsed, yet by the end of the month only 10 horses were fit for duty. The squadrons of the Scots Greys, to which regiment the 1st Australian Horse were attached, were reduced in the same period to an average of 30 horses per squadron.

Deductions.

Cavalry soldiers require more training in riding in the open and over rough country. This will be

still more necessary under the present system of three years' service, and will be difficult to carry out in England without a more extended Manœuvres Act.

Lieut.-General Sir J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Entrenchment and Cover.

The men soon became quick at taking cover, and learned to build themselves sangars of stones when in action or on outpost duty. Although the Cavalry were not provided with entrenching tools, troops detailed for outpost duty, after some experience, entrenched themselves with spades carried on the wagons when the ground was not stony enough to enable them to construct sangars.

General physique, morale, and intelligence of the Cavalry Division were good. Many of the Dragoon and Lancer *reservists* were, however, far too big and heavy.

3. Deductions from the experience of the War in connection with the general question of the training and duties of Staff and Regimental Officers.

(a.) Training of Staff Officers.

Besides training officers at the Staff College, a large proportion of officers should yearly take part in Staff Tours under competent officers. By this means uniformity of ideas in staff management and tactics generally would gradually be produced throughout the Army.

Tactics crystallise in Orders: it is essential for officers to be able to understand how to interpret orders correctly, and also to be able to issue clear, complete, and concise orders.

Again, Generals and their staffs should as far as possible be accustomed to work together during times of peace, and general officers should have a voice in selecting their Staff officers. On leaving Modder River for Kimberley, the Generals of Cavalry Brigades and their Staff officers were all new to each other; this was a great disadvantage.

(b.) Training of Regimental Officers.

The self-denial, energy, and general discretion displayed by the regimental officer of the Regular Army throughout the South African War are beyond all praise. His character as a thorough sportsman and a gentleman will last in the traditions of this Empire. At the same time, chiefly owing to want of opportunity in peace time (viz., few men or horses to train, with but little ground on which to drill and manœuvre in England) he took the field less proficient than he might have been in the tactical methods required by modern war. Looking back at the manner in which our regimental officers were constantly handicapped in their efforts to learn their work prior to the War, their attention to duty and general keenness in their work must be regarded as very remarkable.

Deductions:

First.—Strong squadrons should be maintained in peace.

Second.—Give troop, squadron, regimental and brigade commanders more opportunities for training their commands in open country, where mounted and *dismounted* tactical exercises can be carried out in a manner resembling the condition of actual war.

Third.—In order to enable officers to denote the requisite time to their tactical instruction, more must be required from non-commissioned officers in supervising men at stables and in performing minor duties in barracks than has formerly been the case.

4. Supplies of ammunition, equipment, food, and forage. Under this head the Commission desire evidence as to:—

- (a.) The method and sufficiency of supply in the field.
- (b.) Quality of supplies.
- (c.) Any delay or failure on the part of the contractors.
- (d.) The number and quality of horses.

(The method of supplying the cavalry Division on the march is shown, generally, in the Report printed as an Appendix "A" to this day's Evidence. Vide page 317.)

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

(a.) *The Method and Sufficiency of Supply in the Field.*

The method of supply was satisfactory; men as a rule had ample rations, but there was seldom a sufficiency of forage. The quantity of food necessary for horses in hard work is from 15 to 20 lbs. daily, of a mixed ration of oats or other grain to give nourishment, and hay or chaff to furnish bulk. In South Africa full rations were generally 10 lbs. oats. Hay was never procurable excepting in standing camp on the railway. At Paardeberg the grain ration was reduced to 4 lbs. per day. From February 10th to March 7th, 1900, horses were on reduced rations, even when the full ration would have been insufficient. The grazing was indifferent and quite inadequate for the large number of horses concentrated. It was seldom possible to graze troop horses more than three or four hours a day.

(b.) *Quality of Supplies.*

The quality of the rations was generally good, but it was often issued in unsuitable quantities. For mounted troops rations should be drawn in a form suitable for issue to individuals. Cavalrymen are always liable to be sent off on detached duties, as signallers, orderlies, messengers, on small patrols and on various detachments. The bully beef was generally issued in 7 lbs. tins. This was most inconvenient. The man carrying the tin for his mess-mates might be sent off on detached duty, or his horse might be shot or succumb to fatigue, or some of his mess-mates might be sent on detached duties. Moreover, a 7 lbs. tin was liable to displace the balance of the saddle and cause a sore back. This was our experience on the march to Kimberley. In any case, tins of canned meat exceeding 2 lbs. weight are quite unsuitable for Cavalry.

Forage consisted generally of uncrushed oats. This alone is unsuitable food for weary, overtaxed horses. Compressed forage consisting of crushed oats, peas, beans, chaffed hay and lucerne and molassene would be much preferable. Hungry horses will bolt whole oats and derive little benefit, whereas compressed forage cannot be bolted and is more easily digested. In future, slabs of some such compressed forage should be manufactured and issued of sizes suitable for individuals to carry.

(c.) *Delay or Failure on part of Contractors.*

No evidence on this subject is available.

(d.) *Numbers and Quality of Horses.*

The question as to the "numbers of horses" is dealt with partly under heading No. 1, Veterinary Report for May, to show state of remounts received for the general advance, will be found as an Appendix "B" to this day's Evidence. (*Vide page 318, post.*)

The well-trained English horses of the Cavalry Division were reduced by one-third when the Division reached Paardeberg, and by two-thirds when it reached Bloemfontein. At Bloemfontein the remounts issued were good English horses, mostly registered horses, with many of the hunter type. Unfortunately it was necessary for brigades to march as soon as they received their remounts. These were fresh from rail and ship, and only a few extraordinarily-constitutioned horses survived this treatment. At this time the Cavalry suffered greatly from lack of farriers, regiments having to send some of their farriers to the remount department and veterinary hospitals, where staff farriers were deficient. Also the Mounted Infantry were provided with some farriers from the Cavalry. Many horses had been left unshod from the day they were embarked, and time and men were lacking to shoe all the remounts before marching. At Kroonstad more remounts were received, but of inferior quality to those issued at Bloemfontein. The Cavalry Division was again remounted at Pretoria, but the remounts had further deteriorated in quality, consisting largely of Hungarians of the harness or Hackney type.

5. Land Transport, including the use of Railways, Ox and Mule transport traction trains.

Oxen are unsuited for transport with mounted troops in touch with the enemy owing to the hours during which they can work, and at which they must be outspanned to graze.

The mule transport rendered most valuable service. No traction trains were used in connection with the Cavalry Division.

6. The Adequacy of Medical and Engineer services.

(a.) *Medical Services.*—The Medical services were always sufficient; but some of the Colonial ambulance corps seemed to be equipped more suitably for operating with mounted troops than those sent from England.

(b.) *Engineer Services.*—In the earlier stages of the War, Mounted Engineers to accompany Cavalry regiments and Brigades were not always sufficient.

In a country like Europe, where river beds containing water have to be crossed, the want of Mounted Engineers will be more urgently required with Brigades than was the case in South Africa.

7. The Effectiveness of the Guns, Rifles and other Armament used.

(a.) 12-pr. Horse Artillery gun was of very little value.

(b.) 15-pr. field gun a fair gun, but inferior to the majority of the enemy's field ordnance. It is not up to the requirements of modern warfare.

(c.) Pom-pom. Its moral power is greater than its actual killing properties would seem to warrant. Every Cavalry Brigade should be accompanied by two pom-poms.

(d.) The clearness of the atmosphere and high ridges in South Africa enabled ordnance of longer range to be used than could ever be used in Europe.

(e.) A new pattern rifle is being issued to Cavalry and Infantry, so it seems unnecessary to complain now of defects of the old pattern.

(f.) The method of carrying machine guns requires modification to admit of gun being carried either on wheels or on pack horses as country necessitates.

8. Efficiency of the Organisation of the Army.

I have not touched upon the question in this precis, as it appears to me so big a subject, and depends so very much upon what are decided to be the possible theatres in which we may have to fight for the defence of any part of the Empire.

I shall be prepared to answer any questions or give any information which the Commission may desire.

17130. The first matter is with regard to the adequacy of the forces employed. What have you to say with regard to that in Natal?—I have to say very much what I have said here. I do not know whether I could absolutely say so decidedly or not, but I think it is quite conceivable had we pursued after the battle of Elandslaagte, and gone on in conjunction with the troops from Talana, that Ladysmith might not have been shut up. I think it is quite possible the Boers might have retired then behind the Biggarsberg on Newcastle, and Ladysmith might possibly have been kept open until we were sufficiently reinforced to hold, we will say, a line something like the line of the Biggarsberg. But there was another occasion upon which I think, had a certain event come off, it would have made a great difference. That was on the Friday after Elandslaagte, the night of the 27th. I was operating with the cavalry nearly every day, and on, I think it was, the 25th or the 26th, General Yule's column came into Ladysmith, and they were pursued not at all vigorously by Lucas Meyer and some 2,000 to 3,000 Boers. Sir George White sent me out with the Cavalry Division on the morning of the 27th at daybreak, to reconnoitre Lucas Meyer, out to the east, or rather to the north of east, of Ladysmith. In the morning and during the forenoon I was able to draw the enemy's fire of at least 1,000 to 1,500 men, and several guns. I think Lucas Meyer supposed that he was going to be attacked there, and he was evidently taking up a defensive position. I managed to get two or three sketches of the position, one very good one was done by a young cavalry officer, adjutant of one of the regiments there, and I formed a very good idea of what the position was like. I sent back the whole intelligence to Sir George White in Ladysmith in the course of the day. He sent me out considerable reinforcement—four battalions of Infantry, I think it was, two more batteries, and another cavalry regiment. These reached me about seven o'clock in the evening, when I was in bivouac to the east of Lombard's Kop.

He sent written orders to me that I was to attack Lucas Meyer at daybreak. I issued orders for the attack, and made all arrangements, and we had arranged to march on the position at one o'clock in the morning. So far as I remember, about 11 o'clock an order reached me from Sir George White that I was to come back into Ladysmith at once, that he could not risk the attack because he was threatened by the Free Staters on the west. My own opinion is (it is only my opinion) that had that attack taken place Ladysmith might not have been shut up. I firmly believe that it would have been successful, because I had the same men, a great many of them, with me as I had at Elands-laagte, who a few days before had very successfully attacked the position, and the men were very confident; and I had an excellent Infantry leader with me in Sir Ian Hamilton. I think, therefore, it would have been successful, and had it been successful, I think it would also have induced the Boers to retire behind the Biggarsberg.

17131. Those of course are points of tactics?—Quite so.

17132. We are very glad to hear your opinion upon that, but it is not for us to express an opinion?—My point of course is that the forces might then have been adequate for the object in view.

17133. Do you think that even if that attack had been successfully carried out the number of British troops in the Colony were sufficient to prevent Ladysmith being enclosed afterwards?—I think they might have been. I think the Boers might have been so subdued for the time, that they might have retired and not taken up the forward positions which they did, because in reconnoitring them I noticed the whole time they were extremely careful in the way they advanced.

17134. We have had some evidence that the fight at Talana had a considerable effect upon the Boers; that even though the retreat from Dundee followed, the actual fighting at Talana had an effect upon the Boers, and what I gather is that you think another attack and the same successful result would also have influenced their action afterwards?—I think it would, and it would have made Sir George White's force perhaps strong enough to be adequate in fact to hold the enemy off Ladysmith until reinforcements arrived.

17135. You say in your précis that immediately after Elands-laagte was the point of time at which you would have wished a stronger offensive?—Yes, that was the first time, and the second time was the time which I have just narrated.

17136. At that particular point of time the force from Dundee had not arrived, had it?—No, Elands-laagte was fought the day after the battle of Talana Hill.

17137. Because you say here, "in conjunction with the forces at Dundee"?—Yes, I mean in conjunction with the forces at Dundee.

17138. But then the force from Dundee might not have been in conjunction at the time?—I think the pressure would have been taken off the troops at Dundee by reason of our pursuit from Elands-laagte.

17139. Still it comes to this, that if everything had come off all right the results which you foreshadow might have happened?—Yes, exactly.

17140. It was a question of opinion all through?—It was a question of opinion all through.

17141. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But is it your opinion that if the brigade had not been at Dundee, but concentrated with Sir George White's force at first, you could have inflicted a blow upon the Boers which would have checked them for a time, supposing that political considerations had admitted of it?—No; I think it is possible that they would have been better at Dundee, and we should not have had so much chance had Dundee not been occupied.

17142. On the whole you approve of Dundee being held?—Yes. Having commenced a very forward policy the only thing to do was to carry it through.

17143. What number of extra men would have made the force adequate to drive the Boers back behind the Biggarsberg, and to hold them in check for a certain time, given a fair amount of probability, in your opinion?

—I am afraid I cannot very well answer that question because it would be so very much of a guess. I mean so much depends upon, when you get troops, how you use them.

17144. But I am speaking of troops used in the best possible manner, of course. Another brigade, would you say?—Another brigade would, of course, have helped very much indeed. Another brigade would have made it almost a certainty, I think, because the weak point was Van Reenan's Pass, west of Ladysmith, and another brigade would have provided for that.

17145. (Chairman.) Another brigade means 5,000 men?—That would be a fairly strong brigade.

17146. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) The Dundee Brigade was about 4,000 strong?—Yes.

17147. (Lord Strathcona and Mount-Royal.) You do not care to give any decided opinion with regard to that?—No, I would not give any absolutely decided opinion. I can give a decided opinion on that last question in saying that if another brigade had been available we could have done that. As it was I think it might have been done, but if another brigade had been there I am sure it might.

17148. It would have secured the position?—Until further reinforcements arrived.

17149. (Chairman.) At Elands-laagte the troops behaved well, did they not?—Very well indeed; no troops could possibly have behaved better.

17150. A question has been raised in the way of criticism of the Cavalry retirement upon Ladysmith?—On what occasion?

17151. At the battle of Ladysmith.—On the 30th October, do you mean?

17152. Yes. Can you say anything as to that?—On that point I can speak with the greatest confidence.

17153. Yes, we were referred to you as being able to give a decisive opinion?—There was absolutely no kind of a hasty retirement. On the other hand, what took place was this: I was holding the line of kopjes to the east of Lombard's Kop (if you follow the place I mean), and I got Sir George White's order to retire. I had commenced the retirement, in fact the men were just running down off the kopjes, when it was reported to me that some Infantry were still in position on our left; this was a false report, but I returned the men to their positions at once.

17154. To relieve?—In order to make sure that the Infantry had retired before the Cavalry gave up their position, but I found out afterwards that this was a false report. Again we came back. On passing through Lombard's Kop with the whole of the Cavalry I was so struck with the strength of the position and how easily it might be held, that I halted the whole of the Cavalry for, I should think, nearly an hour, while I sent a message back to Sir George White to ask him to let me hold Lombard's Kop. I told him that I could do it easily with a few troops, and I did not think it was a good thing to leave it. The answer I got back from Sir George White was that I was to obey my orders, and by that time nearly all the troops were back close to Ladysmith.

17155. There has been a statement that "a seething mass of clumsy broken Cavalry charged down the narrow neck on the west of Lombard's 'Kop,'" is that an exaggerated account?—There is no truth in it. The 5th Lancers got separated in some way or another during a flank movement I was making with the whole Division to try and outflank the enemy. We were under a heavy shell fire, and whether the Commanding Officer of the 5th Lancers thought he could get better cover, or what it was, I do not know, but at any rate he did break away from the Division, and I could not find him for two or three hours. I sent everywhere I could think of after him, but I could not get hold of him, but I knew he was wandering about in a rather aimless way somewhere to the west of Lombard's Kop. The statement to which you refer is pure invention.

17156. That was early in the day?—That was early in the day. I think about 8 o'clock in the morning.

17157. I think the passage I refer to purports to

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K. C. B.,
K. C. M. G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K. C. B.,
K. C. M. G.

7 Feb. 1903.

relate to the retirement of the troops into Ladysmith at the end of the battle?—Exactly.

17158. At the retirement of the Cavalry at a quarter past 12 and the withdrawal of the Cavalry into Ladysmith there was nothing of the kind?—Absolutely nothing of the kind; very much the contrary, because I was holding them for an hour at Lombard's Kop asking Sir George White if he really wished me to give up Lombard's Kop.

17159. There was nothing that would have affected the morale of the Cavalry afterwards?—Nothing whatever.

17160. Then the next phase of the operations that you speak of is after you left Natal. You left Natal before the siege began?—I left Ladysmith the day it was shut up. I left with the last train that came out.

17161. Then you went to the North of Cape Colony?—Yes, I went to Colesberg.

17162. And there, I understand, again you found your force inadequate?—Most decidedly, the force was very inadequate there.

17163. Especially in mounted men?—Especially in mounted men.

17164. And your conclusion from that is that mounted men ought to have come out at the beginning of the expedition?—I think they should have come out at the very first. Even then they would have been barely in time.

17165. That, I suppose, relates to the special circumstances of the South African case. It would not always be the case that the mounted troops ought to come across first, would it?—I think so; in any oversea expedition I think the mounted troops ought to go first, because it gives the horses a chance of recovering from their voyage, and they would probably be fit to go on when the Infantry arrived.

17166. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And the same applies to Artillery there?—The same applies to the Artillery there.

17167. (*Chairman.*) It is mainly on the ground of acclimatisation of the horses, then, that you think the Cavalry ought to go out at the commencement?—And also partly because I think mounted troops are always required first in a campaign for reconnoitring purposes.

17168. But they would not probably be acquired until there was some force of Infantry to move with them or immediately after them?—Probably in a European campaign mounted troops ought to be two or three days' march ahead of the Infantry.

17169. As part of the same movement?—It is conceivable that you might have first of all a very big Cavalry reconnaissance in any campaign. And then there are other objectives, such as deranging and hindering the enemy's mobilization.

17170. So that you were crippled in your operations there until after Lord Roberts' arrival?—I was very much crippled in that way until towards the end of December. Perhaps I might tell you the state of the Force as I had it on the different dates?

17171. If you please?—On the 21st of December R Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery had arrived, and two companies of Mounted Infantry came in, which were previously at Hanover Road, but these companies were in such a state that they were really practically useless until the men had learned to ride better; they were quite unsafe to trust, and I had to throw them up altogether for two or three weeks in order that they might be trained. They were totally untrained.

17172. Were they Mounted Infantry?—Yes.

17173. From the Regular Infantry?—From the Regular Infantry. On the 25th two squadrons headquarters and 12th Lancers arrived, but they left me again on the 2nd of December to go round the Modder River and reinforce Lord Methuen. Another battery of Horse Artillery arrived on the 27th. On the 1st of December the Suffolk Regiment arrived. On the 2nd of December the New Zealand Mounted Rifles arrived. On the 5th December the Carabineers arrived, and about the 8th the Inniskillings. On the 11th of December the 10th Hussars began to arrive, and on

the 14th they were complete. On the 26th the Essex Regiment arrived. So that during December I was gradually reinforced. Beginning from the end of November up to the end of December I was reinforced; but I was not actually strong enough to really carry out the wishes of Sir Redvers Buller as contained in his orders to me until Lord Roberts arrived and General Kelly-Kenny's Division came up to Naauwpoort.

17174. What was the particular object of your operation?—I was ordered by Sir Redvers Buller to keep the enemy back first of all; and secondly, if I possibly could do it, to turn the Boers out of Colesberg and drive them across the Orange River.

17175. So as to get possession of the bridge?—So as to get possession of the bridge. Sir Redvers wanted to clear the north of the Colony.

17176. And that was never possible?—That was never possible. It was quite possible somewhere about the middle or the end of January when I had these reinforcements, and I could have done it then, but Lord Roberts ordered me not to embark on any enterprise where I should have any considerable losses.

17177. So you then moved on to join in his operations?—Yes, I then moved on to Kimberley.

17178. And there again there was the same deficiency in your strength, but it was more in the nature of having no reserve?—That was so. The waste of Cavalry in undertaking operations of that kind is tremendous, and I think always must be. I think there was not sufficient provision made for pushing up reserves of horses.

17179. Do you speak of the reserve squadron—that squadron that is generally kept at home?—Yes.

17180. You think that in case of an expedition it ought to come out?—Yes, it ought to come out and remain at the base.

17181. In the late War there was no reserve of that kind?—No.

17182. So that if you had losses your force was diminished?—It was diminished to a tremendous extent.

17183. A good deal has been said about the condition of the horses in consequence of that march. Is there anything you wish to say with regard to that?—Of course they had very little food. Horses cannot possibly be kept alive on very hard work like that unless they are fed, and it was impossible to feed them.

17184. You could not carry the forage with you?—We could not carry it with us, and after Paardeberg it was not available.

17185. I think you go into the question of horses later on?—I could give the various strengths of the Division, which would probably be interesting to you.

17186. Thank you?—I can give you the casualties in horses during the march to Koodoes Rand Drift and Kimberley. The Division left the Modder River with 5,027 horses. On the 28th of February, the day before the surrender of Cronje at Paardeberg, the strength of the Division was 3,553 horses—we had lost some 1,500 horses.

17187. What did the men do? You had to make them march, I suppose?—Yes. We got remounts, of course, very soon after that. When we got to Bloemfontein we formed dépôts for the men.

17188. But before that what did they do?—They had to march.

17189. You were marching too quickly for the dismounted men?—Yes. The strength of the Division, I might mention, on Monday the 5th of March—that was the day before Poplar Grove—was again 5,655 horses, and during Poplar Grove we lost 213 horses killed and wounded and exhausted; and on Tuesday the 13th of March, the Cavalry Division reached Bloemfontein, and the horse casualties were as follows:—Cavalry, 314 killed (that is in addition to the number at Poplar Grove), wounded or exhausted: Horse Artillery, 134; total, 448; so that adding that 448 to the 213 at Poplar Grove, roughly 650 horses out of that 5,600 horses were killed, wounded, or died.

of exhaustion on reaching Bloemfontein. The rest relates to a time subsequent to that.

17190. Those are in the operations after the advance from Bloemfontein and up to the capture of Pretoria?—Yes; and also the Cavalry Division did a good deal of work to the east of Bloemfontein, at Thabanchu, and Sanna's Post, and Dewetsdorp.

17191. During that period the great difficulty was in pushing up the remounts?—Yes.

17192. So that you were below strength?—Yes. I think generally I may say that in all operations after leaving Modder River through Kimberley, Bloemfontein, and to Johannesburg and Pretoria, the Cavalry Division commenced with an adequate strength, but they dwindled away so much that very soon they got down to a strength which was quite inadequate for the purpose.

17193. Next you have gone into the questions of the quality of the men and so on; I do not think I need take you through those in detail unless there is any point on which you have anything to add?—Nothing whatever.

17194. You mention one point about dividing the light regimental transport?—I think myself that the Cavalry soldier ought to have nothing on him at all except his arms and ammunition.

17195. To take the weight off the horse?—To take the weight off the horse. I think in modern war it is necessary that he must risk a good deal in the way of spending the night out and living on the country, and perhaps having no food at all for a considerable time; but it is absolutely impossible if Cavalry are to do their work, that they can be laden as they were in the last campaign.

17196. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Does that apply to campaigns in countries with small areas?—I should say always.

17197. (*Chairman.*) What would this light regimental transport consist of?—Light carts, or pack animals, according to the nature of the country, to carry light equipment and food.

17198. To carry practically what the man now carries with him?—To carry practically what is on the horse now.

17199. Is that a practicable thing to do, to have transport of that kind following close up?—I think it is perfectly feasible. I would sub-divide the present arrangements. I would not keep all the regimental transport together, I would have it in three parts; for the first line I would have small, light carts to accompany the squadrons, that is, practically taking off the horse everything that is on it now and putting it in these light carts; for the second line I would have what is now the regimental transport practically; and for the third line, the supply wagons.

17200. That was really the reason why I asked the question. That this regimental transport which you mention here in your summary does not refer to the question which has been argued between regimental transport and general transport, it is a special thing for mounted troops?—It is a special thing for mounted troops.

17201. But I gather from what you said just now that on the other point you are rather in favour of regimental transport as it exists under the regulations?—I see no objection to regimental transport, I see no reason to alter the regimental transport, provided it is divided up, as I say, into three parts, and it is understood that only the light carts have any chance of being there at night, and very often they would not be there.

17202. But you are aware that there is a considerable argument as to whether the system of regimental transport as provided at the beginning of the War was sufficient, or whether it was necessary to supersede it?—I know that argument was going on.

17203. And have you any opinion upon that point?—I am not prepared with any at the moment. I see no reason why any great alteration in that respect is necessary.

17204. You think the regimental transport followed up by the supply column meets the general case?—I think that is so.

17205. Then, you divide your remarks on horsemanship and horsemastership between the different forces?—Yes.

17206. The Cavalry, I understand, you were pretty well satisfied with on those points?—I think that there is always room for improvement. Of course, some regiments are better than others, but, on the whole I was satisfied.

17207. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are they equal to the Cavalry of France or Germany?—I should think they are certainly better all round horsemen.

17208. (*Chairman.*) And in horsemastership it is a good deal a matter of feeding?—It is altogether a matter of feeding, I think, in the field.

17209. And there the training of the officers and men has not been as precise as it might have been?—I think the officers might have more experience than they had in the care of horses picketed out in the open, and also in the kind of food that often has to be given them in South Africa and other countries of a like kind. I think our Cavalry officers are splendid horsemasters with the kind of food they would get in this country, feeding horses in that way, but I think a little more instruction would be rather good for them as to the sort of food they would use and how they would use it in places like South Africa.

17210. When they had to rough it?—When they had to rough it. I would not make a very strong point of that. I think that the horsemanship and the horsemastership of the Cavalry is very nearly all we can desire.

17211. But with regard to the Mounted Infantry you were not satisfied with their riding?—I gave you an instance when two companies that were sent to me were absolutely dangerous—in fact it was impossible to use them in front of the enemy, and I do not think their riding ever came up to the standard required for efficient scouts in most cases.

17212. Are you speaking of Mounted Infantry?—I am speaking of Mounted Infantry only.

17213. As a whole?—As a whole; that is to say, the regular Mounted Infantry, which have been taken from Infantry regiments. I am not speaking of Colonials.

17214. No, they come next. Do you think the Mounted Infantry can be made satisfactory?—My own opinion is that Mounted Infantry are very useful indeed, and might be most valuable to enable troops to be moved quickly from one point of the battlefield to another; but in the performance of all ordinary Cavalry work I do not think this class of Mounted Infantry, that is to say, Infantry soldiers taken away from their regiments and given a partial training, can ever be made sufficiently fit to take the place of Cavalry.

17215. (*Viscount Esher.*) What sort of training is being given to the Mounted Infantry under your command now?—They are taken away from their battalions a company at a time, and they are trained under very good officers; they are put through a short course of riding, and taught all the elementary duties of practically a Cavalry soldier.

17216. Do you think that the training which is given now at the Mounted Infantry Camp at Aldershot is such as you would suggest should be given to Mounted Infantry?—It is the very best that can be given in the time.

17217. Do you think it is useful?—Yes. But that rather comes into the whole question of the principle of Mounted Infantry.

17218. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Is not the object of Mounted Infantry chiefly to carry Infantry about rapidly from place to place?—That should be the only object of it.

17219. You do not look upon scouting as one of their main objects?—I do not think they can ever be trained sufficiently for that.

17220. And as regards Mounted Rifles, what do you say?—They are simply a form of Cavalry.

17221. They would scout, of course?—They would scout, certainly; the Mounted Rifles would be trained Cavalry soldiers to all intents and purposes.

17222. Trained in shock tactics too?—I would train

Lieut.-General Sir J. D. French
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

the Mounted Rifles to understand what is meant by shock tactics, and I would practice them in it a little, but not so much as I would other Cavalry. I mean, I would make the main weapon of the Mounted Rifleman the rifle, and I would give him something to use mounted in case of necessity; but, on the other hand, I would make the Hussar and Lancer, depend mainly on his sword and lance; and his rifle would be his second weapon. That is the difference I would draw between the two, but I would make them both equally good horsemen.

17223. You said in your Summary just now that few of the Mounted Infantry ever became good enough riders to be fit for scouting work, but that is not their main function?—No, it ought not to be.

17224. (*Viscount Esher.*) But is there not an advantage in having a certain number of men in every battalion trained for scouting purposes?—I think it would be an advantage to have a few men, but not to the extent of a company. I think there is a great advantage in having some; for instance, for an Infantry battalion on the march to have three, four, five, or six mounted men out beyond it would be a very great advantage, if good enough horsemen could be found.

17225. What I understand you rather to deprecate is any attempt to turn the Mounted Infantryman into a Cavalry soldier?—Exactly, or replacing the Cavalry soldier or saying, "You have so much Mounted Infantry, and therefore you cannot want Cavalry."

17226. (*Chairman.*) But you speak of the Mounted Rifles. What Mounted Rifles have we now?—We have none at all now.

17227. And you do not count the Yeomanry as Mounted Rifles?—I was thinking more of the Regular troops. I think the Yeomanry would make very good Mounted Rifles, if that was laid down to be their rôle; my opinion is that it would be a very efficient rôle for them to play.

17228. But you would give them some weapon of offence besides their rifles?—I would give all mounted riflemen that.

17229. What do you point to?—I would give them a sword.

17230. The present Cavalry sword?—I think the present Cavalry sword is the very worst that could possibly be used for any mounted troops at all. I am trying very hard now to get it altered. I think we want more of a rapier.

17231. To be used with the point?—To be used with the point.

17232. Would it be better than giving them the bayonet?—Yes, it would be longer. This sword that I mean is the Italian sword. It is about the same length as the present sword, it may be a little longer.

17233. But it would not be longer than the bayonet on the end of a rifle?—But the bayonet on the end of a rifle cannot be used like a sword with a handle. I am quite against using rifles or bayonets on horses, because I have tried it. I tried it at Colesberg with the New Zealanders. I was very anxious to make Cavalry demonstrations round the flanks, and the New Zealanders had no swords; they had only their rifles and these bayonets, and I manoeuvred them over and over again with these bayonets, and we found they were very clumsy indeed.

17234. But it was represented to us by one witness at any rate, that you might have a bayonet in the form of a sword bayonet to be used for other purposes, but which, when put on to the end of a rifle which riflemen have, would make something like a short spear. You would not agree with that witness?—I do not agree with him, because I have tried it practically, and the New Zealanders of whom I am speaking were very good horsemen indeed.

17235. You think it is necessary that these men, if they are to be used for scouting purposes as mounted rifles, as you define them, should have a weapon of offence?—I think they should, certainly.

17236. And for the Cavalry, as I understand you, you would make the weapon of offence the principal weapon?—I would make the sword or lance always the principal weapon of the Hussar or Lancer, but I

would take the greatest pains with his shooting and in his training. I consider that he can make a tremendous and most valuable use of his firearm, but I think that his main weapon of offence is his sword, and that he ought always to be taught so.

17237. The opinion has been expressed to us by some witnesses that even in the case of cavalry in the future, the principal weapon should be the rifle; you do not agree with that opinion?—I do not agree with that view at all; I absolutely disagree with it.

17238. You think that even under the conditions of modern warfare, the chief weapon of offence of the Cavalry soldier should be his sword?—I do. My reason is that if the Cavalryman is taught that he is to rely mainly upon his rifle, his morale is taken away from him, and if that is done his power is destroyed. He ought to be taught that he can ride at anything or ride over anything. I do not say that the officer who is leading him is always to take him at everything, but the Cavalry soldier all through the ranks ought to believe that he can do anything, and he ought to be taught to believe so; his training ought always to tend that way.

17239. That means a very complete training, does it not?—Certainly.

17240. Therefore, even in the case, probably, of Mounted Rifles, and certainly in the case of Mounted Infantry, you must draw a very distinct line between the Cavalry training and the training for those forces?—Absolutely, because when people are arguing about the difference between Mounted Infantry and Cavalry, and so on, there is one thing which I think very often escapes notice, and that is that in an ordinary campaign, say against France or Germany, or any European country, Cavalry forces will come together, and then the rifle is of no use at all.

17241. In South Africa you never had Cavalry against you?—No, we had not, and that is the reason why we were always able to get round flanks, and go where we chose, but I am absolutely certain that if we are opposed by Cavalry anything like as good as we think our own Cavalry, the leader who gets down off his horses and begins firing (except with one or two squadrons which may be used on the same principle as Horse Artillery is used) is lost.

17242. Is there anything more that you wish to say about the oversea Colonials?—I think I have said pretty well all I want to say about them. Do you mean generally?

17243. I was thinking at that particular moment whether they were the class of troops who would be Mounted Rifles, or Cavalry, or Mounted Infantry?—I think they would make very good Mounted Rifles. I have no doubt that some of them, especially some of the Australians, might be made very good Cavalry, but I am not quite sure whether they are got hold of enough for that, whether they are not too much on the principle of the Yeomanry here in this country.

17244. That is to say whether they get sufficient training?—Whether they get sufficient and regular training. Bringing them out for a day at a time, and an hour or two at a time, and that kind of thing, is not the best training that Cavalry can have for shock tactics, and for overcoming opposing Cavalry.

17245. But for the work that you had to do you found them efficient?—Yes, they were very good. They differed very much of course, but the New Zealanders, to whom I referred just now, were splendid. I mean those under Major Robbins' command; they did some very good work indeed round Colesberg.

17246. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Had you any opportunity of knowing whether the oversea Colonials were serviceable as scouts?—I had every opportunity of knowing that. I had a great many of them.

17247. Would you say that they were good in scouting?—Most of them were good scouts.

17248. Had you with you, or had you an opportunity of seeing any of the contingents from the North-West of Canada, in which there were a number of the North-West Mounted Police, which is a regular

force there?—I saw them on one or two occasions, and they were excellent.

17249. And they make good scouts?—Very good.

17250. They are accustomed, of course, to roam over the prairies?—That is what is wanted for a scout; you want him to be able to ride over an ordinary country.

17251. (*Viscount Esher.*) And to have a quick eye for country as well?—Exactly.

17252. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And they had very good staying qualities?—Very good indeed.

17253. (*Chairman.*) You found some of the Reservists too heavy?—We found that they were much too heavy. I am referring to the Reservists who came back into the Cavalry regiments. I think it is a matter that requires attention.

17254. (*Viscount Esher.*) I presume they got lighter as the campaign proceeded?—I suppose they did a little, but not appreciably so.

17255. (*Chairman.*) But you noticed it enough to think that it is a matter that ought to be considered in relation to the question of a Reserve?—I think it ought certainly to be considered in the question of a Cavalry Reserve, because in these days, of course, every thing depends upon the weight put upon the horse.

17256. Have you drawn attention to that?—Several times.

17257. Officially?—Not officially, but I have several times drawn attention to it.

17258. (*Viscount Esher.*) It is rather difficult to suggest a remedy, is it not?—Except keeping up more Cavalry soldiers.

17259. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Had you no body of specially trained scouts?—We had several corps which were called scouts, generally after the name of the general they were with. They were composed generally of South African colonists.

17260. From their knowledge of the country?—Yes, but they were got from all over South Africa, and a great many of them were got from towns like Johannesburg. They were not always satisfactory, but they did very good work on the whole.

17261. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Most of the British in South Africa are in towns, are they not?—Yes, I think so.

17262. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is it not customary to have in the Army a body of men who are specially trained and recognised as scouts?—No, I think that is a point which is receiving attention now.

17263. But it has not been so?—It has not been so hitherto. It has been suggested to give special prizes for scouting and to have regular picked scouts, like we have picked shots. It is receiving considerable attention, and I think it is a very good idea and will be very useful; but at the same time I think that a good squadron commander always knew his best scouts, and always had a few men whom he employed particularly in that way.

17264. I believe in the United States they always had scouts available for expeditions, say, as in their Indian wars and such like, for service, and their western country is very much like that of South Africa?—Yes, and I think it was a very good thing.

17265. (*Viscount Esher.*) As commanding the First Army Corps could you commence to organise a body of trained scouts without reference to headquarters?—Yes, provided I adhered to drill regulations. I could not, of course, raise an extra corps.

17266. But you could specially train them?—Yes.

17267. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You had to pick out the men who appeared most intelligent and most expert for the purpose, but who had had no training whatsoever beforehand for that work?—That is so.

17268. (*Chairman.*) In speaking of the training of staff officers I think what you have just said to Lord Esher has a bearing. Under the new Army Corps

organisation, generals and their staffs would be working together beforehand?—That is supposed to be the great principle of the Army Corps system

17269. And in South Africa you found the disadvantage of the other process?—Yes, it was a very great disadvantage indeed.

17270. Had you a sufficient staff under your command?—I had a particularly good staff. I cannot speak too highly of them.

17271. Were they Staff College men?—There were only two Staff College men—Colonel Haig and Colonel Lawrence.

17272. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Two out of how many does that mean, roughly?—Ten or twelve at the time that I had them on my staff.

17273. (*Chairman.*) Were the other men selected by yourself?—No, they were not.

17274. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose your personal staff was?—Yes, my personal staff was selected by myself; that is always the case.

17275. (*Chairman.*) But you were satisfied with the work done?—I was more than satisfied with the work done; I cannot speak too highly of it.

17276. Have you any suggestions to offer for the future as to what should be done?—I think I have put in my *précis* what I have to say on that subject. I think it is a principle of the very first importance that the general and staff officers should be accustomed to work together in peace time, and I think that perhaps more attention should be given to that. A great deal is being done as it is, but I think that now the War is over more attention should be paid to the practical training of officers in staff duties. I think that one point in which a great many staff officers showed a want of training was in their methods of expressing themselves in writing orders. I think that they sometimes fail in that respect, and that the meaning of their orders is not always made quite clear. Then I think also that some officers who have had a Staff College training, and have been found to be excellent staff officers, are sent to a place like the Intelligence Department or some office here in London, where they spend the whole day in an office, and really the value of their training at the Staff College is not made the most of in consequence of their not being put with troops. I know of some officers with whom that has been the case. I think the place for a really good staff officer of the kind that is wanted in the field is with troops and not to be tied up in offices in London.

17277. (*Viscount Esher.*) You mean that you want a man with different qualifications for the work in London from what you want for a staff officer in the field?—For certain kinds of work I think we do. I know really very good officers fully qualified for Staff Officers in the field who have been sent almost straight from the Staff College to offices in London, to the Intelligence Department, for instance.

17278. With whom do you think there the fault lies?—I think they should be selected. The Commandant at the Staff College knows all about them and reports their qualifications, and perhaps it is the case that their qualifications may not have been duly looked to when they were appointed, and perhaps sufficient care was not taken in their selection.

17279. The idea is that the Commandant reports upon the special qualifications of an officer on his leaving the Staff College?—I believe he does.

17280. (*Chairman.*) But the work in offices in London is of some importance also?—It is of very great importance, but I think that perhaps men might be found who are more fitted for it than for work in the field.

17281. There ought to be selection in both directions?—In both directions.

17282. I suppose there is selection?—There is, no doubt, selection.

17283. There may have been failure?—Possibly. You cannot expect any new system, of course, to work perfectly.

17284. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you draw

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French
K.C.B.
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

a broad distinction between officers who are qualified for Assistant Adjutant-Generals or A work, and officers who are qualified for Assistant Quartermaster-Generals or B work?—I do not know that I would altogether draw that distinction, because I think that the B work very often requires a man who can get about and ride well, and who has an eye for country just as much as A work.

17285. B work requires it even more, does it not?—I think it very often does; looking for camping ground and all that kind of work—Quartermaster-General's work.

17286. Could not a clearer distinction be drawn between the theoretical man, the office man, and the practical man?—I think there might

17287. Would not it be a great advantage?—Yes; that is practically, I think, what I am recommending; that is to say, that there should be more care in selection.

17288. (*Viscount Esher.*) And I suppose it does not necessarily follow that a man who has done exceedingly good work in the Intelligence Branch in London is the sort of man whom you would care to have on your staff on active service in the field?—Certainly not.

17289. That is really one of the points you want to make?—Yes.

17290. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I was asking not only with regard to men in London, but in your own corps there is a certain amount of work connected with military law, regulations and so forth, which is purely office work, and requires a theoretical mind?—Yes.

17291. On the other hand, you have, of course, a number of men whom you require for the other kind of work?—Yes; but in a case like Aldershot, for instance, military law is part of the Assistant Adjutant-General's work—that is an A matter. The same man may have to look over courts martial, and see that irregularities do not occur, or point them out if they do; and that same man may have to come out and do staff work in the field next day.

17292. Do you think that a mixture of duties is a good thing, or would you have specialisation?—I think it is necessary to have a mixture of duties. I do not see how they could very well be separated, because in the field courts martial are going on, and there is administration of military law to attend to; and very often it is a great deal more important on service, because martial law comes in too.

17293. But in the other branches men are specialised into sappers, gunners, cavalry, and infantry; would it not be possible to specialise the staff to some extent, too?—It would mean, of course, breaking up the whole arrangement of staff duties, and I am not prepared to say that I think it is advisable. I think if care was taken that the right kind of men came to staff troops that were expected to go on active service first, and were not put in offices in London and that kind of thing, that would meet the case, and things would work as they are very well.

17294. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose you approve of some sort of theoretical training for Staff officers?—Certainly. I think the Staff College is excellent.

17295. As at present constituted, you think so?—Yes; I do not know exactly how it is now, but if the same system exists now as obtained under General Hildyard, I think it is excellent.

17296. Do you not think it would be an advantage if you could pass more officers through the Staff College than you can do at present?—Yes, I think it would be a great advantage, because the more that can be passed through the better.

17297. (*Chairman.*) Then as to regimental officers; have you anything to add to what you have said in your summary?—I think regimental officers are excellent. It is sometimes said that they do not show enough initiative, but I find that they show a great deal of initiative if they are let alone. I think very often commanding officers, and perhaps general officers sometimes, do not judge enough by results; they interfere too soon in the work of the junior officers, and that is especially the

case with some commanding officers. When the military training of the company or squadron is going on it is the business of the commanding officer to watch and know exactly what is going on, but not to interfere before a certain point. I do not know whether I make myself clear.

17298. Yes, so that the young officer finds out his own mistake?—Yes; and I think also it upsets him tremendously to be interfered with. If he is pursuing a system of his own in training his squadron or his company, it is as well to let him do it, and to point out his mistake to him afterwards; and it is quite possible that he may attain the result you want in his own way just as well as if he was interfered with every day and told to do something different.

17299. And if he does not attain the result, he will understand where his mistake arose much better if he has worked it all out and failed?—Much better. That is what I cannot get some commanding officers to understand. The fact is they want to do everything themselves.

17300. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How can you deal with that?—The only way to deal with that is to remove the commanding officer who shows that sort of spirit; that is the proper way, and to remove him without any hesitation.

17301. Has it been done?—I do not know, I am sure. I think it should be done in such a case. I think much harm is done by interfering in that way. I think we are perhaps rather apt to blame the young officer and not the commanding officer.

17302. I asked that question, because a good deal of theory has been put before us here, and I am rather anxious to know where the practice comes in?—It is the practice I should adopt myself without a moment's hesitation.

17303. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose you can exert a good deal of influence in that way now?—I think so. We are trying to encourage that sort of thing. For instance, Sir Redvers Buller always did so. I was under his command at Aldershot, commanding a cavalry brigade, and he was excellent in that way, and a pattern for everybody to copy. He knew every single thing that was going on, but we never heard his voice at all. He never interfered; but he could tell you everything at the end, at a certain time when he chose to make his comments and remarks. We saw he understood everything at the time, and he pointed out the mistakes which had been made.

17304. You mean, he left you to make the mistakes?—Yes, he left us to make the mistakes, and then corrected them afterwards, and he was quite ready to discuss them with us, too.

17305. (*Chairman.*) But in actual warfare did you find any lack of initiative in the junior officers?—No, none whatever on the part of the juniors. I found some lack of initiative on the part of some senior officers, such as commanding officers; not so much with squadron officers, they showed more initiative.

17306. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Could that have been discovered in peace time?—I think it should have been.

17307. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose that is partly due to the fact that the training of the younger officers has been better than that of the senior officers?—That is one of the main reasons for it, that the reforms did not begin with the seniors.

17308. They began at a date which has rather excluded the senior officers from having the full advantage of them?—Yes, and no doubt it will get better as time goes on. I was trying to get the blame off the young officers, where I think it is unjustly put, and to put it on what I consider to be the right person.

17309. You think, on the whole, the young officers did extremely well?—Extraordinarily well. I think the country has been much indebted to young officers in this war.

17310. And they showed a practical knowledge of their profession?—Certainly. I do not mean to say that they were perfect by any means, but I am sure that the work they had done before, which I know was extraordinarily arduous, assisted them tremendously. I refer to the time when I was in command of the Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot. It is often said that officers care about nothing but polo and hunting. I have known cavalry officers, several of them squadron com-

manders, men with large independent means, men who had horses at Melton and ponies all over the place, who would give up hunting, polo, and everything simply to go and have their squadrons out in the morning, and then go into the barrack rooms and lecture them in the afternoon. I have seen them in uniform in barracks very often at 5 and 6 in the evening, having been working the whole day. That was the kind of work that was going on in the Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot for some time before the war, and I am sure it had a great effect on the conduct of the war afterwards.

17311. (*Viscount Esher.*) You do not see any diminution in that keenness now?—Absolutely none whatever, but we are so often told that up to the time of the war young officers did nothing and squadron commanders did nothing, whereas their profession was the very first thing they thought of.

17312. (*Chairman.*) The next head is supplies, and I do not think I need ask you anything about that; you have stated your views very exhaustively here, unless there is anything more you have to say about the horses, as that is a special point, of course, in your command?—I think that the whole question of supply of horses in war ought to be taken up and thought out, owing entirely to our system of training everything of this kind alone till war actually occurs, the remounts we got were most unsatisfactory.

17313. Do you mean in quality or condition?—I think in both. I think the quality of some of the horses was very bad indeed. They got very much better during the last year or two of the war, the last 18 months, say.

17314. Was that not because they had a longer time after being landed before they were sent to the front?—The actual horse was better, the stamp of horse was better; he was a much more suitable horse for the purpose.

17315. Which sort of horse are you speaking of?—The horses that were sent out, that we got during the last 18 months of the war, received from England, and also some Canadian horses, I think.

17316. Are you referring chiefly to English horses?—Chiefly to English horses, horses that came from England.

17317. Not Hungarian or Argentine horses?—No, I think the English horses were much the best that we got; but, of course, in that country, next to the English horse, I should put the Cape Colonial horse as much the most suitable horse for that warfare.

17318. Was not that a great deal a matter of acclimatisation?—You mean the Cape horse?

17319. Yes, he was accustomed to the climate?—Yes, and I think in the latter stages of the war we knew perhaps better where to find them. They were, of course, accustomed to the country.

17320. Accustomed to the food?—Accustomed to the food.

17321. There was a difficulty in getting horses accustomed to the food, was there not?—Very great difficulty, but remounts were often received in a terrible state.

17322. That was owing to the exigencies of the war, I suppose?—Yes, and the necessity for having horses up and using them at once, which probably could not have been avoided. It was certainly nobody's fault, out there, and I do not believe it was anybody's fault here. I think it was the fault of the system, and that something ought to be done at once to consider the question of remounting mounted troops in war.

17323. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you say that we had an insufficient horse supply for the original number of troops intended to be sent out, the Army Corps and Cavalry Division?—An insufficient reserve?

17324. Yes?—I certainly think we had.

17325. Insufficient for the wastage of war?—Certainly, we had no reserve at all. We had a lot of reserve horses of a kind, but I do not think that system meets our requirements. We ought to have regular depôts, I think.

17326. (*Chairman.*) You mean keeping horses in depôts?—Yes, on that principle.

17327. More like the principle in India?—In India and in Germany.

17328. (*Viscount Esher.*) Had you any reserve horses in Natal when you arrived there?—None at all.

17329. There was no provision there for the wastage of war?—Not in my time. I was only there a little time.

17330. But still you would have seen it. There was no provision made at the time you left Natal?—None whatever. We were losing horses very fast. I think that the horse power of the whole Empire ought to be utilised and economised.

17331. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And organised?—And organised.

17332. (*Viscount Esher.*) When you commanded the Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot under Sir Redvers Buller, was it then clear to you that the system was a bad one?—Absolutely clear.

17333. You knew it before the war?—Perfectly well. We all knew it.

17334. And you knew that you would be face to face with considerable difficulty from such a cause?—Yes, everybody talked about it; for a long time it had been patent.

17335. How many cavalry regiments have you under you at Aldershot at this moment?—Three. The Cavalry Brigade consists of the 18th Hussars, the 13th Hussars, and the provisional regiment of Dragoons.

17336. How are they mounted at the present moment?—They are mounted very badly; they are mounted on cobs practically. I do not complain about that, because it is only incidental to the war, and will be made right.

17337. Has any attempt been made to make it right at present?—An attempt is being made to make it right. A lot of these cobs which were on hand had been sent to the cavalry regiments as horses more with a view to their being taken care of, I think, than anything; there is nobody else to take care of them.

17338. These were cobs not sent out to South Africa which had been bought here?—Yes, they were part of the preparations for carrying on the war, and they were all in the depôts which we had at Aldershot.

17339. And that supply is now being used up?—Yes, but they will be used for mounted infantry as soon as the mounted infantry training commences. We have no mounted infantry barracks yet, and we cannot commence their training until we can put them under canvas.

17340. Then these cobs which you are using now for your three cavalry regiments will be used for the mounted infantry?—They will be used for the mounted infantry, but that is all done from London. I have no power myself over it.

17341. Have you no power at all in that matter?—No, it is all done through the Remount Department.

17342. When your mounted infantry camp is reformed at Aldershot, will it not be in your power to say how many horses you propose to send down, and what force of mounted infantry you propose to train? Is not that within your jurisdiction?—No, it is all laid down.

17343. Do you know whether at the present moment any purchases are being made to replace these cobs you will draft to the mounted infantry?—I do not know. I think some provision is being made. That is entirely a question for the Remount Department. I have nothing to do with it at all. I am only speaking from what I think, and not what I know.

17344. Except that you can complain of the quality of the horses sent you?—Yes, and I am complaining.

17345. What regiment was it that came up here for the 17th?—For the opening of Parliament, do you mean?

17346. Yes?—We did not send any. It was the Provisional Regiment of Hussars from Hounslow, I believe.

17347. They were very indifferently mounted?—The same probably applies to them.

17348. (*Chairman.*) The Veterinary Report which you have put in gives really an illustration of the whole question?—Yes, I think it does.

17349. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount-Royal.*) Do you know of any reason why the bully beef was put up in 7-lb. tins—was there any particular reason for it?—I have no idea, but it is the most inconvenient arrangement that could possibly be made. It is a fatal arrangement for cavalry.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French
K.C.B.
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

17350. It was not because there are seven days in the week, and it was a supply for the seven days for one man?—I have not the least idea. I never understood why it was. I only know that the result was very bad.

(Chairman.) We have had a good deal of evidence about that from the Supply Department, and we were told that the fact was that they exhausted the trade supply of 2-lb. tins, and had to fall back on 7-lb. tins.

17351. (Viscount Esher.) The trade supply is very small, and unless you pay extra the trade will not supply 2-lb. tins; they make 7-lb. tins, which are easily sold, and the result was that the 2-lb. tins ran out?—I see.

(Viscount Esher.) If the War Office would have insisted upon a large supply being kept in 2-lb. tins, and had been willing to pay for it, they could have obtained them. But they would not.

17352-3. (Chairman.) The only other point that I wish to ask one question about is respecting the Engineers—that is, the mounted Engineers. Have you mounted Engineers at present?—Yes; but very few. Not nearly enough; those that exist are normally attached to the 1st Cavalry Brigade.

17354. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You have the pontoon train?—Yes. we have a Bridging Battalion at Aldershot.

17355. (Chairman.) They are not attached to the brigade in peace time?—No. They are included in the "Corps Troops."

17356. Ought they to be so?—I think the field troop which is attached to the Cavalry Brigade should be augmented, and have a large proportion of pontoons in its composition.

17357. It ought to be a regular part of the brigade?—Yes, I think so, certainly.

17358. And more of them?—Yes, more of them.

17359. Especially with a view to operations in a country more like Europe?—I think so, certainly. Bridges have to be thrown and demolitions and all sorts of things undertaken.

17360. Were you delayed at all in South Africa by the want of them?—I think I was found fairly well with them, because I used to improvise people myself. I had a very good mounted Engineer officer with me, Colonel Hunter Weston, the man who blew up the railway in the north of Bloemfontein; he was very clever, and he certainly never left me in want of anything.

17361. That you owe to his energy?—Yes, I think so to a great extent.

17362. More than to the provision made for you?—Yes, I think so.

17363. At the end of your statement you have put the heading of "Efficiency of the Organisation of the Army." What we meant, I think, was very much what you have been dealing with, pointing out anything in which the efficiency was not good and the organisation failed. Have you dealt with all the points of that description which came to your notice during the war?—I think so. I think I have dealt with nearly everything without going into very big questions indeed.

17364. It was not pointing so much to reorganisation as to defects in the organisation which existed?—Yes.

17365. And those you have dealt with?—I think I have dealt with most of them.

17366. (Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.) Have you made any estimate of the number of Boers opposed to you at Ladysmith in the earlier part of the operations?—At Elands-laagte I should think there must have been some 2,500 opposed to us, not perhaps quite that—perhaps that is rather over it; there may not have been more than 2,000, but they were gradually increasing. I should think, taking the west and the north and the east of Ladysmith, when I left, there must have been 12,000 to 15,000.

17367. They had a great advantage over the garrison from their greater mobility, had they not?—Exactly; but, as I said before, I think that they might have been pushed back more easily than they were.

17368. So that, in short, they were able to be before Ladysmith and again at the Tugela within two or three hours—that is the mounted men; was it not so?—Yes, the mounted men could; the Tugela was only 15 miles from Ladysmith.

17369. Giving them a very great advantage?—That gave them a great advantage, of course.

17370. You never could be sure of the number that you would have opposed to you there?—No.

17371. (Sir John Hopkins.) Have you touched on the Horse Artillery guns?—Yes.

17372. They were of little value?—Yes.

17373. That we have had evidence of?—Yes.

17374. And, of course, you have an idea in your own mind of what you look upon as a good artillery gun?—Yes, I have.

17375. A Horse Artillery gun?—The Horse Artillery gun is rather a thing I am in doubt about. I cannot say I have a good idea whether it is any good taking guns with cavalry at all—whether I would not take pom-poms or machine guns. I am not quite sure about that.

17376. I do not think you have touched upon the value of the lance as a weapon for cavalry anywhere?—No, I have not.

17377. There have been several opinions before the Commission in connection with that. Do you like the lance yourself?—Yes, I would have a certain number of Lancers. I would keep, for instance, the number of regiments of Lancers that there are now, and I would take away the lance from all the others. I would not have the Dragoons armed with the lance.

17378. As a cavalry officer you probably might not enter into the feelings of the colonels of the infantry regiments as to their best men being taken for the mounted corps?—I enter very much into their feelings. I think it is a thing that ought to be considered very carefully. I was a great deal in command of mixed forces in South Africa, and a continual complaint made by colonels of infantry regiments was that their officers were away with mounted infantry and so on. I remember a commanding officer complaining most bitterly to me that he had to do actual subaltern's work, because he had so few officers with him.

17379. (Sir John Edge.) You said with regard to medical services that the medical services were always sufficient, but that some of the Colonial ambulance corps seemed to be equipped more suitably for operating with mounted troops than those sent from England. Which Colonial corps does that refer to?—The Australian. I remember riding in an ambulance on purpose just to try it for half an hour, and I found that they went better over the ground and appeared to be much lighter; it was the ambulance that was brought out under the supervision of an officer whose name I forget—he was an Australian, a very good man.

17380. Was it with any particular Australian Corps? I only wanted to identify it?—I can identify it for you and let you know; I cannot at this moment.

17381. If you would let the Commission know we should like to know it. Did you find that that ambulance stood the rough work well?—I thought so. These particular ambulances that I am talking about were much more calculated to do the rough work of mounted troops than our own.

17382. Then is that the form of ambulance that you would recommend for the British Mounted Service?—I would recommend those advantages to be adopted, but whether it was the actual form I would recommend I am not sufficiently versed in ambulances to say, but I think it had advantages over ours.

17383. Have you been asked to make any report on that subject?—No, I have not. I was very much struck by this ambulance, and rode in it myself, and lay down in it, and tested it also on the march, and I was very much struck with how much easier it rode than the other one.

17384. (Viscount Esher.) Were your signallers who were with you mounted?—I had signallers with me.

17385. Were they always mounted?—Always mounted.

17386. We have had a suggestion made to us by one General Officer Commanding a Division that it would have been a great advantage to him to have had his signallers mounted, so that I suppose it was not usual in all cases?—No, I do not think it was.

17387. But I suppose it would be a great advantage to an officer commanding a Division, or even a brigade, to have his signallers mounted?—My own opinion is that signallers ought always to be mounted.

17388. But no actual steps have been taken, have

they, to institute mounted signallers?—Not so far as I know.

17389. Is that a point on which you would have complete discretion in your Army Corps?—No, that is a great question of principle.

17390. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) That involves money?—That involves money.

17391. (*Viscount Esher*.) You said you think on the whole that cavalry officers are good horsemasters?—I think they are very good.

17392. Do the young officers have any special training in veterinary work?—Yes, they go through a veterinary course; every young cavalry officer is supposed to go through a veterinary course, and does.

17393. And farriery—do they understand that?—Farriery is included; it is part of the course.

17394. But practically do young cavalry officers know how to shoe a horse?—Yes, I think they do. In every regiment, I believe, it is a matter that is looked to very carefully. In my regiment I know young officers had to go to the forge and do it themselves, and they were passed in it by the veterinary surgeon.

17395. That is not usual, though?—I think it is usual. It is certainly laid down in the regulations that the Commanding Officer should take steps to see that it is done.

17396. Then with regard to mounted infantry, you have not issued any new regulations, have you, for the mounted infantry at Aldershot?—No.

17397. Then the Mounted Infantry Camp is not actually formed, is it?—It will not be formed until about the end of April or the beginning of May, because of the necessity of putting men under canvas.

17398. Are you contemplating any changes with regard to their training?—No, I think they have been trained very well, as well as they can be, up to now, under the supervision of some very good officers—Colonel Alderson and General Hutton—and I do not think their training can be improved upon at all.

17399. So long, I suppose, as there is no change in the actual organisation of the mounted infantry?—Exactly.

17400. And that is not a question with which you want to deal specially?—No, I should not like to deal specially with that unless the whole question came up, and one had an opportunity of really thinking it out. I have my own ideas on the subject.

17401. You know, of course, that one of the principal advantages claimed for this Army Corps organisation is decentralisation?—Yes.

17402. How far do you consider that that is carried in the case of the First Army Corps?—I do not think it is carried far enough. The General Officer Commanding has not a sufficiently free hand as regards finance, for instance, and questions of that kind.

17403. Is there anything you would like to say especially with regard to that?—The powers of the General Officer Commanding to deal with questions involving expenditure are very restricted.

17404. By whom?—By the War Office. For instance, it is laid down, "Except in cases of theft or fraud the General Officer may authorise the writing off of losses, deficiencies, or over-issues of cash not exceeding five pounds, providing recovery presents special difficulty or would cause considerable hardship, or over-issue made through excusable misunderstanding of regulations." I think it absurd to limit the sum to £5.

17405. You think it is too small?—Very much too small; it used to be £1—it has now only lately been increased to £5.

17406. You think a great deal of discretion might be given?—A great deal of discretion might be given, and a great deal of correspondence saved.

17407. Is it mainly in financial questions that you think you are not sufficiently decentralised at present?—There are other questions besides finance in which the General's powers are restricted. He might have more power as regards discipline, for instance.

17408. Can you give an example of that?—It is difficult to give an actual example. My point is, that the General Officer Commanding an Army Corps should be entrusted with full powers to decide finally all questions—whether disciplinary or financial—which arise in his command. Take the case of an officer's conduct being called in question. Such cases have

often to be referred to the Adjutant-General. If they were dealt with by the General Officer Commanding without reference to him, and it afterwards came to the knowledge of the War Office (as it always does through the papers), the General would be asked why he had not referred it; whereas I think a General should be encouraged to give a decision, which should be considered as final.

17409. But taking all the purely military questions as regards the training of troops, the moving of troops, within your own Army Corps district, and points of that kind, have you there an absolutely free hand?—I have not.

17410. Would it be competent to you to move a battalion from one barrack to another without reference to any Department?—Theoretically I have the power, but sometimes when battalions join the command, they have been directed from the War Office to join certain specified barracks. The allocation of ten groups in the command should rest entirely in the hands of the General Officer Commanding. Decentralisation is also not complete as regards grants for military training. May I read this paragraph about special grants for military training, manœuvres, etc.?

17411. If you please?—"The expenditure of above is so far in the hands of the General Officer Commanding that he may allocate the fund in any way he likes, but it is specifically provided that no portion of such sum can be expended in any way not provided for by regulation." When the General Officer Commanding under this paragraph allocated a sum to cyclists during cyclist manœuvres for purposes he considered necessary in connection with the manœuvres, the grant was queried by the War Office as being unprovided for in regulations. The query was subsequently withdrawn on representations being made. That is an example of what I consider to be useless interference.

17412. That again is on the financial question?—Yes, it is; it was simply an example rather bringing out what you meant, perhaps. Manœuvres, of course, do depend upon finance, and whether you are able to do something or not able to do it, and if it is not covered by regulation, and you cannot produce chapter and verse for doing it, you would not be allowed to do it.

17413. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Are staff rides dependent on finance at all?—Yes.

17414. So that even in those you have not a free hand?—Yes, I have; they are provided for by regulation.

17415. So that you could extend those to any extent you please?—I could not extend them to any extent I please. I am limited by the sum placed at my disposal for the purpose.

17416. (*Viscount Esher*.) Would you then be checked or restrained to a certain extent by the amount you have to spend on staff rides?—Yes, I would.

17417. Have you a special sum allocated to you?—Yes.

17418. And within the expenditure of that sum have you complete discretion?—No. As I stated in the case of the cyclists, if I spend any sum in a manner which is not exactly covered by some specific regulation, the sum spent will be queried, although it is spent entirely in connection with the operations in question.

17419. You have a financial officer at Aldershot?—Yes, an Auditor.

17420. Is he only an Auditor?—He is only an Auditor.

17421. Do you refer questions to him beforehand as to whether you can or cannot spend money?—Yes, continually.

17422. Does he report independently of you to the War Department?—He can if he likes, but he is obliged to furnish me with a copy of what he says.

17423. He corresponds direct with the Financial Secretary then, does he?—No, with the Accountant-General.

17424. But he has to submit to you a copy of what he sends?—He has to submit to me a copy of what he sends.

17425. Do you consider that he is under your command?—No. He is the representative of the War Office authorities in the command.

17426. Has he a large staff attached to him?—He has one principal assistant and 14 or 15 junior clerks under

Lieut.-General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.,
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
J. D. French,
K.C.B.
K.C.M.G.

27 Feb. 1903.

him. I can read you the original Order when he was appointed a year and a half ago.

17427. If you please?—“(1) The Army Corps Auditor will be the representative of headquarters in the command. He will carry out locally the audit of all the accounts of the Army Corps, and will record the expenditure in the command. (2) The Auditor, as the representative of the Accountant-General, is empowered to inspect the accounts of any paymaster, accountant, or sub-accountant in the command, and any records on which money claims are based. Whenever as the result of such inspection an official report is made by the Auditor to the Accountant-General, a copy will be furnished to the General Officer Commanding. (3) All claims, even if exceeding £100 in amount, will, except as provided in paragraph 5, be examined and paid by the District Paymaster,” and so on. “(4) All cash accounts referring to the financial year 1902-3 and all supply and store accounts rendered to the War Office after the 1st of April, 1902, will be rendered to the Army Corps Auditor for local audit. (5) Until further orders no change will be made in the present practice as regards the payment of claims for Engineer services; those under £100 being paid locally and those of £100 and upwards being paid at the War Office, or as regards the rendering and audit of accounts for such services, except that the Engineers’ stores accounts and rent accounts will be rendered to the local Auditor and audited locally.” That is the original Order.

17428. You see there he is spoken of as the representative of the Accountant-General?—He is the representative of the Accountant-General. He is not practically under my command at all.

17429. But he does not merely fulfil the duties of an auditor, because you would probably send for him, would you not, if you had any doubt beforehand as to whether you were, or were not, justified in certain expenditure?—Certainly at once.

17430. Do you remember what the sum is that is allocated to you to spend in your command?—This year £60,000, of which sum £40,000—I am not quite certain whether I am right in the sum—two-thirds of it at least has to be kept for big manœuvres, which are to be held for a few days in September under the superintendence of the Commander-in-Chief.

17431. Taking that two-thirds, would you have a discretion as to how you would expend it?—It is to be kept entirely for manœuvres. I should have no discretion at all. I should have to use it as I was ordered to use it. Manœuvres would be under the superintendence of the Commander-in-Chief.

(After a short adjournment.)

Major-General Sir BRUCE M. HAMILTON, K.C.B., called and examined.

Major-
General Sir
Bruce M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B.

17448. (Chairman.) I am not quite sure at what point you went out to South Africa?—I went out on General Clery’s staff as Assistant Adjutant-General.

17449. To Natal?—Yes.

17450. Were you present throughout the operations in Natal?—Until a month after the relief of Ladysmith.

17451. And then you went round?—I joined Lord Roberts at Bloemfontein and got the command of a brigade.

17452. And after that you commanded a brigade?—I commanded a brigade to the end of that year, and then I got the command of some mounted columns, and I had various commands then until the end of the war.

17453. You have been good enough to prepare some notes on the memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575 post*) which we submitted to you. The first head was with regard to the adequacy of the forces?—Speaking generally, the forces were adequate in strength to the work they had to do. As regards the commencement of the war, this refers only to the troops in the field about the time of Colenso, and after that date. At this period of the war the want of mounted men was greatly felt. Infantry were not sufficiently mobile to take advantage of their numbers against the mounted Boers. Had there been a force of 6,000 mounted men capable of moving for

17432. And you could not draw upon that two-thirds in any case for any other purpose?—No.

17433. With regard to the other one-third, how far does your discretion go there?—I must be covered by the regulation in what I do.

17434. Is that one-third ear-marked at all?—Yes.

17435. It is all divided up into a sort of subheads, so much for this, that, and the other?—Yes.

17436. Would you have the power of transferring a sum from one object to another without reference?—I may allocate the sum amongst the subheads, but I must not go outside them.

17437. Then you do not consider that at present the decentralisation which we have heard so much about is as complete as it might be?—I do not think it is.

17438. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) May I ask if you had any opportunity of forming an opinion of the medical service and ambulance corps of the Canadian contingents?—No, I had not.

17439. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You mention manœuvres. I should like to ask whether you consider that you have sufficient manœuvring ground, and suitable manœuvring ground in your command?—No.

17440. Is it possible in this country, in England, to find suitable ground?—I think it might be by extending the Manœuvres Act, but it is very difficult.

17441. And as regards Ireland?—It would probably be easier to find suitable ground in Ireland.

17442. Do you know the West of Ireland well?—Fairly well. I have hunted there a great deal some years ago.

17443. Might it not be possible to find suitable manœuvring ground in the west of Ireland?—I think it might be very possible; it is all a question of money.

17444. It would be much more easy to find manœuvring ground there than it would be in England?—I should think it would.

17445. The compensation claims, too, would be much smaller than on this side?—Yes, I suppose so.

17446. I was asking with reference to further manœuvres by other Army Corps?—Yes, I should think perhaps it would be easier and less expensive to find ground in Ireland than in England.

17447. (Chairman.) Is there anything else that you wish to add to your evidence?—No, thank you.

three or four days without baggage the operations would have been very different. In the latter stages of the war the numbers were sufficient, but increased numbers would have produced quicker results.

17454. You mean that to Sir Redvers Buller’s force a mounted force of 6,000 men would have made a great difference?—Oh, yes, because it could have gone round independently.

17455. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Gone round where?—Potgieter’s Drift, for instance. They could have gone on one night and occupied the ground on the far side of it, and I think 6,000 men would have been sufficient to hold their own. The infantry could have been there the same day. They would only have had to hold it for a few hours, and even if there had been 10,000 Boers against them I think they would have done very well.

17456. (Chairman.) But without the mounted men the Boers were too mobile?—The Boers could always see us coming; they always knew our movements, and could be there before us.

17457. Is the movement you refer to the same sort of movement as that of Dundonald round by Acton Homes?—Yes, but I think it might have been much wider if we had been stronger, and we could have taken greater risks.

17458. In the later stages of the war the deficiency of mounted men was less marked?—Of course, we had nothing but mounted men at the end of the war; the

Major-General Sir
Bruce M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B.

27 Feb. 1903.

infantry were only used for the lines of communications, and the protection of baggage. We fought then entirely on the lines of the Boers, but it does not do to assume that every war would be the same as this. Still, I think that any side which has a large number of mounted men would have a very great advantage, and I have no doubt from our experience in the Transvaal that we have the means of forming a large force of mounted men that no other country has.

17459. As to the mounted men in your column, they were principally Irregulars, I suppose?—Regulars and Irregulars. I had lots of cavalry and Yeomanry, and Colonials—Cape Colonials and Australians.

17460. (*Viscount Esher.*) When you speak of that force of 6,000 mounted men, which you would have been glad to see in the earlier stages of the war, are you speaking of an infantry soldier on horseback, or are you speaking of cavalry?—For the Boer war I think the infantry soldier would have been equally good; in the Boer war we practically used them all for the same work, and there was no difference.

17461. I am speaking of that 6,000 men you say you would have liked to have had in the early stages of the war; would you have preferred an infantry soldier on horseback, that is to say, a mounted infantry man, or would you have been satisfied with cavalry for that particular purpose?—I would have preferred mounted infantry, because I think they would have been steadier; it would have been holding a position against attack when they got there.

17462. (*Chairman.*) The second point is as to the quality of the men?—The shooting of the Regulars was good, although inferior to that of the Boers, and capable of great improvement. Some Colonials shot well and some indifferently. The second lot of Yeomanry knew nothing at all; they did not know how to handle a rifle at the commencement. The marching capacity was good. The infantry always did what was required, and I believe could have done longer distances. It was very often a question of boots. On our way up to Pretoria there was great difficulty very often in getting enough boots, and we often had to leave men behind because they had worn through them. The Brigadiers had to arrange, and I had to arrange myself, for the supply of boots very often, to send an officer off to bring them back, and the brigade which happened to get the most boots could go on marching the furthest, but the marching was very good, I think, all through. It does not compare as regards distance with the marching of Continental armies, and the Continental Powers seem to be able to get their men to march longer distances, but I think our men are really just as good. I do not know how the authorities of the Continental armies manage it; perhaps they train them up just for their manoeuvres, and do tremendous distances for a short time, and I think they push them more. I think if we marched our men so far as the Continental countries do at manoeuvres it would affect recruiting.

17463. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you think our men are as well shod as the Germans?—That I do not know.

17464. Have you ever seen the shape of the German shoes?—They seem to wear a kind of Wellington boot.

17465. I refer to the shape of the feet?—Yes, I dare say that has a great deal to do with it. I have been quite surprised at foreign manoeuvres to hear the distances they have gone, but still I think our marching in South Africa was very good.

17466. (*Chairman.*) Is it not one thing to march at manoeuvres and another to march throughout a campaign?—Quite a different thing. Then, as regards the horsemanship, the horsemanship of regular cavalry was good, also of some Colonials. The others soon could ride well enough. The mounted infantry were often quite unused to riding, but after a period of two or three weeks became fairly efficient for the purpose required. They should be able to mount and dismount quickly, and ride at a fair pace over rough ground. They should also have some training in the care of horses, in the treatment of sore backs, and in fitting saddles.

17467. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is not that a very important point for a mounted infantryman?—I think so—a slight knowledge. When we took numbers of men straight from the regiments, who did not know anything about it at all, they were quite indifferent. They did not under-

stand that they might lay their horses up for three weeks if they were not careful about putting the saddle on, and I think it very important, but sufficient instruction is not very easily given.

17468. But it is important that a mounted infantryman should be trained not only in horsemanship, but in horsemastership?—Yes. Horsemastership is very much a question of discipline. The artillery and cavalry were much better horsemasters than the auxiliary troops. The artillery system is excellent. As to cover, the men had not been taught sufficiently the value of cover, but they soon learnt it during the early part of the war. Regiments which had been on the Tugela would at once entrench themselves on getting into camp, and the men worked voluntarily when they realised the security it gave them. All entrenchments should be such that a man is comfortable in them, and has protection from bullets, and can fire without exposing his head. Entrenchments of outposts should be a matter of drill, and never omitted when the ground is available. The general physique and morale of the men was excellent, and their fighting capacity could not be excelled, but their intelligence was not equal to that of the enemy, nor to that of many of our irregulars. Even at the end of the war the men were not at all observant, and the private soldier was easily caught in a trap by the Boers even quite at the end of the war.

17469. (*Chairman.*) We have had some evidence that they improved in intelligence very much during the war; is that not your experience?—They did get sharper, but I think their intelligence was always inferior. They were not anything like so well educated, and they were not anything like so good as regards intelligence as the Boers, or as some of the Colonial troops.

17470. For instance, it was put to us that the force which marched into Ladysmith at the time of the relief was as good a fighting instrument as you could get—that, taking it all round, as a fighting machine your force which went into Ladysmith after all the battles on the Tugela, had developed into as good a fighting machine as you could wish to see?—I think it was a very good fighting machine, certainly.

17471. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is not that rather for dogged fighting than for the sort of work you were doing with your columns at the end of the war?—Yes. I think at the beginning of the war it was necessary to start according to our pre-conceived ideas of Continental warfare. We could not be expected to start straight off according to the system of the Boers.

17472. But for the sort of work you were doing at the end with your columns, did you not require a higher degree of intelligence than was required for the style of fighting on the Tugela?—Certainly more individual intelligence. I think for the style of fighting at the beginning of the war a more carefully worked out system and officers who understood the system thoroughly was wanted.

17473. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) At the end of the war you were carrying on a guerilla war as the Boers were?—Yes, and everything depended on the individual much more, and the individual commander more, and it did not depend so much on the system—it was not so much the work of a machine. The most important point as regards the training of the men is to improve their shooting, and greater facilities for voluntary practice should be given than exist at present. When ranges are near the barracks the shooting of a regiment improves. The difficulty in obtaining the use of a which is not compulsory. Sites for long ranges are hard range, the distance to go, the expense of getting there, and of buying ammunition, prevent almost all practice to find, but short ranges could be made in most places. This should be done near all barracks, and ammunition issued at a nominal charge. Good shots at short ranges would soon shoot well at long, and the shooting in the Army would rapidly improve.

17474. 500 yards—300 yards?—I think 300 is quite enough.

17475. You think that if a man can shoot well at 300 yards he picks up the other easily?—I think if a man is a good shot at 300 yards he would very soon shoot very well at any other range.

17476. That would solve the range difficulty in England?—Yes. I went down the other day to a depot and found the sergeants going down to a shooting match. It took the whole day to get there and back, and they said, "We would go every day if it did not cost so much." They had to have a drag to take them

Major
General Sir
Bruce M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B.

27 Feb. 1903.

there, and that is always the case. I think a great many officers will agree with me upon that point as to short ranges close to the barracks. Of course it is expensive, but I think it is worth an Army Corps.

17477. (*Chairman.*) How did our shooting compare with the Boers?—The Boers were much better shots I think. I think they were more ready, and more accustomed to field work. Some of our men shot very well.

17478. Was it not the same case with the Boers—that some of them shot very well?—Yes, they did vary, but, as a lot, they were much better than ours. If we got a small commando we found that a larger proportion—it is very hard to tell exactly, but I think a much larger proportion—of them would shoot well than of our men, because a far larger proportion were more accustomed to outdoor work and life on the veldt.

17479. There is a certain amount of difference of opinion apparently upon that point from the evidence we have received?—I think British officers are very anxious to stick up for the shooting of their men, but there is no doubt at all that our shooting could be very much improved if the men had plenty of practice.

17480. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was it not very difficult really to judge of the shooting of our men?—Yes, it was.

17481. Because you so seldom saw a mark?—Yes, it is hard to give a very decided opinion.

17482. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) A belief was stated here by one of the witnesses that the Boers for the most part held their rifles up over the trenches so as to keep their heads covered, and fired; do you agree with that?—No; I certainly do not. They were very good at making themselves safe.

17483. Of course this witness stated there were some marksmen among the Boers who were excellent; he was speaking of the majority when he stated that belief?—Well, there are many officers who may have had more opportunities of seeing. I will not say it is impossible that in some commandoes they did that, but I think, taken generally, the Boers were very good shots. I do not think they were so plucky individually as our men, and if they were at all near our fire, and it was pretty warm for them, I can quite imagine their doing that, although they were good shots, but if they were in a safe place, as they very often put themselves into (they generally put themselves on the top of a hill, and if they saw numbers coming, went off pretty quickly), then I am sure they shot excellently. Another point in regard to the training of the men is that the strength of the company should be increased. Companies of infantry are now so weak that officers lose interest in the training of so few men. They see hardly any men on parade, and the captain of a company, who has served 15 or 16 years, becomes disappointed. My experience is that if officers and non-commissioned officers are well trained, a comparatively simple course is sufficient for the men. In May, 1901, I had nearly 3,000 of the new Yeomanry to organise and train.

17484. (*Chairman.*) That is the Second Contingent?—The Second Contingent. In some regiments I was able to pick out the officers and non-commissioned officers that happened to be immediately under my own control, and when I was able to do that all those regiments rapidly became efficient; other regiments remained almost useless up to the end of the war, because they had not good non-commissioned officers and officers. I believe that good schools of instruction are very useful for the education of non-commissioned officers, but they should be very carefully organised and managed by specially selected officers. The Swiss schools are excellent, and their course of instruction well thought out. The course of instruction in ours is not, I think, so good. As regards the training and selection of officers, the most difficult question is the selection and advancement of the most efficient officers. Young officers should be able to see on entering the Service that if they make themselves efficient their prospects will be improved. At present there are few inducements to work, and a young officer, if he fulfils the requirements of his commanding officer, is promoted by seniority without regard to his efficiency or the reverse. Field sports should be encouraged, and young officers induced to improve themselves voluntarily rather than by forced work. Promotion should be by selection.

17485. Even in the junior ranks?—Yes, I think it ought to be by selection in the junior ranks; but, of course, you cannot be quite so certain while a man is a

junior, and you could not select so deeply among the subalterns.

17486. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Who would select?—I think the Commanding Officer and the local General. I think that the promotion up to the rank of major ought to be in the hands of the General under whom an officer serves. The Commanding Officer's recommendation of a subaltern, be the Commanding Officer good or bad, will be to the best of his ability; if the Commanding Officer is asked to give his best officer he will conscientiously try to give him, and he will very often, if he is not a very good judge himself, be influenced by the opinion of the regiment, and the officer chosen will be the officer who is recognised as the best.

17487. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you not think some consideration ought to be given to the amount of effort which a young officer makes?—I was coming to that; I think that a system might be introduced of giving rewards of two years' substantive seniority on certain lines: as a reward for active service, to Adjutants who have done well, to officers who distinguish themselves at the Staff College or elsewhere, to subalterns who have taken honours in a professional examination after two or three years' service somewhat similar to the Navy.

17488. You could do that under the present system without actually having an examination by taking into consideration how a young officer does in the military courses through which he passes. If a young officer goes in for a course of musketry, we will say, if he does exceptionally well, he is classed when he comes out, is he not?—Yes.

17489. If you were to take into consideration the way he performs when going through these various courses it would obviate the necessity of having a special examination?—Yes, if the way he passes through his examinations for promotion in theoretical subjects is taken into consideration.

17490. But the examination for promotion is rather a farce now?—I mean if the examination was made a second test.

17491. The point I put to you is that in order to obviate any special kind of examination, could you not, under the present system, even promote the best subaltern by taking into consideration how he does in the courses through which he actually passes—musketry and engineering, and so on, which are voluntary courses now with the exception of musketry?—I think so, but I think the examinations ought to be such that they would be a good test.

17492. You would prefer a more stringent examination for promotion?—Yes, for the young officer; I think it is a great thing to make them work. You want men who are capable of work. One does not believe in examinations entirely, but it is a great deal to get people who have the power to work and who will exert themselves.

17493. Do you not think when it comes to examinations there is always a risk of cram?—Yes, there is, certainly: I agree about that.

17494. And in that way you may not always get the most highly qualified officer; some men, as you know, have a much greater capacity for cramming than others?—In the Navy you find men who take honours at Greenwich—I am not quite sure about this, but they take three or four firsts.

17495. They go to Greenwich to a regular Naval School, and that is rather different?—Also at the gunnery Island at Portsmouth; if they take a first at gunnery it helps their promotion.

17496. You are quite right, only it is rather different from anything in the Army; would you suggest that young subalterns should be sent to a military school at a certain stage in the same way that these young Naval officers go to Greenwich?—What I should like is a good professional examination, theoretical and practical. I do not think the present system of courses provides sufficient test, nor are they in the subjects which it is most important for an officer to study.

17497. Do you not think there would be some advantage in making all these courses compulsory instead of voluntary? Take the signalling course; no young officer is now bound to go through the signalling course, and it is voluntary; do you think that that voluntary system is advantageous, or would you make all these

courses compulsory for young officers?—I would not make them all compulsory.

17498. (*Sir John Edge.*) Would signalling be a course which would be necessary for every officer in the Service?—Signalling was very useful in South Africa, but I do not think it is necessary for every officer.

17499. I suppose if you were a little stringent in the field examination you would get a very good estimate and be able to judge whether the man who had passed the book examination had crammed or not?—I am rather in favour of a theoretical examination for youngsters.

17500. You mean a purely theoretical examination on paper?—In addition to the field examination.

17501. I am not disputing that at all; I say the field examination would enable you to form a judgment as to whether the man had scored high by cramming or not?—Yes, I think it would.

17502. You could always test it?—Yes, and even allowing for cram, I think, a good examination does find out intelligent men. Examination honours is only one of several ways I have suggested by which young officers could gain advancement.

17503. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Apart from the courses, are you in favour of leaving a great deal to the selection of the Colonel?—Among the subalterns, yes.

17504. Would you insist on the Colonel being a celibate?—No.

17505. How are you to avoid favouritism?—There might occasionally be a little favouritism, but the general result would be satisfactory.

17506. Cæsar's wife is not always above suspicion?—Still, it is wonderful how conscientious men are when they are selecting in the regiment.

17507-8. (*Viscount Esher.*) There is always the public opinion of the regiment?—Yes, I think that would keep it in check.

17509. (*Sir John Edge.*) You think you could trust the Colonel so far as the promotion of the good of the regiment was concerned?—Yes.

17510. But would you be quite so certain if the Colonel was applied to for a man for another service, say for an Adjutancy of Volunteers, for instance, that he would send you the best man?—I think if the Colonel was asked for his best man in such a way that it would be to the officer's interest to be selected, he would always try to select his best man.

17511. You mean that you think you could always trust the Colonel to select the best man and send him out of the regiment for five years as Adjutant of a corps of Volunteers?—I think that the nomination of the Colonel, under the supervision of the General, is the best thing that can be done.

17512. (*Viscount Esher.*) Anyhow, you think that there is not a sufficient incentive now for a young officer to take a great deal of trouble in his profession—is that your point?—That is so.

17513. There is not enough incentive, and some incentive should be invented or created—that is your point?—Yes; of a definite reward as regards his prospects.

17514. (*Chairman.*) Did you find any difficulty in the war in consequence?—It was always very hard to find out which were our good officers; they did not know exactly, and I think we had not been trying always to find out. I think if we were to substitute this system of giving two years substantive seniority for the reward by brevet, by the time an officer became a Major he might possibly have received three of these rewards, and a large number of Majors might have got one of them, thus making a better class to select from than exists at present. This would also enable efficient officers to come to the front, even if they had not had the chance of going on active service. Until the South African war the choice of Generals was limited to those who had been lucky enough as youngsters to go to some small war—because the only promotion that could be obtained at all was by getting a brevet for active service, and it could not be got for anything else but active service. The present system of reward by brevet produces false situations, and is very irregular in its effect, giving some men eight years advantage and others none at all. Many good officers now leave the Army because they have no prospects, who would remain if they saw a chance of advancing themselves by proved efficiency. The quality of our officers was excellent, but owing to defects in our system of selection and training

the best regimental officers were not at the top at the commencement of the war, and the want of leaders ready to take responsibility and risk was often felt.

17515. (*Viscount Esher.*) What was the cause of that?—I think we had not a sufficiently high standard for regimental commanding officers.

17516. We heard there was great difficulty in finding column commanders towards the end of the war who were efficient?—There was a difficulty, but there was a very large number of columns. I should think there were nearly as many small column commanders at the end of the war as there were regimental commanding officers at the commencement. These small column commanders were up to a very good standard, and this shows that the men were there.

17517. When you say those officers were disinclined to take risks, was that from inefficiency in some cases, or were there any other causes at work?—I think it was principally from inefficiency.

17518. Do you think the fear of being dealt with rather summarily and drastically in case of failure had any effect in weakening the initiative of commanders of columns?—I would not say that. I think that the men that had initiative would take the chances, provided they felt they would be reasonably supported.

17519. Did you hear of any cases where officers who had done well up to a certain point in the war rather shrank from responsibility towards the end?—I cannot remember; no doubt there were men who did not do so well after a long time, and I suppose the continued strain had some effect upon them, but I cannot think of cases which meet exactly your question.

17520. However, I suppose it was generally understood, was it not, as the war came to a conclusion, that if a mishap occurred to an officer in command of a column he would be superseded?—It was not invariably the case.

17521. I know it was not invariably the case, but was not that rather the feeling among officers in command of columns?—Yes, I daresay it was, or rather I would say they felt they would be superseded if not considered efficient. This was the usual reason why men were superseded—not for mishaps. I refer to the latter part of the war.

17522. Do you not think that would be rather inclined to make a man shrink from taking a big risk?—I think he ought to feel that he would not be superseded unless it was considered he was to blame, because you may have a mishap which is not your fault.

17523. Do you think that was the feeling?—I do not think that fear had a very great effect as far as my judgment goes. It is very hard to tell. I think that an efficient man would have proved himself an efficient man in spite of the fear of being superseded in case things went wrong.

17524. (*Sir John Edge.*) He would take the risk?—I think so.

17525. He would do his duty and take the risk?—I think so. It certainly does make a difference to an officer whether he is trusted or not; I quite agree about that. If a man feels there is a doubt about him that might cramp him. No doubt subordinates should be made to feel they will be fairly treated, and their difficulties considered.

17526. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did you have to work much in conjunction with other columns?—Not much. I think I know the point you were going to put, and I think that columns working in the same district should be placed under command of the senior officer, and not merely told to co-operate.

17527. (*Chairman.*) What is your next point?—With regard to the present system of training officers in the various arms, that of the artillery appeared to me excellent. The junior officers rarely, if ever, left their own particular sub-division of their unit, and were absolutely responsible for it both in the field and in camp, whereas subalterns in the cavalry and infantry are always liable to be removed to another squadron or company, on account of the seniority in their regiment. The squadron organisation is good, but should be more self-contained. The infantry subaltern has never had a command of his own within his company; he is merely the Captain's assistant, and has no responsibility such as the subaltern officer of artillery. He is constantly away from his own company temporarily commanding another, and therefore lacks the training which a definite command and definite responsibility would give him. If infantry battalions were organised on the same lines as artillery and

Major-General Sir
Bruce M.
Hamilton,
K.C.B.,

17 Feb. 1903.

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27 Feb. 1903.

cavalry, it would be possible to give the senior officers of a battalion a command suited to their standing and service, and would enable the responsibility for the training of the men to be thrown on the company commanders. If battalions were organised in four large companies instead of eight small ones, each company having an establishment of one Major, one Captain, and a subaltern for every 50 men of establishment, then the commander would be absolutely responsible, and each subaltern would have his definite command and responsibility. Officers should never be shifted from one company to another unless under very exceptional circumstances. In the absence of a subaltern the section should be commanded by the senior non-commissioned officer. The senior non-commissioned officer of the company could then be employed as a field instructor, and the pay and clothing duties could be carried out by another non-commissioned officer as company quartermaster-sergeant. If it could be found practicable to make the company and squadron a self-contained administrative unit, as in the case of a battery of artillery, so much the better. As regards the training of staff officers, an organised system of selection and training for staff officers should be introduced. At present a proportion of our staff officers receive a certain amount of staff training at the Staff College, but as soon as they are appointed to the staff their principal work is the routine and discipline of the Army, which has little to do with their work in war. Also a considerable proportion of our staff officers have no technical staff training at all, and officers without and previous staff training whatever have sometimes been put in important staff posts. The result is that a very confused idea prevails as to what is required for staff work and as to its distribution. This was specially noticeable at the beginning of the war. The staff should be divided into two branches: (1) Those who prepare the Army for war; (2) those who carry out interior economy and discipline. This division of work was made on the Headquarter Staff at Pretoria. The former should be carefully trained, and of proved ability, so as to ensure their all being up to a certain standard of intelligence, and also that they are conversant with certain fixed principles as to the maintenance and movements of troops. In peace time the most urgent work is often routine and discipline, and unless the above division is made a busy staff officer is often obliged to neglect the more important work of training the troops for war. I think some of the best Staff College graduates should go as instructors at Sandhurst for a couple of years before appointment to the staff. This would enable them to digest what they had just learnt at the Staff College. Ambitious and rising instructors would foster the proper spirit among the cadets, and have more influence with them than any other class.

17528. Had you any difficulty in getting an efficient staff?—I had a very efficient staff.

17529. You had no difficulty in getting it?—I had no difficulty myself; the selection of the staff lies entirely in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, and I was very fortunate in having a very good staff.

17530. Staff College men?—No, they were not all Staff College men, but I think they would all have been better for being at the Staff College. Of course, the technical training did not come in so much towards the end of the war. It would have been much more important, I think, at the beginning of the war, where we were engaged in divisions in regular organisation. I think manœuvres are very important, and that we should have them every year; they should be a regular part of our training, and the money for them always included in the estimates.

17531. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Have you served in Ireland at all?—Never.

17532. (Chairman.) You next refer to supplies?—The supplies were satisfactory. As to the horses, they never came up to requirements in quantity, and their quality left much to be desired. The great waste in horse flesh was no doubt due to the fact that it was impossible at any time to fully mount up any unit with horses in hard condition, and fit for work. It was constantly necessary to use weak or unfit horses which a long day's work would render useless for many weeks. Every endeavour was made to classify them as (a) horses fit for work, (b) fit for slow work, (c) unfit for work. But the necessity of taking out troops in sufficient numbers interfered with this. The Engineer services were excellent, and they had a very good system of employing natives, mounted on Kaffir ponies, with the field detachments, to do digging and general labouring work. I think it would be a very good thing to

have a large force of mounted infantry, and that we ought to keep up the cadres in peace time of regiments of mounted infantry; that is, the commanding officer, adjutant, and a few staff sergeants, and pass the men through, so that directly we go to war we can at once expand them into so many regiments of mounted infantry. It would be a little more expensive than the present system, but a defect of the mounted infantry in the war was a want of discipline, and that would be obviated a good deal by having the regimental staff ready. Directly the men became mounted infantry they seemed to deteriorate in discipline.

17533. They were away from their own regiment?—Yes, in a regiment of mounted infantry there were four companies, each from a different regiment. Even companies were not always formed from one regiment, and there was no regimental system.

17534. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Are you rather in favour of permanent corps of mounted infantry as opposed to the system of drawing the best men away from the battalion at the critical moment?—I do not think enough men to form permanent corps can be kept up, and I think three months' training is sufficient.

17535. But the disadvantage has been put before us of the regiment, at the critical moment, losing its best men just when they are wanted the most; their best shots, their best officers, and their keenest men. What do you think of that?—It is no doubt a great disadvantage to the regiment, but I think such a much larger number of men can be got by drawing in that way that it is a very great advantage to the Army as a whole.

17536. Practically you would like to see the whole of the infantry trained as mounted infantry in turn?—A large number; I once mounted a whole infantry regiment, and they had only the same proportion of mounted infantry as other regiments at the beginning of the war, but they very soon became quite as good as the other mounted infantry, and much better as regards discipline and interior economy.

17537. (Chairman.) Have you anything to say about the guns?—I had rather a good idea of the field gun; it had not so long a range as the Boer gun, but it did much more damage.

17538. You are speaking of the field gun, not the Horse Artillery?—It is the 15-pounder I am talking of; the Horse Artillery guns were not so long range.

17539. Could you move the 15-pounder quick enough for your purposes as a mounted column?—Yes, I took double teams; I used to leave a lot of things behind and take double teams for the guns, so as to make a long march more easily.

17540. Had you any of the heavier guns with you?—I had a couple of these 12 cwt. 12-pounders, naval guns, and they were not so mobile, and they would stick much oftener, but they got about in a wonderful way.

17541. They would be more suitable to go with infantry?—Yes. They are capital guns, and would not delay infantry.

17542. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) They kept you back to some extent, I suppose?—It was only an improvised carriage, but they were heavier for going about, and they were not so certain to get through. I took the others for choice when I was going on a long march with mounted troops.

17543. In such a case the length of range is not quite such a vital matter as mobility?—No, not quite.

17544. We have had a good deal of evidence that an extreme range was not of very great importance?—During the latter part of the war the Boers had no artillery, and therefore there was no very fair means of judging. If you cannot shoot as far as the enemy the moral effect is bad.

17545. Going back to the earlier part of the war, did you attach as much importance as the newspapers did to the extraordinary range of the Boer guns?—The Boers out-ranged us there is no doubt, but their long range guns that did much damage were heavy guns. Their light guns did little damage; they had a 9-pounder Krupp which threw a shell a long distance, but it hardly ever did any harm.

17546. It was only their guns of position which were very effective?—Their heavy guns were very effective.

17547. As guns of position?—Yes, but they managed to move them about much more than we did.

17548. (Chairman.) Is there any other point you would like to mention?—No other point.

APPENDIX "A."

REPORT ON SUPPLY SERVICES WITH CAVALRY FORCE. (May 6th to May 31st, 1900).

(Handed in by Lieut.-General Sir J. D. French, K.C.B., K.C.M.G. Vide page 301.)

Bloemfontein to Kroonstad.—May 6th to May 12th.

Rations Issued.—The 1st, 3rd, and 4th Brigades left Bloemfontein with four days' supplies at full field service rates. The 1st and 3rd Brigades replenished at Vet River; the 4th Brigade wagons halted to fill up, but as this Brigade pushed through without halting for one day on May 8th, as did the others, its wagons did not come up until May 13th in Kroonstad. The 3rd Brigade accompanied Army Headquarters, and have not been with General French's force since that time. The 4th Brigade took two days' supplies from its wagons at Du Preeze laager on May 10th. During the action that day the whole baggage and supply train fell behind with the Mounted Infantry, and did not overtake the column until 13th May, in Kroonstad. Thus the 4th Brigade was out of rations on May 11th, the 1st on May 12th. A sufficiency of flour was obtained at Rodepoort to feed the men of the 4th Brigade on the 11th, and plenty of oat hay and mealies for the horses of both brigades. On May 12th two days' complete rations for both brigades was purchased in Kroonstad.

Fresh Meat.—There was a large number of sheep and cattle in the country; the whole force has had fresh meat during this and at all periods of the operations.

Receipts.—Receipts were given for all supplies taken from inhabitants. Payment was not made, as in every case the actual owners of the farm were bearing arms against us.

Halt at Kroonstad.—May 12th to 26th.—As experience proved it was impossible for a divisional supply column to overtake Cavalry on the move. The General Officer Commanding issued instructions that the Brigade supply column should be doubled, making 24 wagons in each, and that the force should move with five days' forage and nine days' biscuits and groceries distributed as follows:—Three days' biscuits and groceries and two days' forage on horse, two days' biscuits and groceries and one day's forage in regimental supply wagons, four days' biscuits and groceries and two days' forage in Brigade supply wagons.

Owing to the difficulties of obtaining supplies from the base, the force has never been able to obtain more than half this amount at one time. On Saturday, May 19th, every available wagon with the force was ordered to Holtfontein siding 14 miles south of Kroonstad to fill up, then to come up to Rhenoster Kopje, meeting the column there.

Kroonstad to Johannesburg.—May 20th to 30th.

Two Days' Supplies.—The force marched with two days' rations for man and horse on the saddle. On the 21st the supply column met it at Welgelegen with four days' for man and horse.

Welgelegen: Three-quarter rates.—On the 21st the force was on half rations, which was increased to three-quarter rates for the men on the 22nd, and 10 lbs. for the horses.

This rate has continued up to the present time, and has been in force throughout the Army. From May 28th the ration for horses has been reduced to 5 lbs. per horse; this has been fully supplemented by oat hay and mannah hay obtained from the country.

Mealies.—Mealies could also be issued for English horses, but commanding officers object to feeding their horses on them.

On May 23rd the empty wagons with the force were sent back to Honing Kopje Station with sick.

Rietfontein (three days' supplies).—On May 28th a supply column met the force at Rietfontein with three days' supplies for men and horses for the two Cavalry Brigades and Mounted Infantry. This was issued on the morning of the 29th; during the issue the enemy opened shell fire on the wagons. No damage was done.

General Hamilton's Force.—On the 29th May, the force was joined by General Hamilton's Division; the latter were without rations for the 31st. The General Officer Commanding ordered the supply officers to hand over any supplies they had on hand, surplus to what was required to feed the Cavalry until Friday, June 2nd. Two thousand pounds of flour was all that could be spared. Rodepoort would have provided two days' supplies for the force; the bulk of this was left for General Hamilton, who was notified of the amounts obtainable.

The force has never been without rations during the present operations, and, except in the case of groceries, sufficient has been obtained from the country to supplement the reduced rates.

NOTES.

Wagons cannot overtake column.—Owing to the length and pace of Cavalry marches, unless the force halts one day in three, no reliance can be placed on supply wagons meeting the column or even its own baggage train keeping up.

Drawing supplies from country.—Under these circumstances, arrangements have to be made to draw supplies from the country; empty wagons should always accompany the Brigades for this purpose.

When no wagons are available the only method is to detach foraging parties under an officer from each regiment.

A small escort should be provided for supply officers on foraging duty, as wagons while filling up at farms often lose touch with the force.

Butchery Implements.—When troops are fed entirely on meat from the country, butchery implements should always be carried on a pack horse by each unit, as difficulty has been experienced in killing animals when wagons have not come up.

Resources of the country.—The farms during the whole march have been scattered; the only supplies that can be counted on with any certainty are cattle, sheep, oat or mannah hay, and at this time of the year whole mealies. Kaffir corn is also obtainable, but it is not safe to feed horses on it. Boer meal is sometimes found in small quantities, but generally speaking bread stuff and groceries are not obtainable except in towns.

Supply Officers.—Since leaving Kroonstad, both supply officers have accompanied their brigades; this is absolutely necessary when supplies have to be drawn from the country.

Both Lieutenant Hazelton, 4th Cavalry Brigade, and Lieutenant Evans, 1st Cavalry Brigade, have done excellent work in this respect. The latter has been particularly energetic.

(Signed) T. D. FOSTER, Captain.

D.A.A.G. (6) Cavalry Division.

Berg Vlei, June 3rd, 1900.

APPENDIX "B."

Report.

VETERINARY REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING 31ST MAY.

(Handed in by Lieut.-General Sir J. D. French, K.C.B., K.C.M.G. Vide page 302.)

To A. A. G. Cavalry Division, Berg Vlei.
2nd June, 1900.

During the past month the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Brigades have been detached from the headquarters of the Cavalry Division; consequently this report deals chiefly with the 1st and 4th Brigades, although during the time the Division was at Kroonstad, the 2nd and 3rd Brigades were frequently visited and the veterinary duties supervised. When the 1st and 4th Brigades marched from Bloemfontein on the 6th and 7th May, the horing could not be considered satisfactory. Both Brigades had only very recently received a large number of remounts, which were not in a fit state to stand hard work, many suffering from Catarrhal Fever, while all were in a soft condition. On arrival at Kroonstad many of the horses were exhausted and others were suffering from sore backs, but a large number recovered during the week's rest they were given after the town surrendered.

Remounts.—At Kroonstad on the 17th May, the 4th Cavalry Brigade received 352 remounts. These animals were distributed as follows:—171 to 8th Hussars, and 181 to the 14th Hussars. They were animals of various breeds, and were in a very unsatisfactory state. A board of officers was assembled to report upon them the day after their arrival, when 112 were found unfit for immediate work. Of these, 21 were destroyed, 65 sent to the veterinary hospital for treatment, and 26 were taken along the road to be placed in the ranks when fit for work. On the 20th May, 350 remounts were received by the 1st Cavalry Brigade. These were in a better state but could not be considered good. On the 22nd May, between Welgelegen and Roodeval, 75 remounts were received by the 4th Cavalry Brigade. These were all animals which had been in different regiments and re-issued by the Remount Department. They were very exhausted on arrival. Eight were suffering from catarrhal fever, eight were lame. Eventually seven had to be destroyed, and several others were brought along to Johannesburg without doing a day's duty in the ranks. Taken as a whole the remounts were very unsatisfactory. They arrived unfit for hard work, and the majority of their feet were in a very

neglected state. Several had suffered recently from pneumonia and were consequently unfit for fast work.

Forage.—The horses of the Brigades lived to a great extent on the country, receiving oat and mannah hay in fair quantity, which partly made up for the occasional short ration of oats. They can never be said to have been starving, but considering the work they were performing they rarely received sufficient food, especially the larger English and Australian horses.

Disease and Injuries.—During the month eight horses and eight mules were destroyed for glanders. A considerable number of animals, chiefly remounts, suffered from catarrhal fever, which rendered them unfit for hard work and caused them to lose condition. The remounts' backs were injured by the saddles, and the more seasoned horses as they gradually lost condition became unfit for duty from the same cause. A number of suitable draught horses whose backs became unfit to carry saddles were handed over to the Artillery to be used in draught. There were fewer cases of laminitis than in previous months, owing to the force of travelling at a slower pace.

Farriers.—As usual on active service the casualties amongst the farriers has put a considerable strain on the remaining men, and caused considerable difficulty in keeping the animals properly shod and the sick and injured attended.

Sick Animals.—At Vet River, the 1st, 3rd and 4th Brigades sent back chargers and 180 troop horses to Bloemfontein unfit to proceed north, and at Kroonstad all horses unfit for further service were sent to the veterinary hospital which was opened there.

Casualties.—The attached return shows the casualties as far as they can be ascertained at present since the divisions left Bloemfontein. The large percentage of casualties was chiefly due to continuous marching with unfit and over-weighted animals. The horses now remaining with the 1st and 4th Brigades are, on the whole, leg weary and require rest. Those of the 1st Brigade are far fitter than those of the 4th Brigade.

(Signed) L. J. BLENKINSOP, Vet. Captain,
S.V.O. Cavalry Division.

FORTY-FOURTH DAY.

Wednesday, 11th March 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Major-General Sir CHARLES E. KNOX, K.C.B., called and examined.

17549. (*Chairman*.) You have been good enough to send us some notes (*vide Appendix, page 662 post*) upon which I will ask you questions. When did you go out to South Africa?—I sailed with two battalions of my brigade on the 22nd December, 1899, landing in Cape Town on the 14th January, 1900. The two battalions were the 1st Battalion of the Buffs and the 1st Battalion of the Oxford Light Infantry; the other two battalions followed afterwards.

17550. What was your brigade?—The 1st Battalion of the Buffs, under Colonel Hickson, 18 officers, and 786 non-commissioned officers and men; the 2nd Battalion, 23 officers and 716 non-commissioned officers and men;

the 1st Battalion of the West Riding Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel Lloyd, 23 officers and 789 non-commissioned officers and men; and the 1st Battalion of the Oxford Light Infantry, under Lieut.-Colonel the Honourable A. E. Dalzell, 20 officers and 595 non-commissioned officers and men.

17551. You landed at Cape Town?—Yes, with two battalions, the Buffs and the Oxforas, and we went straight up to Naauwpoort Junction, in the Colony. We stayed at Naauwpoort for about 10 days, and then I went off with those two battalions to a place called Thebus, where we had to repair a railway bridge which was broken. That is on the Rosmead Junction line

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

towards Stormberg; the Boers had blown up that bridge and we went there with some Engineers and repaired it. Then we returned, and from there we went straight to the Modder River, and were joined then by the other two battalions, under Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny. The whole division was then concentrated; instead of the 12th Brigade, which belonged to the division, we were given the 18th Brigade, and the division then consisted of the 13th and 18th Brigades. The 12th Brigade, under General Clements, never joined the division until we got to Bloemfontein; they had gone with General French in the first instance.

17552. You took part in the advance on Bloemfontein under General Kelly-Kenny?—Yes.

17553. What part did you go to then?—I went from Modder River in a flank march to Klip Kraal Drift, Paardeberg, and so on to Bloemfontein.

17554. And after Bloemfontein?—After Bloemfontein the division was broken up.

17555. And afterwards?—I took command at Kroonstad afterwards; I was sent up to command at Kroonstad, and the division was broken up.

17556. You remained at Kroonstad?—I remained there from the 7th June to the 1st August, and then I was given command of a mobile column working out to the west towards the Vaal—an infantry brigade—and after that I went to a place called Heilbron. I had a mounted column always after that, and the infantry were more or less put in garrisons.

17557. It is your opinion from that experience that the strength of the forces was not sufficient for the work throughout?—We never could make our occupation effective; when we were at Bloemfontein the whole of the south of the Orange River Colony had under Lord Roberts' first proclamation given up their arms, and were perfectly contented, and were back on their farms, and it was only afterwards, when they were forced by not having any help given to them, that they rejoined De Wet, and all the other commandants.

17558. Your point being that if you had had sufficient troops then to guard the Boers from their own people, you would have kept the south part of the country quiet?—Yes, and when I was at Kroonstad the whole of the west, Bothaville and right up to the Vaal, from Hoopstad right up to the Vaal, if we had been able to keep garrisons in the various towns and to police and give protection to the inhabitants, I am sure they would never have risen again.

17559. But to police meant more mounted men?—They were always saying to me, "Why do you not send patrols to protect us?" because the commandants used to send out recruiting parties, and they forced these people to join again.

17560. But you had not enough mounted men to do that?—No, nor infantry either; they had all gone on with Lord Roberts.

17561. Do you know how many mounted men were available at that time?—In the whole force?

17562. Yes?—No, I cannot say.

17563. Of course the circumstances of the war were peculiar in that respect?—Yes, it was an enormous country, and we could not have had the men in any case, I think.

17564. And the disadvantages under which infantry were placed in competition with mounted men were greater there than probably would be the case on other occasions?—Yes, I marched about for six weeks with an infantry brigade, and I never could do anything, because the Boers used to move about around me every day, and if I went to a new place I found them in my rear, so that the infantry were no use at all.

17565. It was not that the infantry did not march well?—No, they marched uncommonly well. I do not think you could have had a better marching division than the 6th, and they did some tremendous marches.

17566. Were they seasoned troops?—Yes, mostly Reserves; they were nearly all Reserves at the time that all the marching took place up to Bloemfontein, although the battalions were very much under strength.

17567. From the beginning?—On the 12th February, the day we started on the flank march round by Enslin to the Modder, the strength was 189 officers and 6,656 men, and on the 14th of March, the day we arrived at Bloemfontein, the strength was 129 officers (we had lost 60) and 5,190 men. We had lost 1,466 men in that time.

17568. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did you get the right proportion of officers?—Yes, the officers were up to establishment, but not the regiments; 1,082 was the war establishment.

17569. (Chairman.) When you say you had lost them, what does that mean?—I have here an explanation of the decrease; there were eight officers killed in the month, and 176 non-commissioned officers and men were killed; died of wounds, three officers and five non-commissioned officers and men; wounded, 790; missing, two officers and 52 men. We suffered tremendously from sickness at Bloemfontein directly on arrival.

17570. Is that included in those figures?—Yes, I have here with me a note about the Sixth Division, written by Major Caunter, who was Deputy-Adjutant-General at the time.

17571. Were those losses made up at Bloemfontein?—No, not until the drafts came out; when the drafts came out they were made up, but I was not with the division then. All the regiments were then separated; the 18th Brigade joined the Guards' Brigade, and went up with Lord Roberts, and the 13th Brigade was all broken up into regiments, and went to different places. There was only one division, I think General Rundle's, that ever was kept intact throughout.

17572. As to the shooting, what have you to say?—I thought the men were quite up to the shooting of the Boers, but they did not shoot in the same way. They did not shoot with their heads, they did not know what they were shooting at very often, but they shot away. The Boers are all trained game shots, and they hardly ever shot without hitting something or other.

17573. Do you think they were all so?—Yes, in the first part of the war, I think certainly; afterwards they had a scratch lot, and then towards the end of course they were left with the very best trained men—all their men were perfectly trained men then, the same as our men were; the longer the war went on the better training they got, and there is no doubt that in the forces they had at the end there were very fine riflemen and scouts, and they could not have had better. Every man was a trained man in every respect.

17574. As to the mounted infantry?—They were very bad at first. They had no idea of country, and they were too cramped in all their movements from the training they had had at Aldershot. They had very cramped ideas; in fact, the general complaint was that we could never get them away from the infantry, and they were always hanging on to the ranks of the infantry instead of being miles out on the flank. They got over that very quickly, and they improved enormously.

17575. Those were the Regular mounted infantry?—Yes.

17576. Did you find any complaints from the regiments that their best men were taken for these companies of mounted infantry?—Yes, they were always objecting to send their men away, that is when they thought that the infantry regiments would be kept together; then they did not like to send their best men away, but afterwards when they found that the rôle of infantry was almost given up they were only too glad to get all their men mounted. One regiment, the Royal Sussex, mounted the whole regiment, and they were only too glad to do so. Towards the end of the war, or even in the middle of the war, the officers commanding infantry battalions were very glad if they could get the whole regiment mounted, because they saw how absurd it was for infantry to march 12 or 14 miles a day.

17577. But that was not the system; the system was to form companies out of each regiment?—Yes, that was the regular system at first, and then, of course, they objected because they said, "We want our battalions," when they thought they were to fight as men on foot. It was not so afterwards.

17578. Did you think they were not sufficiently taught to ride even for purposes of mounted infantry?—No; the idea always was that all a mounted infantryman wanted to do was to be able to sit on a pony, and if he could sit on a pony and get from place to place that was all we wanted him to do, but that was not the case, because after a very short time of that sort of riding they had no ponies to sit on, and they did not know how to take care of their horses. A great number of them did not know how to put a saddle on a horse. With that sort of man riding on a horse it did not last very long; on a long march a man riding in that sort of way very soon gives the horse a sore back, and when the

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

Major-
General Sir
Charles E.
Knox, K.C.B.
11 Mar. 1903.

horse had a sore back the man did not know what to do with it, so that the horses went from bad to worse.

17579. The mounted infantry man ought to know something about horsemastership?—It is the first thing; if you take a motor car and send a man out to drive it, he may drive it very well, but if anything happens the man is done, and I look on the mounted infantry in exactly the same way. The first thing to teach them is a little bit of veterinary practice—first aid to the horse—and then how to look after him and take care of him and how to feed him; they do not know anything about that, and the cavalry are much the same.

17580. But the object of the mounted infantry is distinct from the cavalry?—Yes, it was, but I do not think it will be now. I do not think we want any cavalry. I think we want men mounted with rifles, and who can shoot.

17581. The whole of the mounted forces ought to do so?—Yes. Of course, the lance now has been done away with; the lance is an absurdity. I know General French is very much opposed to this view, but the great point is as to whether the sword is any use, and I do not think a cutting sword is any use; it should be mostly a sword for pointing.

17582. But do you not think a weapon of offence for regular cavalry is necessary beyond the rifle?—I know that General French does think so, but I would sooner charge firing a repeating pistol than go at the enemy with a sword; in a charge with the sword all the men cut; they cannot be made to thrust; they will always cut, and they always used to cut with the lance if they had the chance. When one gets to close quarters like that I do not think much harm is done with the sword; you may get a cut at one man. If we could fire like the Boers did when they charged—they charged firing their rifles—we could do far more damage than by waiting until one gets close with the sword, and it is doubtful whether one ever does get home.

17583. Will it not be different in a war where they are opposed by cavalry?—It may, but to have cavalry of that sort they must be kept fresh in reserve for a charge, whereas it is doubtful whether we would ever have sufficient cavalry to be able to keep them fresh—to be able to do all the patrolling work, and then to have a sufficient force of fresh cavalry ready. The European armies will have masses of cavalry who have never done anything at all, and who will be kept until there is an opportunity.

17584. But there are distinct functions for cavalry?—Yes, if we could have cavalry in that way it would be different, but the great object is to have as many men as we can mounted on horses who can shoot well, masses of men mounted so as to get about quickly.

17585. With a view of mobility?—Yes, I think that will be the great feature of armies in the future—the means of getting about. That is the way the Boers gave us so much trouble.

17586. Did you have anything to do with the Yeomanry?—Yes, when I first got a mounted division I had a great number of Yeomen, Australians, New Zealanders, and the whole of the Colonial Division.

17587. With regard to the Yeomen from this country, was it the first or second contingent?—I had the first, too; I had very good Welsh Yeomanry, excellent men, under Colonel Forbes.

17588. And the second contingent?—Were very bad; they could not be anything else. I do not know where they were got, but they had no idea of riding, shooting, or anything else. We got a free hand to send away all that could not be trained, and then we trained the rest, and at the end they were good.

17589. We have had a good deal of evidence about the second contingent, and it was said that those that stayed out were good men?—Yes, they were trained; they had a year's training, and any man can be trained in a year, I think, in a country like that. Of course, they were weeded out; we had a free hand to send any one away we liked—officers and men.

17590. And as to the Colonials?—The Colonials varied very much, some of them were very good and some indifferent. The ones I had with me were fairly good; I had Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, and they were right through the campaign from the very start—very good, excellent men. Then the Australians were very good—first rate. The reason why these men were better than others was that they had lived in South Africa or Australia, and they had an idea of

country—an expanse of country. They were not like the other men who were sent out from home, whom I always used to complain about, and said that they missed the streets; that is just it, and they had no idea of country—the enormous expanse. They could not see to begin with.

17591. Did you have Canadians?—Yes, I had for a very short time, only a fortnight, just before they were disbanded, Strathcona's Horse, and they were very fine men—excellent.

17592. And of all those branches of Yeomanry and Colonial corps what was the quality of the horsemastership?—The Colonials were very good; they understood how to look after their horses on the veldt, and they had been accustomed to it more or less. They are very hard men on horses, however, and they did not take much care of them, they rode them terribly hard, and so on, but still they could look after them; they understood how a horse ought to be fed out there.

17593. Are you speaking of the African Colonials?—Yes.

17594. And the oversea Colonials?—I do not think they were quite so good; I do not fancy that in Australia and New Zealand they are accustomed to go long distances on their horses as they are in South Africa; I do not know exactly about that, but in South Africa no man ever walks, and they ride enormously long distances, and have to look after their horses, off saddling and grazing and feeding, and all that sort of thing. All that the South African Colonial knows, being taught it from his very youth up.

17595. He knows he must spare his horse?—He must, and they could get more out of a horse. They know the proper pace to go for a journey, and so on. Our men learnt that in the end, too.

17596. In any training of future corps, whether regulars or contingents, horsemastership must be an important matter?—The first thing. Sir Evelyn Wood called on me for a report in view of the mounted infantry programme now coming out, and I put that first—teach the man first—or at any rate at the same time as you teach him to ride—about his horse, and I am sure it is necessary.

17597. Do you think it could be done?—It must be done. And then the officers too; it is wonderful how few officers in the infantry know anything about a horse—the most trifling things they do not know—how to treat it; simple little things.

17598. Which could be easily taught them?—Yes, it ought to form part of the training.

17599. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you think cavalry officers have much veterinary knowledge?—No, I do not; there are some that have, some also are fine riders, but taking the majority of cavalry officers they are not good at all. The artillery are the best all round, they have a very fine system, and they never vary; it does not matter whether they are in barracks or on the field, it is exactly the same.

17600. (*Chairman.*) To what do you attribute that?—The regular system they have got which never varies. I have seen after a march of 30 miles all their officers at stables, just as if they were in barracks at home. You would not see that in the cavalry, and certainly not in the mounted infantry.

17601. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you know whether the veterinary course is compulsory for officers in the cavalry?—No, it is voluntary, so far that only two officers from each cavalry regiment at home are obliged to attend each year; there used to be a six weeks' course at Aldershot to which an officer could go if he wished.

17602. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do they understand shoeing?—No, I spoke only the day before yesterday to a mounted infantry officer about that, and I said that they ought to learn shoeing too, but he said it was impossible to teach them shoeing, and that if you had two or three good farriers it would be sufficient, but the time could not be given to teach the men, and probably they would never be taught to shoe a horse.

17603. (*Chairman.*) To teach the men?—Yes.

17604. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But the officers?—I do not think they ever go through a course of shoeing; they have so much to learn that it is better to strike out things that are really not absolutely necessary, and I do not know that it would do them much good if they could shoe. I think they ought to know whether a shoe is properly put on or not.

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

17605. That is what I meant?—They ought to know something about the system of shoeing horses, and whether a horse would do better in one class of shoe than another. I do know something about horses; I have all my life been with horses, and I found it an advantage out there. I had a very fine English horse who was always going lame, and last of all I told the man to shoe him with what they call seated shoes, so as not to press on the sole, and he never went lame again. A farrier would not have done that; I just thought I would try it, and it succeeded, and that horse carried me the whole time. I think that they ought to know those little things about a horse's feet.

17606. They ought to know whether a horse is properly shod or not?—Yes, that ought to be included in a sort of course of lectures on veterinary practice, and I think officers and men ought to go through that during their course of mounted infantry. Of course, they can strike out a great many things; for instance, they are supposed to learn how to shoot in their battalion, and to teach them how to signal, and that sort of thing is not necessary.

17607. (Chairman.) In the training of cavalry you think the difficulty is getting sufficient ground?—Yes.

17608. Do you mean a sufficient expanse?—Yes, the only place I know that we have got is down at Salisbury on the Plain, and that is not very big. It is possible to go from one end to the other in a patrol.

17609. What is the remedy you see for that state of matters?—I do not know whether this new ground in Scotland would be any better. I think the only training ground for cavalry is in India and in South Africa.

17610. (Viscount Esher.) Is it specially scouting you have in view?—I think all cavalry ought to be taught to scout. I do not mean by scouting skirmishing, but the art of scouting; that is not taught, and I do not think any one in our Army could teach it except Baden-Powell, who has written a little book about it; but I do not think he knows anything about it.

17611. That is what you have in your mind; when you say you want a great extent of ground, is that what you want?—Yes, for scouting and patrolling, and teaching them how to observe, and write reports, and that sort of thing. It might be done at Salisbury Plain, but I am certain it cannot be done at Aldershot. I think they never seem to have any idea how far cavalry can go, and what a horse can do in a day if he is looked after. The Boers thought nothing of going 60 miles in a night, but if one of our cavalry officers was asked to march that distance he would be astonished.

17612. That is the experience you ought to give them?—Yes, that is what we ought to teach them, and to do that the horse and the saddle must be lightened, and everything made as light as possible.

17613. I was thinking of your point of there not being sufficient training ground; it seems to me that it is for scouting more than anything else that you want it?—Not for drill.

17614. Or for horsemastership?—No; drill is nothing, and it is merely to teach them to have an idea of country.

17615. (Lord Stratheona and Mount-Royal.) Would you have a distinctive body of scouts apart from the ordinary cavalry—of mounted infantry?—No.

17616. (Chairman.) You say that you know the Boers looked on the artillery and infantry as magnificent?—Yes, they were always saying that about our artillery and infantry. They did not think anything of the cavalry, but I do not think they distinguished between the cavalry and mounted infantry; I do not think they knew which was which.

17617. As regards the artillery, you agree?—Yes, I do not think the artillery can be improved; their guns can be improved from time to time; that is a matter of experience, but I am certain their methods and system and so forth cannot be improved. There are little things like the harness being made lighter, and they want more horses; all the artillery officers told me that they want more spare horses, and so on.

17618. But otherwise you would leave them as they are?—I would, indeed.

17619. With regard to the infantry, it is a question of greater initiative, is it not?—Yes, and that is a big question. I do not think the class we recruit from are very intelligent men, as a rule, and it is very difficult to teach them anything. One in ten may be got whom it

would be worth while to teach scouting, tracking, and all that sort of thing, but I do not think we would be able to teach them more self-reliance and individuality, because the infantry work in denser formation, and they are always together, at all events a section would be the smallest number of men we would have working. Two men would not be sent away patrolling as mounted men are sent.

17620. They are very much split up now in an advance, are they not?—They are extended to a greater degree, there are 10 or 20 paces between the men, but that is not much, and they are always together, more or less, under their officers, and they always look to their officers and non-commissioned officers for every thing. Where more individuality and self-reliance are necessary is when a man finds himself out on out-post and has to act on his own initiative; that could be taught more, I think.

17621. You think they have sufficient intelligence for that?—I think so fairly; some of them are awful fools, and they could not be taught anything.

17622. But even advancing in extended order, a man must look out for a stone or whatever there is as cover for himself, must he not?—Yes, we can teach them that all right, and it is easy enough when there are plenty of bullets flying about; they do not want teaching about taking cover then, and the thing is to teach them not to take too much. I think that is born into the man. The Boers always said, "Your men do not seem to care about their lives a bit"; but when men are advancing like that they must go on. The way the Boers did was that individual men acted alone, and they were always running about from rock to rock and hiding, but we could not do that in an advance of infantry.

17623. Can an officer be trained to have more initiative?—Yes, some are very good, and others are not so bright; you cannot expect them all to be the same. You see our system is rather against it; with a regiment in barracks an officer has to go and see whether the men's dinner is all right, and he has to see every single thing like that takes place, so that the men always look to the officer for every single thing, just like children; they cannot do anything unless an officer is there to see that it is all right. We are getting better now in that way by giving them a more free hand; they can go away all right now, and be back again in the morning, and that shows the men they are trusted more.

17624. Do you approve of that system?—Yes, I think it will do a lot of good; some commanding officers do not like it, but the only reason they do not is that when there are a lot of men in barracks it is rather a nuisance to the other men if men come in all night long, and that is why they do not like it. The men who were in bed at 10 o'clock and did not want to go out have no rest at all, because the others are coming in all night long, some of them drunk, and it is not very pleasant. That is the drawback of that system.

17625. As to staff officers?—I think they are too much in the offices; there is such a lot of office work to be done, and they are too much confined to them.

17626. Do you not approve of Staff College officers on the staff?—I approve of the education they get at the Staff College, but I think that then they ought to go away and have more practical work afterwards.

17627. Do you mean with their regiment?—At the different big manœuvring stations, like Aldershot and Salisbury, and send them abroad, too, and anywhere, so as to get them field work before they take up any appointment. They do join at Aldershot and are attached to a cavalry or infantry regiment to do office work and that sort of thing, but I do not think it goes on long enough.

17628. But I suppose you would like officers who serve on the staff to go back to regimental work?—Yes, they must go back.

17629. And it is an advantage that they should?—I have never been on the staff, and I believe in the regimental officer and the ones who stick to their regiment.

17630. Were you satisfied with your staff during the war?—Yes; but, of course, I had lots of changes.

17631. Had you both Staff College men and non-Staff College men?—I had one, Colonel Kincaid, R.E., who I do not think was ever at the Staff College, and the other one I had, a Brigade Major, was a Staff College man.

Major-
General Sir
Charles E.
Knorr, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

17632. But you recognise that the Staff College is an advantage to a man on the staff?—The education is, of course, an advantage.

17633. As to supplies, I do not think I need ask you except about the horses. You say the quality of the horses was good?—I do not know what the number of horses in the country was. That paragraph of my *précis* (*vide Appendix. page 663 post*), beginning "The Remount Depot," should be the Remount Department, and not any particular dépôt. They were all right at the end, but they took a long time to learn what was wanted.

17634. You say a little before that the quality was good, but the horses were never given the chance to recover?—Never; they were landed, and probably in a week or a fortnight they were out at work, whereas in South Africa they want to get acclimatised. The system which we had at the end of the war, when they were put into a large dépôt, where they were worked four hours a day, being driven round a ring two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon to get them fit, was the right system, and they were fit then to go to work. We were never allowed to work them to a finish; directly a horse got bad, overworked, at the first station we touched these horses were sent back, and fresh ones were issued. That was the proper system, and we were all right; a horse then went back, and was resuscitated, and was probably fit for work again in a month; but in the beginning we could never get any fresh horses, the horses were ridden to the end as long as they would carry a man, and directly they fell they were left to die on the veldt.

17635. The Army Service Corps you found not sufficient?—I never had any privates of the Army Service Corps; I only had officers. They were always employed in the different garrisons.

17636. But that corps requires strengthening?—Yes. I would make use of them as conductors, and that is their department. We employed Colonials altogether under the Army Service Corps officers.

17637. You mean natives of South Africa?—Yes.

17638. And natives too?—Yes. Of course all the drivers were natives. We were obliged to have native drivers, and I do not think our men would have been able to drive a team of sixteen mules.

17639. But for the proper organisation there ought to be some means of expansion of the corps?—I think so; I think if we had men trained as conductors and drivers of all sorts, mules, oxen, and so on, then they could be overseers in case of war, whatever country we had to operate in, and we could have camel men and all that sort of thing. Of course, in India they understand that kind of thing.

17640. The same remark as to expansion applies both to the medical and engineer services?—Yes, certainly to the medical service. We had to get a larger number of civilian medical officers, and of course that shows that wants easy expansion. We ought to know who to get and where to get them.

17641. But the work done was good?—I think so. Of course at Bloemfontein we were terribly rushed at the beginning, as there were no tents, and the men were dying like flies; there was a tremendous rush then, but it was not the fault of the Medical Department.

17642. That was until the railway opened?—Yes, that was just the fortune of war. If we had had good hospitals at that time it would have made a difference.

17643. You think the 12-pounder was a useless gun?—Very; that is the Horse Artillery gun—perfectly useless.

17644. What would be your recommendation with regard to the guns?—I think the guns that they have now at Aldershot, the quick-firing guns, are the ones, and we must have quick-firing guns. We have still the 15-pounder, but the breech has been altered; it is a very nice gun, but not a quick-firing gun. At Aldershot I think they have two batteries of German quick-

firing guns. General Marshall tells me they are beautiful guns, and there is a slight modification of the same gun for horse artillery. We must have quick-firers. I suppose from time to time there would be improvements in guns; the worst of it is that I do not think we sometimes take the trouble to find out what the improvements are, otherwise we would never have gone out to South Africa with the guns we had. I think that is a matter for artillery officers to keep themselves up to date in.

17645. And the rifle?—The rifle is a very good rifle. I have not seen the new rifle, the modification with the shorter barrel, and so on, but a better rifle than the Lee-Metford is not wanted, only having a clip loading instead of the magazine; only five cartridges can be put in together by means of a clip, and I believe that has been done, but I have not seen the rifle. It is a better rifle than the Mauser, I think—a better made rifle.

17646. You spoke of lightening the weight on the horses, but you wish also to lighten the equipment of the infantry?—Yes, that is rather a difficult matter; according to the regulation a man has to carry 100 rounds, but we always carried 150 going into action; that is a good lot to carry, and the man ought to be able to carry some food in case he cannot get his ration for the day, and it is a difficult thing to know how he is to carry all the things he wants.

17647. We have heard also that the great coat is a difficulty?—We carried a blanket instead of the great coat. Something ought to be carried, whether a blanket or a great coat does not much matter, but a man ought to be able to carry the one or the other. Then they ought to have bandoliers, not pouches; two bandoliers to carry 150 rounds, and a great coat and haversack would load the man pretty well. I have seen them equipped like that, and it is marvellous that they can march at all.

17648. What is your recommendation?—They must have the ammunition, and I think it all goes back to the old thing that they must have a company cart to carry the entrenching tools, and something of that sort.

17649. To be close up?—Yes, to follow always with the company, or say a double company. I think that is the only way out of it, and in fact that is what did happen; their kits were always carried for them. We gave up carrying the blankets in the end too; the carts always carried them.

17650. And that is practicable?—We could do it out there, because we had mules, and I do not see why it should not be done. I believe it will come to having motors or some mechanical means of draft. It was absurd to ask the men to carry the valise, but they do want to carry a certain amount. I have seen different things tried, and I know it always came to this, that when I was going with a mounted column I generally had 100 infantry whom we carried on the carts. We did not ask them to walk, and their kits were carried for them also; even then they could not carry their own kits, they must carry 100 or 150 rounds of ammunition, and some way must be found of carrying their blankets and their kit.

17651. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) How do you propose to do that?—In company carts, I think or squadron carts, because you must carry entrenching tools. The men used to carry a Wallace spade, but they threw them away as they were no use; they threw them away on board ship, and when we landed at Cape Town there were few Wallace spades.

17652. (*Chairman.*) They cannot have tried them on board ship?—No, but they knew what they were to carry, and they did not intend to carry them. We had one man in a section who had to carry a spade, and he did not intend to carry that, so they threw them out of the port-holes.

17653. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) What is the present weight carried by an infantry soldier?—I could not quite tell you.*

* The witness subsequently sent in the following information:—

Equipment Carried by the Soldier.		lbs. ozs.	lbs. ozs.
Rifle and bayonet - - - -	10 10	Great coat - - - -	6 2
100 rounds ammunition - - - -	6 0	Belt, straps, etc., say - - - -	3 0
2 bandoliers - - - -	2 10		
Water bottle - - - -	1 1	Total - - - -	33 11
Mess tin - - - -	1 8		
Haversack with 1lb. bread and 1lb. meat	2 12		

If one blanket is carried in place of the great coat, the usual before going into action, add 3lbs.

total will be 32lbs. 1oz. If 150 rounds are carried, as is

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

17654. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You would only ask him to carry his ammunition, I suppose, and one day's provisions and water?—His water bottle, his ammunition, and a haversack containing whatever he liked to put in, bread and cheese, or whatever he could get.

17655. For one day?—Yes, that is all. I would carry his blankets or his greatcoat, or whatever it was, in carts.

17656. (*Chairman.*) You say that deer stalking would be the best thing for them?—Yes. Sir Evelyn Wood has got a plan—of course, I do not believe in it because I am not a bad shot with the gun, a good ordinary average shot—but he is going to try to teach them to shoot clay pigeons with a rifle. I said "I cannot hit them with a scatter gun, and I do not think that Tommy Atkins will have much chance with a rifle. We have, however, got the rifles, and we have little cartridges with shot in them, but they will never hit them. The idea is to make the men shoot quickly, and that is one system. Of course, the other system is crafty shooting—stalking as the Boers did; they stalked our men as they would stalk a springbok, and when they saw the springbok looking up in alarm, they would lie still or get round some other way, whereas our men would go straight for it, and never get a shot at it at all.

17657. Are they training the men on Salisbury Plain in that way?—There are no men on Salisbury Plain yet; they only come there on the 1st May; when they pitch the encampments on the 1st May there will be a tremendous lot of men training. We have nine batteries of artillery now, and they have a splendid artillery range.

17658. And finally you say the most important corps is the Intelligence Corps?—That is where we suffered most of all.

17659. What do you exactly mean by an Intelligence Corps?—What we had at the end; every column had an Intelligence officer attached to it, and his business was to collect guides, to collect all the information he could from the people about—anyone—any sort of intelligence that was any use, and he wrote up the diary of the day, and all that sort of work. In the beginning of the war we never had any guides; we never knew exactly where we were.

17660. Was he a member of the General Staff?—Yes, and he had guides under him.

17661. What was he called?—The Intelligence officer; that was his title.

17662. What rank did he take on the staff?—Deputy Assistant Adjutant General. We cannot do without them. Of course, operating in France a man ought to speak French thoroughly; in South Africa we generally had men who could speak Dutch.

17663. Is not that provided for under the ordinary system that each General should have some member of his staff for that purpose?—He tells one off, but I want a trained man who knows exactly what to do when he starts. The General could tell off a man, but I know one division which, when they had arrived within four miles of Bloemfontein, did not know where Bloemfontein was. It was at night certainly, but the Intelligence officer ought to have known exactly where he was, and where Bloemfontein was, and they were only four miles off and did not know. We often got like that—that we did not know where we were.

17664. You were deficient in maps in South Africa?—Yes, very deficient—not in the end, because then we had some very good maps, and of course as time went on we did not want maps. I knew the Orange River Colony as well as I knew London, and perhaps better, and I did not want maps.

17665. (*Viscount Esher.*) Before you had that special Intelligence officer attached to you what did you do?—We went according to what the conductors of the wagons used to tell us, and by the map. The Intelligence officer was a very important man—he was the man.

17666. And the whole time you commanded a column did you have an Intelligence officer with you?—Yes.

17667. Always an officer of the General Staff?—Always an officer. The last man I had was a civilian; he was an excellent man, too. He held the same position, but did not belong to the Army; he was an Australian.

17668. Did you always have a trained Intelligence officer with you?—Yes, always when I was commanding a mobile column: I would not go without one.

17669. I gather from your *précis* that you think that one of the principal lessons of the war, if not the principal lesson of the war, is the necessity for mounted infantry?—Undoubtedly.

17670. When you say that you think a large force of mounted infantry should be trained, but not kept up as a mounted establishment, does that mean that you approve of the system that they have adopted at Aldershot of gradually passing infantry soldiers through the mounted infantry course?—Yes. The establishment of horses necessary could not be kept up, but that has been improved upon now; by the last order they are to pass an entire company of a battalion through in the year.

17671. Do you think it would be advisable, having passed one company of the battalion through the mounted infantry this year, to pass another company through next year?—Yes, it would go on every year.

17672. And do you not think, on the whole, that is preferable to having a special mounted infantry establishment?—I do, because we gradually train all our men, and it does not matter whether they go to the Reserve or not, they are still able to come up and be mounted men, and if we could train the whole nation that would be a good thing.

17673. What is Sir Evelyn Wood doing with the Second Army Corps in the way of training mounted infantry?—No training commences until the 1st May, because we have not got the barracks; all the men will have to be under canvas, and the horses picketed, so that nothing will be done until 1st May. On the 1st May 400 mounted infantry come up for training under the new system; each battalion sends from each of its companies one section.

17674. And they are forwarded in companies?—Yes, and when they are trained, four more sections come, and so it will go on until the whole battalion has been trained. They are increasing the numbers, and the qualifications will not be so high; they will not ask the men to be first-class shots, and that sort of thing, but they must have good eyesight.

17675. Is the commander of the Second Army Corps tied down by regulation in the training of mounted infantry men, or may he vary, for instance, the system adopted at Aldershot?—We have not got the new regulations yet; yesterday at Salisbury I got a notification that the new regulations were coming out for trial, but they have not come, and I do not know exactly what the system is to be.

17676. When the new regulations are out will Sir Evelyn Wood be bound by them, or will he have discretion to vary them if he pleases?—No, I think there will be a uniform system throughout the whole Army.

17677. I suppose you do not by chance know whether any system has been adopted in India for training mounted infantry?—No, but I know they are training the native troops.

17678. The native infantry; you do not know that?—Yes, because they are employing some of the native mounted infantry in Somaliland.

17679. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was the name of the officer who commanded the Australian corps under you?—Colonel Knight.

17680. He was a Regular officer, was he not?—Yes, he is either at the Staff College now, or he has gone back to his regiment; he belongs to the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

17681. It so happened that the contingent he commanded were all Bushmen?—Yes, the first lot were bushmen, and an excellent lot.

17682. As to those men, you have no fault to find with the distance they could ride in a day?—No, they were first class men. We could not have better men than that, but they were men who had learned it from their youth up. Although they were called Bushmen they were not all Bushmen, but there was a sufficient sprinkling amongst them.

17683. They were all from the country?—Yes. We have lots of men in London who have never seen anything but London; and the same thing applies to all big towns, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sheffield. What do they know about the country?

17684. They were good horsemasters as far as knowing how to treat horses was concerned, although they might ride the horses very hard?—Yes, they brought their own horses with them, and splendid horses they

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

were, too; it was their business to look after them. They were good horsemasters.

17685. Had they spare horses with them?—No, I do not think so.

17686. Did they get spare horses?—At one time they did, because they were under Colonel De Lisle just before I got them, and Colonel De Lisle said that if Lord Roberts would mount him properly he would guarantee that he would catch De Wet, and they had three horses each, but they never did catch him.

17687. They used to drive their horses before them when they were on the march?—No, the spare horses were generally ridden and led by the black boys in the same way as the Boers did.

17688. Were the spare horses ridden?—A black boy would lead one and ride another; the black boys could ride and lead three or four horses.

17689. On the march did they change horses sometimes?—Yes, they were always given a free hand, and could do exactly as they liked about that. If one horse was tired the man had not to go and ask an officer if he could get on another.

17690. In that way you could cover a great deal of ground in a day?—We could march 60 miles in a day; we always did 30, and it is not a very great push to do another 30. I suppose, as a matter of fact, the flanks generally did about 40 miles, because they covered a great deal more ground than the column.

17691. Are the regiments in your division now at Salisbury up to their full strength?—There is no division yet; when the barracks are built, in about four years' time, there will be a division there, but at present that division is quartered, some at Plymouth and some at Pembroke Dock, and all over the place. I could go and see my regiments if I liked any day, but they are all under other generals.

17692. Do you happen to know whether any of the regiments are up to their full strength?—I am certain they are not up to war strength; they would probably be on the home establishment.

17693. What is the home establishment of an infantry regiment?—700.

17694. Are they up to that, do you think?—No, I should not think they were but I cannot tell you for certain. I know they are getting recruits very fast now, owing to bad trade and want of work, and so on.

17695. Can you tell me what number of men are told off in a regiment for duties outside regimental duties?—I thought about that point, because I wanted to suggest something. I should think at least a hundred men a day are employed, including officers' servants, cooks, men who have got to stay in the barracks—what they call barrack room orderlies, school orderlies, and general orderlies.

17696. In cleaning up barracks?—Cleaning up and doing different work; the place must be cleaned up.

17697. So that if a regiment is up to 600 or 700 men there are 100 of these not on military duty?—You may take it that at least 100 are employed as officers' servants or in the officers' mess, the sergeants' mess, and all the different things they have to do. They always keep two men in every barrack room, who are called barrack room orderlies.

17698. Does not that interfere very much with the military training of men?—It does, but when a company is struck off for training no men are taken out of that company for these things, and the other companies find them. When a company is taken off for its month's training none of the men are taken out of that company, and all the men in the company go back to duty.

17699. But it is only the officers in that company who are being trained with their men?—It cannot be done all through; that is why I think every regiment ought to have men who are not doing any duty at all for these jobs; either reservists, or let a man, after he has done his three years, join what I would call the regimental reserve for fatigues, officers' servants, cooks, and so on; he would serve on and do nothing in the year except a course of musketry.

17700. The objection to that is that it would cost a great deal of money?—But I would not give them any extra pay.

17701. Do you think the money could be better spent?—Yes, I would let them go on at their regimental pay. We should then be employing men we

knew instead of having other men brought in, but all officers ought to have reservists as servants.

17702. When there is a short system of service, three years, the whole time ought to be taken up in the training of the men?—Yes, of course, it is little enough, but these things must be done; the men must have their dinners cooked, the officers must have servants, and the barracks must be cleaned.

17703. But it ought not to be done by the men in the actual course of learning their profession?—No, of course not. It is the same with the officers; they have so much to do that although some people look on the regimental officer as an idle man, all day long he has work to do, and not only that, but he is now responsible, or has always been so, for paying his men, and very often they suffer great pecuniary loss from that. They are given a colour-sergeant whose whole time is taken up keeping accounts and paying the men, and that sort of thing ought to be done as in the Navy, by a paymaster, and the officers ought not to have anything to do with paying the men.

17704. Is the company officer's time taken up with other kinds of work rather than company work?—Yes, he has not to look after the canteen as he had before, but he has a great deal to do, and as to the colour-sergeant, who is the man next to an officer in the company, all his time is taken up keeping accounts.

17705. And his special business ought to be training the men?—If anything happened to one of the subalterns he is the next man. Last night I was talking to Colonel Bowles, who commands the Yorkshire Regiment, and he complains bitterly of the need for more non-commissioned officers. He says that in a company a non-commissioned officer is taken away as caterer, another for the gymnasium, and another for the school, and there are not sufficient non-commissioned officers in a company. He wants more non-commissioned officers. A large number of them go away to classes; some go to Hythe to the School of Musketry; some go to Aldershot to learn the gymnastic work, signalling, and all that sort of thing, which takes an enormous number of non-commissioned officers from the regiment.

17706. Your opinion is that with a three years' service the whole time of the non-commissioned officers and men ought to be devoted entirely to learning their military duties?—Yes.

17707. And that the work which now devolves on these men, although it costs money, ought to be done by men who are not going through the three years' course?—Undoubtedly.

17708. (Sir John Hopkins.) Under the head of the Remount Department, it is stated in your précis: "And this, taken in conjunction with the indifferent horsemanship of mounted infantry and Colonials"—by Colonials there you do not mean any but the South African Colonials?—No. As to the others I have no experience, except of the first bushmen, and they were first rate. I believe the second lot were not at all of the same class as the first, but I know that a large number of the Colonials, Kitchener's Scouts, and a lot that were raised at the end of the war, merely loafers from Cape Town, were quite as bad horsemen as the Yeomanry were.

17709. If this is read as Colonials, it will mean the New Zealanders, the Australians, the Canadians, and so on?—I did not mean that. I might say, "A portion of the Colonials."

17710. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You say you think the Reservists who went out in the beginning of the campaign were far superior to the drafts of young soldiers who arrived from England later on?—Yes. In every way; I only saw those drafts later in the block-houses, and so on. At the time my division was broken up we had the old Reservists still with us, and the drafts had not come up.

17711. During the later portion of the advance on Bloemfontein, say in the 4th, 5th, and 6th months of the war, you must have had a number of men sent out as reliefs or new troops?—No, the only drafts for the division arrived at Bloemfontein after we had got there. We had a draft of 120 men for the Oxfords, who joined us at Bloemfontein, and they could not join us before, as they had not arrived in the country. When the railway was opened they came up from Cape Town.

17712. Practically as regards the earlier movements of the war up to Bloemfontein you were working, as far

as the Regulars and Reservists were concerned, with men who had been trained for war?—Quite so; no drafts arrived until we got to Bloemfontein for my brigade.

17713. Our difficulty in South Africa was that we had of course in extending our forces largely to work with a large number of men who were not trained for war?—Quite so; I do not suppose that even when they went out the larger portion of these men had ever been on active service before.

17714. By being trained for war I mean that they had been trained for the purposes of war, but had not been to war?—Yes.

17715. We had, of course, ultimately nearly 400,000 men sent out as against 80,000 men we were prepared to send out; did you notice in your subsequent operations much disadvantage from having practically untrained men?—Certainly; the Yeomanry were a very good example—absolutely untrained for anything.

17716. Leaving the Yeomanry and coming to the Militia?—When I gave up the infantry brigade, which I mentioned I was operating with in the western part of the Orange River Colony, which consisted of one Militia regiment and one Regular regiment, I ceased to have anything more to do with infantry.

17717. So that I cannot ask you about infantry at that time?—No; I had 100 men of the Grenadier Guards whom we put on carts, and who went about with us, and I had no infantry afterwards.

17718. From your general experience as a soldier, would you say that an infantryman can be trained fairly in about six months?—Certainly not.

17719. How long do you think it would take to make a man an infantry soldier?—One year from the time he joins.

17720. You are taking the average recruit?—Yes, I would train him in a year, mounted infantry, and all.

17721. The average recruit?—Yes.

17722. Supposing you got men from an intelligent class you would do it in less?—Yes; as to the first three months at the depot, it takes them all that time before they have been through a course of gymnastics and been made all right; then they have done no shooting, and they would take another three months to learn shooting, that is six months; in the other six months they would be repeating that, and at the end of the year they would be turned out all right.

17723. Taking the nation as a whole, I take it that the less educated classes will require a year, and the more educated classes six months?—Yes; if an officer of that class was to enlist I think he could be taught in three or four months to do all that is required; it all depends upon the intelligence.

17724. That brings in my point, which is this, that supposing the nation were to submit to universal military education at the age of 18 for a year—three months, six months, nine months, or a year—as they did submit to universal Board Schools—I think with much of the volunteer class they could be taught in six months.

17725. But supposing the nation submitted to that system, you would have enormous reserves for volunteers to come from in case you wanted great expansion for a great war?—Yes, I think it would be quite easy to teach them, because I do not believe we need to teach any drill; a man can be taught sufficient to move about in a fortnight, and all that is necessary to teach him is to shoot and ride.

17726. What about marching?—Marching is a matter of training; for instance, I could not march ten miles now, but I think in a month I could do so.

17727. But that training is important?—Undoubtedly. I do not see why a man should have a vote in the Government of his country without also being able to bring up a rifle and defend it. Before giving a man a vote I should rule that up to 30 he should be able to prove that he can ride and shoot. Why ought he to vote for the Government if he cannot defend his country?

17728. Might you not go further, and say that as every boy is obliged to learn the three R's he should also learn how to shoot?—Yes. Of course there would be great opposition to that.

17729. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) The question put by Sir John Hopkins as to the outside Colonies is of some little importance, as in the Colonies

they might be somewhat sensitive, as to an opinion with regard to their intelligence; were you perfectly satisfied with all that you saw of the troops from the Colonies, both Australia and Canada?—Yes.

17730. Did you look upon them as intelligent and good soldiers, and especially good mounted infantry?—Certainly, the first lot of Bushmen from Australia and New Zealand; there were two batches, and with regard to the second lot I cannot say anything. I never had any with me after the first lot.

17731. But so far as came within your own observation?—They were very hard men to deal with; great drunkards, and that sort of thing; they had not much idea of discipline, but they knew what you wanted to do, and they would do it, but they would do it their own way.

17732. And they had intelligence too?—Yes, but they were a handful rather to take care of; if we got into towns, for instance, they would play mischief, but they were just what you would imagine Bushmen from Australia and New Zealand would be. They had no idea of discipline.

17733. Still, they were a very useful set of men?—Excellent, and Strathcona's Horse was a very fine regiment.

17734. Altogether both from Australia and Canada those you had were very good men?—The only men I referred to here were some wasters, who had been picked up in Cape Town and Durban, people off ships, and all sorts of riff-raff.

17735. Have you given much attention to the question of having special bodies of scouts attached to brigades or divisions?—No. Do you refer to infantry brigades or divisions?

17736. Yes?—I think every infantry battalion should have a certain number of mounted men always ready, but so they would have.

17737. And you would have them trained for that purpose?—No other training would be required, but what every mounted man should have—good intelligent men.

17738. Would you not select for that purpose those of special intelligence, these who are alert, active, and of keen vision?—Yes, but that is what I would make all mounted men.

17739. Then you would not have special corps for scouting?—No; out in South Africa there were special corps called Kitchener's Scouts, and So-and-so's Scouts, but they were just the same as the others, and it was only a difference in name; every mounted man if worth anything must have all those qualifications; he must have good eye-sight, he must be able to observe everything keenly, or what is the good of mounting him?

17740. But you can hardly have in the same body of infantry or mounted men only those who are equally intelligent?—I quite agree you cannot have that. I see your point, that you want picked men.

17741. Yes, and that this should be done not in the field only but in the time of peace; that you should train such bodies; you are aware such is the case in the United States?—Yes.

17742. And they are found most useful there?—If we had corps of that description I would have them all composed of trained scouts like the American scout, Burnham.

17743. Take, for instance, Lovat's Scouts, they were very good scouts, I believe?—But they must all hold certificates of training, because otherwise a man calling himself a scout might be no use at all.

17744. You would be able to choose, at any rate, for that purpose?—Yes, but there, again, those corps would be more useful with cavalry who are going quick than with infantry going slow; it is not necessary to employ an expert of that class with a slow moving body.

17745. But having them you would be able to utilise them as might be required?—Yes, but I would attach that sort of man to the Intelligence Department, that is where they will be wanted, and not in the corps. I should make that part of the Intelligence Department, so that if I was commanding a division I would say "I want so many trackers and so many So-and-so," and they would send me the men.

17746. But you would be in favour of specially trained men?—I think we must try to train all our men as much as we can to scouting, but we cannot do that unless we first get a body of trained scouts who can pass an ex-

Major-General Sir Charles E. Knox, K.C.B.

11 Mar. 1903.

Major-
General Sir
Charles E.
Knox, K.C.B.
11 Mar. 1903.

amination in scouting and tracking, and all that sort of thing; then those can be instructors for the rest. There is no officer in the Army knows anything about it except Baden-Powell, who has written a book, and I do not know that he knows anything himself. He has had some practice, I believe, under scouts out in Rhodesia, and probably he is the only man who has any idea about the art at all.

17747. You mentioned that our troops fired by regulation, and the Boers by the head; that is to say, that the British Army generally go on the regulation, and they fire in a great measure as if they were firing at a fixed target, without regard to the circumstances of the place or of the moment?—Yes.

17748. While the Boer takes advantage of anything and everything that he can?—Yes, he will probably creep about for half an hour, without firing at all, whereas our men would fire, and go on firing.

17749. And there is no reason why the British troops should not be so trained and educated, is there?—I daresay we could train a great number of them. I will tell you a story about a man at Naauwpoort. He belonged to the Cork Militia, which had just come out, and he was on outpost. An officer who was commanding the outpost went round to see what the men were doing, and he asked this man what he was doing, and he replied: "I am looking out for the enemy." The officer asked, "Do you know where the enemy are?" and he said, "No, but I am looking for them." The officer then said, "They are in those hills," and the Irishman then said, "Be jabbers, you don't say so," and he started and loaded and fired at the hills for about half an hour, until he had fired all his ammunition away.

17750. You would have a change with regard to that, then?—Yes, that man was very keen; he knew he was there to find the enemy, and directly he heard where they were he began firing. That is a perfectly true story.

17751. Then speaking of the staff and the staff officers you said, "And worst of all they are often deficient in common sense and unable to give an opinion on any strategical or tactical problems." Do you consider they are men who ought not to have passed out of the College as being qualified to take positions on the staff?—No, the men might very easily pass the examination.

17752. Yes, but should they be recommended for that purpose with the testimonial—or whatever it may be—that they are fit for staff purposes?—Well, I think a great many of them I would not care to employ on the staff.

17753. Then you think there is a defect in that respect in the College and in the education and training given in the Staff College?—I think a man might very easily pass the examination, and yet not be a good strategist or tactician.

17754. And not a man of good common sense?—You might take a hundred and not get one who would be any use in that respect.

17755. Are they not reported on from the Staff College?—I do not think the course at the Staff College or passing the examination to pass out of the Staff College would make a man a good General, for instance. Why should it? He might have a good general knowledge, but he would be no use. I think it is the same in every profession, is it not? You get barristers who pass examinations, and so on, but it is not necessary that they are all made Lord Chancellors. They have a knowledge of the thing.

17756. Still, there must be some defect in the system when a large number are so deficient as this statement in your précis imports: "And worst of all they are often deficient in common sense"?—Well, I think they are. I sometimes wanted advice, and I said, "What do you think about this?" and they did not know. I do not care what you are doing, you sometimes want someone else's advice—of course, I cannot mention names, but that is what happened. I do not mean to condemn the Staff College altogether, although it is rather the system in the

Army to condemn the Staff College. I think they are stuck too much in the Staff College, and they want to go away, at all events, after their course is over, for a practical course.

17757. And be a regimental officer?—No, more to work in the field with the staff of divisions, and so on; I think myself that is what they want. I think they had a very fine training in South Africa, but that is rather an expensive sort of training.

17758. (Sir Frederick Darley.) They learn theory in the Staff College, and you think they ought to learn the practice afterwards?—Yes, I think they cannot learn the practice in the Staff College. How can they?

17759. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Still, it is useful?—Yes, of course; that is what I mean. I do not think they get the practice in the Staff College.

17760. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Just as the barrister you speak of learns theory from his books, and practice in the courts?—And I do not think even after all that it is a necessity for every man who is passed out of the Staff College should be a first-rate staff officer.

17761. No, but you find a great many so?—I think there are a great many so, but there are a great number who are not so.

17762. (Chairman.) Is there anything you would like to add?—No, only about relieving the officers from all sorts of duties, such as paying the men, clerical work, and that sort of thing, which takes up a great deal of their time, and which renders them liable to great pecuniary loss if they are not financiers.

17763. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Has the colour-sergeant had any experience in account keeping?—No, and it is his business to teach the men as well as the officers; they call them pay sergeants, but, as a matter of fact, it is always the colour-sergeant who is the pay sergeant. An officer can make anyone in his company the pay sergeant, but it is generally the colour-sergeant, as there is a shilling a day extra pay attached to it. I would relieve the officers of all that kind of work, and it would simplify matters, because the accounts would only pass through one hand; let every regiment have a paymaster who does the business of paying the men, and he might also assist the commanding officer and adjutant; he would be a sort of second adjutant, so that the adjutant of the regiment could be out in the field, and not stuck in the office all day long as he is now. Anything that would relieve the officers and the men, and give them time to stick to their regimental work—soldiering—would be an improvement.

17764. It used to be considered that the adjutant was responsible for the training of the men?—Yes, he drills the battalion, not the company; the officer commanding the company is responsible, but when these companies are in the battalion, then it is the adjutant who trains them.

17765. If the adjutant is in the office all day how can he do that?—He has a morning parade from 7 to 8, and then the orderly room begins at 9, and he does not get out again until 11, when he has probably another parade, if the commanding officer has a parade, and then the whole of the rest of the day is office. The extent of the correspondence and the returns from the regiment which have to be kept up is enormous, and the adjutant is responsible for all that. I would make the paymaster responsible for all that work, and also paying the men.

17766. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You spoke of the great extent of the sickness. Do you consider that that was owing greatly to insanitary conditions which could have been prevented?—No, at Bloemfontein it was owing to the want of tents, which we had not got; the men were lying on the ground in terribly wet weather, and also owing to the very severe march we had had.

17767. But the conditions of transport at that time were such that it was impossible to have the tents?—Quite impossible. We got them as soon as the bridge at Norval's Pont was opened.

17768. It was not preventible at the moment?—No, it could not be helped.

Lieut.-Colonel ARCHIBALD MURRAY, D.S.O., called and examined.

17769. (Chairman.) You were first Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence with Sir George White?—Yes.

17770. And you were present at Talana?—Yes.

17771. After that you took up your duties in Ladysmith during the siege?—Yes.

17772. After the siege, where did you go?—I joined the new division, the 10th Division, formed under General Hunter, as Assistant Adjutant-General and went to the relief of Mafeking.

17773. And after that?—I crossed from the Mafeking Border to Heidelberg with the 10th Division, and there I joined the staff of General Sir Ian Hamilton as Assistant Adjutant-General—we changed staffs really—General Hamilton broke his collar-bone and General Hunter took his place, and it led to a change of staffs. From that time up till January, 1901, I was with General Hamilton.

17774. Then you went home?—I was temporarily attached to Lord Roberts' staff, and came home and got command of my battalion in India. I went to India and my battalion was ordered to South Africa, and I went back for the second time to South Africa in the capacity of a battalion commander.

17775. And there you were wounded?—Just at the end of the war, last April.

17776. The greater part of your service in South Africa was as an officer on the staff?—Yes.

17777. For Intelligence principally?—I was not very long in the Intelligence Department, only till the end of the Ladysmith siege, after that I was a staff officer, Assistant Adjutant-General, and had nothing to do with Intelligence.

17778. At the time you were at Dundee what arrangements were there for Intelligence?—I was sent up to join General Penn Symons as Intelligence officer, and a small nucleus of Colonial farmers were given me to work with, and I started the Intelligence for General Penn Symons there, working in conjunction with the Ladysmith Intelligence Department. I had a certain number of farmers who were joined to my staff, and a certain number of Basutos. We were in touch all along the Natal border with the advancing columns of Boers, and knew exactly every movement of theirs. We had full information.

17779. How do you mean that the farmers were attached to your staff?—The farmers were civilians, of course, working under me as Intelligence agents, and I also had a few Basutos with me.

17780. What did they do—go out as scouts practically?—A few Basutos would go with one of these farmers, and they would assist the farmers, and scout for them, or lie in places where a white man would be noticed but a Basuto would pass unnoticed.

17781. That was the system by which you collected information?—Yes, apart from the cavalry work.

17782. That was your own particular branch?—Yes.

17783. And you think you got full information?—I only went up on Sunday, and Talana was fought on Friday, so that we had not long to inaugurate the system, but knew fully what to expect from the advance of the columns from the north and the west, at least my General knew fully what to expect.

17784. And you accompanied that column back into Ladysmith?—I changed my capacity rather; I was the senior unwounded staff officer, and I did more the executive work as Assistant Adjutant-General. The intelligence work was not so necessary then, and I was doing Assistant Adjutant-General work.

17785. You did not require much intelligence?—No, beyond the scouting round the column, and seeing to the safety of the column. I still had these excellent farmers with me, who acted as guides and did a great deal of scouting for me.

17786. The farmers proved useful?—They were a most excellent class of men, the Northern Natal farmers.

17787. Were they British?—All British.

17788. In Ladysmith you were again Intelligence Officer?—I was constantly taken away from my Intelligence work; the Intelligence Staff was very strong there, and under very capable direction, and I did a

great deal of executive work on the staff there. For instance, on the 6th January, and after the 6th January, I was entirely attached to General Hamilton's staff on Caesar's Camp for work outside Intelligence work—staff work.

17789. But you knew the organisation of the Intelligence?—Yes, I worked for three months in Ladysmith.

17790. What was the organisation of the Intelligence Branch in Ladysmith at that time?—There was an Assistant Adjutant-General for Intelligence, Major Altham, and two Deputy Assistant Adjutant-Generals for Intelligence, Major David Henderson and myself; we had an excellent Corps of Guides, mostly composed of farmers, and we had a large staff of natives who were in touch with the Boers and communication with us, when we could get the information in; there was a network of natives and a great many of the native chiefs were in communication with us from the outside.

17791. I suppose it was not very easy to get the intelligence in?—Sometimes we would wait five or six weeks before a native chief could send in an agent to us, but at the same time the Intelligence Department was of use to Sir Redvers Buller, as it enabled Sir George White to tell him most of what went on behind the scenes, as it were, on the Ladysmith side. We could tell the movements of the Boers north of the range of the Colenso Hills, for instance.

17792. That was valuable for Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes, because we sent the information out two or three times a week by pigeon, until the heliograph was working, and then we sent it out every day.

17793. Information you had gained?—Yes, by movements of Boers, either visible movements owing to our having five or six telescopes going with a large radius of action, or from what we gathered from our own agents. Every day that information was sent out.

17794. We know that one of Sir George White's difficulties was that his plans were apparently known to the enemy. Did that fall to the Intelligence Branch to deal with?—No, not entirely; it fell to us to try to stop it, and see where the leakage occurred.

17795. That is what I meant?—Many times we tried to ascertain the leakage, whether it was done by signal or runner. It was rather a big community to watch, and a very big perimeter, and the Intombi sick camp made it especially difficult. That is where the refugees were. They were on the perimeter of our defence, and I think that communication through Intombi was possible, and it was very difficult for us to prevent information going out with the sick to Intombi.

17796. Was that the special duty of the Intelligence Department?—No, not more than trying to find out where the leakage did occur.

17797. Do you think you were able to stop it?—No, I think there was information going out right up to the end, but I do not think it was as much as was thought, nor do I think it was done by signalling by lamp or adjustment of lights in windows. That is a very simple plan and very hard to detect, as such a signal might convey information to those outside, and still be very innocent in appearance to those inside.

17798. Was that supposed to have been going on?—Yes, that no movement took place without a certain adjustment of lights which could be seen from the Boer perimeter, but we traced a great many of them, and as far as we could see they were from natural causes.

17799. Do you think an organisation like that which you have described—with farmers and natives—is a satisfactory organisation for Intelligence?—We were working at that period of the war with, you might say, a trained Intelligence Staff, Major Altham and Major Henderson being both trained men; we had very good men, and were working on a small scale. Later on in the war we were working on a large scale over very big country, and we were not able to demand the same number of trained skilled Intelligence Officers. I think we suffered during the war through the want of trained men in the Intelligence Department, not only to collect, but to collate and get the information down into a useable form. I think highly trained officers are wanted for that.

17800. Special training beyond the ordinary staff training?—The ordinary staff training is useful, because it teaches them exactly what points to look for. I think

Lieut.-Colonel
Archibald
Murray
D.S.O.

11 Mar. 1903

Lieut.-
Colonel
Archibald
Murray,
D.S.O.

11 Mar. 1903.

the man who is an intelligence Officer is more or less a specialist, but he wants the ordinary staff training to graft it on to.

17801. How would you get him the special training?—Nearly every officer in the Intelligence Department now is a Staff College officer, and he has the special training of the Staff College, and the special training of the Intelligence Department. During the war the difficulty was that it was not capable of rapid expansion to suit a big theatre of war.

17802. The work of the Intelligence Division in London is in a separate branch from the work of the Intelligence Officer of an army in the field?—Yes, but most of the Intelligence Officers from the War Office were in the field, and were trained to Intelligence work, collating and collecting evidence.

17803. But surely the work in the office of the Intelligence Division would not be the only means of training an officer for Intelligence work in the field?—No, they can be trained with the different corps in India, and with the different staffs of the Army. At the present moment, I think, that is being done.

17804. Has that been done in the past?—I do not know; in India it is done, but I do not know how far it has been done at home.

17805. May I ask if you have had any training?—The only training I had for Intelligence work was that I had an intimate knowledge of South Africa before the war, having been there five years. I knew the country very well, and had been in Natal and Zululand for three years. I was sent out as Intelligence Officer because of my knowledge of the country and the Boers, whom I knew very well. Apart from that I had no special training beyond my Staff College training.

17806. For an Intelligence Officer in operations in different parts of the world you generally require a man who knows the different localities?—With local knowledge, yes. At that same time, I think, that an Intelligence Officer ought to be trained in certain ways as to what he is to get, and the best ways of getting it, and then, when he has got the information, the best way of collating it, so as to put it before the man who has to use it. All that requires training.

17807. All that can be got on the staff of the General?—To a great extent it can. I think an officer can be trained to write concisely, and to digest what he gets, and to study methods of getting it, because, after all, what is wanted is to put the matter shortly and clearly before the General—the vital points, and not reams of stuff.

17808. Every General in command of a column ought to have an Intelligence officer with him on his staff?—It is absolutely important—of vital importance.

17809. Who would collate the information and have scouts under him, and put the information before the General in a form on which he could act?—Yes, the Staff Officer would put it before the General in a form he could work on.

17810. Is there sufficient provision for that in the Army as it stands?—I think the Intelligence Department wants largely augmenting; it is a difficulty in peace time, as these large staffs for Intelligence work cannot be kept everywhere in peace time, but it is a department that wants to be organised, so that in case of war it could rapidly expand to meet the circumstances of the case. Certain named officers might be on a list, for instance:—"List of officers available for South Africa with experience who would be suitable for the Intelligence Department."

17811. That means that different officers ought to study in different parts of the world?—There is no doubt that they ought.

17812. You are prepared to speak in the first place with regard to the efficiency of the organisation of the Army?—I have said in my *précis* (see Q. 17816) that I never saw any brigade or any division organised in peace that took the field in war; all the brigades and divisions that I saw and worked with were organised during the war.

17813. You mean that the Army Corps that went out, for instance, never acted as an Army Corps?—That particular Army Corps I never saw at all; I may have seen parts of it afterwards, but the troops I first worked with were battalions, squadrons, batteries, and staff put together at the required moment.

17814. The theory, I suppose, was that a division or a brigade, or an Army Corps, sent out from this country

would work under those denominations?—Yes, but the circumstances were too strong for the theory.

17815. Did they suffer in consequence?—I can only say that I think it would have been better if the organisation had existed in peace time too, but I think it speaks well for the material of the battalion, battery, and regiment that such excellent work was done with an organisation hurriedly put together.

17816. You have been good enough to give us some notes which you now put in?—Yes:—

1. During the war I never saw any division or brigade that had existed in peace, but I saw several brigades and divisions formed during the war. As the exigencies of the service demanded it, squadrons, batteries, battalions, ammunition columns, etc., were put together to suit the particular circumstances of the case. Though a far from satisfactory method, the result, in my opinion, proved how really sound the organisation of the regiment, battery, and battalion is, otherwise the brigades and divisions could not possibly have formed the useful fighting forces that evolved from this hasty formation. The difficulties of emergency organisations are found, not in the putting together of squadrons, batteries and battalions, but in obtaining the requisite medical services, ammunition columns, supply and transport services to accompany the fighting arms. From a considerable experience during the war, I think the greatest praise is due to the officers of the artillery, medical, transport and supply branches of the Headquarters Staff for the able manner in which they coped with large and urgent demands to complete divisions hastily required to move out to take the field. The difficult work of the Staff of the General Officer Commanding Artillery, called upon urgently to improvise an ammunition column to carry every kind of ammunition for 4·7 guns, 5-inch guns, 6-inch howitzers, 15-pr. Elswick guns, Canadian guns, pompoms, and infantry ammunition, must have been seen to be appreciated. The principal medical officer, though hard pressed for field hospitals and bearer companies, never once sent any force, with which I was connected, away with insufficient medical units. Other officers are better able to go fully into the question of the supply and transport services, but I should like to say a word of praise for the junior officers of the Army Service Corps who were ever ready to accept responsibility and to cope with a difficulty. The same may be said of the young officers of the Royal Engineers.

2. I am strongly of opinion that infantry cannot carry a position in the face of the modern rifle unless assisted up to the last moment by artillery fire.

I advocate the employment of mounted infantry, and welcome this force on the battlefield to threaten and envelope the enemy's flanks and so set free the cavalry for wider turning movements and more independent action. It is essential for the thorough training of the Army that all arms should be exercised together.

No one arm is complete in itself, and the different branches must constantly train together. In my opinion all peace stations for single units should be done away with.

3. With regard to the training of officers, I am a strong advocate for as many officers as possible passing through the Staff College, and as I do not think the present two years' course could be with advantage shortened, I should like to see the number of instructors and students at the Camberley Staff College very much increased. I do not think a competitive examination always secures the best men for the Staff College, and I advocate in its place a qualifying examination to ensure a high standard of general and military education, and the students to be selected or nominated from those qualified. Carefully framed regulations would be necessary for this selection or nomination. From an experience of many officers working on the same staff as myself I am certainly of opinion that given two men, one Staff College and the other not, of equal soldierly qualities, the Staff College man is the most useful, for he has studied method, conciseness, and has acquired a useful technical knowledge of all arms. In order to increase the number of trained staff officers, during the period of Division and Army Corps training, selected officers should be trained for staff work in the field, under existing staff officers. The training of the young officer with his unit is not a difficult matter so long as he has received a good education, but becomes a heavy responsibility on his commanding officer when he is poorly educated. Many regiments are feeling this very much at the present time. To teach young officers to act on their own initiative and to think, their daily outdoor military work should be always based on some

Lieut.-
Colonel
Archibald
Murray,
D.S.O.

11 Mar. 1903.

small military problem to be solved practically on the ground. By this means officers and men learn to think for themselves, and all ranks work with a keenness which is absent from work of a perfunctory kind.

4. With regard to the training of the men, considering the class the recruit is drawn from, their general want of education, and the fact that they join the Army at any time of the year, I am of opinion that three years is not sufficient time to train men to the necessary standard requisite for the small highly trained Army that we require. I recognise that this short service has been introduced to obtain the necessary numbers for war without undue expenditure during peace, but I am of opinion that the quality of battalions, regiments, and batteries will not be of such a high standard as when men had seven years' training before they passed to the Reserve. To make the three years' service system a success the recruit on joining must be more developed mentally and physically.

17817. The difficulty was not so much in putting the regiments together, but in getting the field services necessary?—That is a point I laid stress on rather, and it is very easy to put eight battalions together and make a division, but the difficulty comes in where it is necessary to arrange for the supplementary services like the ammunition column and the medical people.

17818. And that, you think, was well done?—I only speak from the experience of two or three times having to start the reorganisation of a division, and on every occasion the Royal Artillery staff did exceedingly well, I thought; it was very difficult to form the ammunition columns for all classes of guns, Elswick's, Canadian batteries, etc.

17819. But they did do it?—Exceedingly well, and the same with the medical service.

17820. The medical service was complete, as far as your experience goes?—I know they were very hard pressed to find the services we required for our divisions, but on no occasion did they send us out without adequate medical provision—enough to get on with.

17821. With the use of different arms under modern conditions, infantry, you think, cannot carry a position without artillery fire?—I think no one arm is complete alone; I think, in face of the modern rifle it is almost impossible for infantry to do the last 200 yards unless strongly supported by artillery fire up to the very last moment, unless it is in the nature of a surprise by night, fog, mist, or something of that kind. In daylight, I think it is impossible. At Talana the infantry would never have got to the top of Talana Hill if the artillery had not fired until even our own infantry suffered by it.

17822. We have had some evidence that, in addition to the shrapnel, there ought to be common shell?—I think all batteries ought to carry a certain number of common shell; they used to do it; it does not want a very large proportion, and I think all batteries ought to carry it. It is useful against material.

17823. As to mounted infantry, do you think that would be as important in other wars as it was in South Africa?—It was absolutely important in South Africa, but I think it would be very useful in any war in any country, not to replace cavalry, but to give a mobile infantry—an infantry capable of quick movement.

17824. And with regard to the training of officers, have you anything to add to what you have given us here?—No; with regard to the training of senior officers, I am a very strong advocate for the Staff College training.

17825. You think that as many as possible should be passed through the Staff College?—Not to make it for the few, but the many, and the more the better that go through.

17826. But it is no use sending a man to the Staff College unless he is capable of benefiting by it?—Therefore, I advocate a high educational qualification before a man is sent there; he wants to be a well-educated man in every way to take advantage of the training.

17827. Is not that the case now?—Yes; at the present moment they are admitted by competition, most of them, and the best educated men are got to go there, I think, for that reason. At the same time, you may get a very well educated man and a very clever man, who does not make a very good staff officer.

17828. After he has been through the Staff College, what do you think ought to be his course? Should he continue on the Staff, or go back to his regimental work?—I think he ought to go backwards and forwards

until he has done his period of the command of the regiment, battalion, or brigade division of artillery.

17829. The regimental work is quite as necessary to train the senior officer as staff work?—I do not think a good staff officer will ever be obtained who is not thoroughly in touch with the regimental work, and to get that a man must go through it himself. I do not think the Assistant Adjutant-General with a division can thoroughly sympathise with the battalions, unless he has gone through it himself and commanded a battalion, and then he knows what the difficulties are.

17830. And the younger officer?—The younger officer, I think, can be trained easily enough in the regiment, as long as he has a good education to start with. What we are suffering from now is commissions being given to men who have not the necessary education to enable them to take advantage of a military education and get on with the military subjects.

17831. You mean just at this particular moment, in consequence of the war?—Yes, during the last few years, and we are beginning to feel it now.

17832. Do you think the ordinary young officer in a regiment does do his best to equip himself with military knowledge?—I think it entirely rests with the Colonel commanding the regiment. The young officer is quite willing enough to work as hard as he is required, as long as the Colonel knows what line to take, and puts him in the right line; it rests entirely with the regiment.

17833. If he is put on the right line, granted a fair capacity, he can be trained into a good officer?—I have no doubt of it, or, if he cannot be trained, he ought to be got rid of. It rests entirely with the commanders of regiments.

17834. With regard to the training of the men, are you satisfied with the class of men you get now?—No, except in exceptional cases; I think the Guards' recruit is a fine recruit, but I do not think that the infantry recruit is mentally or physically what we shall want for a three years' soldier.

17835. A good many witnesses have said that the soldier we now have in the ranks developed in the war into a very good man?—Oh, yes.

17836. With sufficient intelligence?—That was not the point I wanted to impress upon you; the men I had in the early part of the war were men who had been abroad, I suppose, on the average, four or five years, and there were no Reserves at all.

17837. Those were the men from India?—India or the Colonies. Then the next battalion I was with were nearly all regiments from home, with Reserve men, and, of course, they were older and steadier, and fine men, too; and, finally, I went from India with a regiment entirely composed of what you might call long service men. I had 500 men going on for twelve years' service, and I saw all kinds in that way, and they all made good regiments, each in its own particular way. But I do not like the idea of only a three years' service in the ranks.

17838. I was speaking more of the intelligence of the class, and the intelligence of the class will not alter because a man has been in peace time for several years in the ranks?—I think he will develop.

17839. You can develop the intelligence?—Yes, in the same way as the physique of these immature boys who join can be developed.

17840. You would say the men you now get into the ranks would have sufficient native intelligence, if it could be developed?—Given the requisite time, which the seven years did give.

17841. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You mean that for the class of men we get three years is not sufficient?—We want a very high standard for our small army, and I doubt our being able to get it by men staying three years. The physique of the recruits is so poor that for the first year they are not able to take full advantage of their military training, and that really only leaves a two years' course of training.

17842. (Chairman.) A good deal has been said of the intelligence of the class, and it has been argued that if you had a more intelligent class, you could do with a smaller army. As I understand you, you think the class we now get, if it has sufficient time for training, can be made into an intelligent soldier?—Yes; I think the class we are now getting, given sufficient time, can be made into an intelligent soldier, but if the period is to be reduced to three years, then I think a class superior

Lieut.
Colonel
Archibald
Murray,
D.S.O.
11 Mar. 1908.

will be wanted to take advantage of the three years to equal what we have got at the present moment.

17843. Have you anything to add?—No.

17844. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Would you be good enough to explain the difference, as you regard it, between a competitive examination and a qualifying examination?—In a competitive examination the men that make the most marks gets into the Staff College, in a qualifying examination a fixed standard is reached by a certain number of men.

17845. Do you consider that the examination at present is not sufficient to show the qualification in education of those entering the Staff College?—Yes, I think it is quite sufficient to show the qualification, but the point I raised was that I did not want a competitive examination for the Staff College. I wanted a qualifying examination to get a certain standard, the men to be nominated from this list of qualified men.

17846. How would you ascertain those who are qualified?—I would have an examination test, but not a competitive examination, that is to say, the men reach a certain standard in an examination.

17847. Those who have been in the universities, or otherwise qualified for the position?—They have very

much the same examination at the present moment, but at present it is a competitive examination, that is to say, a certain number at the top of the list get in; I would rather have a qualifying examination, so that a certain number of men, five or six times the number, reach a certain standard, and are regarded as being qualified, and from these qualified men I would select.

17848. In enumerating the guns, I see you mention amongst others the Canadian guns. Did they differ in any way from the ordinary guns?—They were a horse battery gun, and they had neither the mobility of the horse artillery, nor had they the power of the field artillery, so that I would say they were not entirely wasted, but their place would be better taken by a battery of field artillery.

17849. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Speaking generally, the junior officer during the war displayed every quality necessary for an officer?—Yes, I have a great respect for the junior officer. I always found him ready to accept responsibility and generally able to carry out intelligently anything he was given to do. I am speaking of the most junior ranks.

17850. The subalterns?—Yes, and captains.

17851. That was your experience of the war?—Yes.

(*After a short adjournment.*)

Major-General Sir H. M. L. RUNDLE, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., called and examined.

Major-
General Sir
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Rundle,
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D.S.O.

17852. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to send us some notes (*Vide Appendix, page 664, post*) upon which I will ask you questions. When did you go to South Africa?—I sailed with the first of my division on the 9th March, 1900.

17853. Where did your division go to in the first instance?—It first of all went to Cape Town, and we landed a portion of it there. At that time the relief of Mafeking was in the air, and Lord Roberts ordered my division to proceed to Kimberley, and those were the first orders I received. But while they were in the course of disembarking the Wepener incident occurred, and the pressure became so great in the south-eastern portion of the Orange River Colony that I was diverted to Dewetsdorp and Wepener, and General Hunter was brought round with his division from Ladysmith to accomplish what was first given to me. My troops, instead of all landing at Cape Town, were landed partially at Cape Town, partially at East London, and partially at Port Elizabeth, which I conclude was done for the facility of moving them up country quicker, as the railway was somewhat congested at Cape Town.

17854. And after that you had command of the south-eastern portion of the Orange Free State?—Yes.

17855. What was the special object you had in view?—The special object given to me by Lord Roberts, which he impressed upon me in a personal interview that I had with him, as well as by written instructions, was to prevent any recurrence of the Wepener incident, and he also impressed upon me that any advance on Cape Colony while he was moving forward with his main force would seriously complicate matters so far as he was concerned, and that object up to the fall of Pretoria (which, I understand, is all I am giving evidence about) was what I kept before me during the whole time, viz., to prevent any attempt of the enemy to get down into the Cape Colony.

17856. And you held that position up to the taking of Pretoria?—Up to the taking of Pretoria.

17857. What troops had you?—I had my own Division, which was at first short of one battalion, the Leinsters, which had not arrived at the time we advanced. I had eventually given me in addition the Colonial Division and about 800 Yeomanry.

17858. What does the Colonial Division mean?—The Colonial Division was organised by Lord Roberts when he went out there. He selected General Brabant, a very distinguished Colonial soldier, who organised this Division under Colonial officers, with a certain number of Imperial officers as Staff officers.

17859. These were South African Colonials?—South African Colonials. They consisted of the Cape Mounted Police, the Kaffrarian Rifles, and several corps of that sort.

17860. They were not over-sea Colonials?—No.

17861. And what was your opinion of those troops?

—I have the highest opinion of their fighting qualities, their knowledge of the country, and their general capability of looking after themselves in almost every circumstance, and in those matters they were absolutely and invariably invaluable to me.

17862. (*Sir John Edge.*) Did you find the discipline of the South African Colonials equal to that of the British Army?—Yes, when they were commanded by Imperial officers, or officers who had been in the Imperial Service, and I would specially mention in this instance Brabant's Horse, commanded by Lieut.-Col. Grenfell. I should like also, in this category, to speak in the highest terms of both regiments of the Imperial Light Horse, one of which, I ought to say, was commanded by an Imperial officer, and one by a Colonial, which is an exception to what I have just said. They had a tendency to over-transport, which was very difficult to control.

17863. (*Chairman.*) And the Yeomanry that you had, what were they?—They were a most interesting force. They were composed of hunting men, steeplechase riders, and every description of riding man almost in the country.

17864. Was that the first contingent?—That was the first contingent. I had several commanding officers, Members of Parliament, masters of foxhounds, whom I can only speak of in terms of the highest admiration for what they did, their intelligence, and everything about them.

17865. Did they remain with you throughout?—They remained with me throughout the whole of the period we are now talking about, and for a very long while afterwards.

17866. The first contingent of Yeomanry, of course, began to go home, did they not?—Not for some time after that. I did not lose my Yeomanry until, it must have been, a year and a half, nearly two years, after the time I am talking of.

17867. They were enlisted for a year?—Or the war? There was a question about that; it is a contended point, which perhaps the Commission would like to hear about.

17868. We have heard all that?—But the result with me was that they remained over their year, and, in fact, very considerably over, and there was considerable discontent in consequence; but, I must honestly say, it did not affect their fighting qualities, or their working qualities, so far as I was concerned.

17869. And you had a great many of the Reservists in your Division?—Yes, my Division was principally composed of Reservists.

17870. And the Reservists, you thought, did well?—Admirably; a most excellent body of men. They were men of a certain age, who had given hostages to fortune; they were really the backbone of the force that went out, in my opinion.

17871. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) How long had the bulk of those Reservists been away from the colours?—I could find that out for you. I could not say off-hand. That you could easily get from the statistics of the War Office.

17872. I thought, perhaps, you might have known?—No, I do not.

17873. (*Viscount Esher.*) Did you find that class of Reservist differ from another?—No, not a bit.

17874. (*Chairman.*) We have heard from some witnesses that the Reservists, having been away for some time from their regiments, were not quite acquainted at first with the modern conditions or even with the rifle that they were called upon to use; did you find any difficulty in that respect?—None. I never found any difficulty. Of course, naturally, there was a certain amount of rustiness; but that must be expected. It was fully made up by the increased intelligence and the extra age of the men who came back, and it very soon wore off. Would you like to hear what a commanding officer of the Guards said? This is one of my Guards' battalions. "The quality of the men, I think, could not have been improved upon. Shooting was good, intelligent, restrained, marching could not have been better. There was no falling out, except when camp came in sight for the purpose of collecting cow-dung, fuel" (that was one of our difficulties, there was no wood), "and avoiding various fatigues on arrival, which was easily checked." I had another officer commanding a battalion of Guards, who speaks of his Reservists in the highest terms—Colonel Lloyd. I cannot turn his letter up at the moment, but it is to the effect that he really depended on his Reservists. I should like to state that the whole *esprit de corps* and the discipline of the Guards' battalions are magnificent. The Guards are so impregnated with the idea that they are the Guards of the Queen, as they then were (now of the King), that it influences the whole of their duties from the simplest to the biggest. I had two battalions of them under my command for two years.

17875. You attach considerable importance to *esprit de corps*?—Enormous importance.

17876. Do you think that has fallen off of late years in the Army?—No, I cannot say that I think it has.

17877. We have been told that there is not so much inducement now for a soldier to feel for his regiment as there was under the old system?—I think it depends upon the regiment; if you get a good regiment you get *esprit de corps*; if you get a bad regiment you do not get any; if you get an ordinary regiment you get very little. I do not think, myself, *esprit de corps* is any worse now than it was 20 years ago; in fact, I think it is better.

17878. Does the territorial system lead to *esprit de corps*?—Enormously. I had the Manchester Regiment under my command and the Staffordshire Regiment, and the people of Manchester and Staffordshire took an interest in everything connected with their battalions; with the men of the battalions their one idea was to go back to the county from which they came proud of themselves and their regiment. I think the territorial system has had a very good effect. That is my experience of it.

17879. And as to the different capabilities of the men; has the shooting improved, do you think?—It is a very curious thing, but the shooting of the Boers was much worse than it was in 1880 and 1881. I do not think that the shooting of the Boers this time was very much better than that of our own men; but the difficulty, of course, was that there was nothing to shoot at.

17880. Because the Boers kept under cover?—And also because smokeless powder has introduced a new factor. There is really nothing to shoot at, and, therefore, you cannot say that a man shoots badly when he is shooting at nothing. We seldom had anything to shoot at except features.

17881. And with regard to the marching, have you anything to say about that?—The marching was excellent. The only thing was that we took men off ship, and, naturally, we could not rush them into marching; but when the men got settled down we could have marched them anywhere and gone any length we liked. That all my commanding officers were unanimous about. The men responded to every appeal made to them. One battalion marched 45 miles in 48 hours, and fought a successful action at the end. That was at

Prinsloo's surrender, when we joined hands with General Hunter.

17882. (*Sir John Edge.*) Have you any objection to mentioning the name of the battalion?—It was the Royal West Kent.

17883. (*Chairman.*) What have you to say as regards horsemanship?—The horsemanship of the Colonial troops was excellent, it could not have been better; and also that of the first lot of Yeomanry, for the reasons that I have given in a previous answer.

17884. You had no cavalry?—I had no regular cavalry ever under me.

17885. And the horsemastership was not so good?—The horsemastership was very bad.

17886. Throughout?—I think so. Not of the Colonials, of course; the Colonials understood the animal of the country, and treated him accordingly. But the horsemastership of the Yeomanry was very indifferent, and it was almost impossible to get the men to get off their horses when they halted; they would sit upon them for half an hour unless somebody told them to get off.

17887. I think you had some difficulty in getting the troops to take cover?—Yes, we had. I wrote a memorandum on that subject, which I thought the Commission would like to see, as it expresses my views.

17888. If you please?—It is a memorandum which I wrote to my Commanding Royal Engineer, dated June 13th, 1900:—"According to telegrams I have received from Lieutenant-General Kelly-Kenny, who has assumed command of all troops he can communicate with, it is quite possible that a crisis has arrived in the present war; it is essential that I should have a portion of my force mobile. This can only be done by making the posts, which I have left, secure and defensible from a modern point of view. For this reason I deputed to you the duty at Ladybrand and Thabanchu of organising the defences of those places. I take it for granted that Ladybrand and Thabanchu are in a position to stand a siege; that the defences are so constructed that they will give protection against modern guns, and that they are capable of making a prolonged defence. I now wish you to do the same at Ficksburg and Willow Farm, and when these are completed to proceed to Hammonia, and place it in a state of defence in accordance with the instructions issued by the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief (Chief of Staff Circular Memorandum No. 17, 'Instructions for Officers Commanding Posts in the Orange Free State'). After you have done this you will report to me through the Chief Staff Officer. I may add that up to date I have failed to see any intelligent use made of entrenchments by Brigadiers or by the troops under their command; they appear to think that a few stones hastily gathered together or 6 in. of earth hastily scraped up at haphazard is adequate protection against modern gun and rifle fire. They possess in their commands educated officers, who, in passing for promotion, Staff College, and other courses prescribed by the Regulations, must have been taught theoretically very differently from the practical outcome of their work in the field. I feel sure that the defences you have organised at Ladybrand and Thabanchu will not come under the criticisms I have felt it necessary to make as regards other positions. I am sending a copy of this memorandum to Brigadiers, with directions that your orders on the subject are to be considered as coming from myself."

17889. With regard to Ladybrand and Thabanchu, which are mentioned in that memorandum, could you give us some particulars?—The paragraph in that memorandum, in which I stated to my Commanding Royal Engineer that I took it for granted that Ladybrand and Thabanchu were in a position to stand a siege, and that the defences were so constructed that they would give protection against modern guns and they were capable of making a prolonged defence, was fully justified some months later, when the garrison of Thabanchu, which consisted of two companies of the Worcesters and one company of Imperial Yeomanry, successfully resisted a siege by 3,000 Boers, with artillery, for some days, until relief arrived under General Bruce Hamilton from Bloemfontein.

17890. You consider that British troops have an antipathy to forming entrenchments and cover?—I would say, as a general statement, that British troops have a curious antipathy to forming entrenchments and cover.

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17891. And you think that view is shared by the officers?—That view is undoubtedly, to a great extent, shared and fostered by the officers, who, though knowing the immense superiority that entrenchments would at times have thrown into their hands, would for days occupy a position of doubtful strength, without any attempt to entrench themselves, unless they were distinctly ordered to do so. This was true of the infantry, but especially true of the mounted forces. On several occasions it was only by strong measures that I could get the officers and men to entrench at all, and as late as September, 1900, little or nothing of the kind had been attempted at one station, although it had been occupied for a fortnight. British officers of infantry and cavalry are too dependent on the Engineers, instead of taking the work of entrenchment as part of their own job.

17892. They did not understand the tactical use of field works?—They were too apt to forget the offensive rôle, and there was at first a tendency to crowd their men together, which, in the latter phase of the campaign, experience had taught them not to do.

17893. (Sir John Edge.) That is in entrenchments?—In entrenchments.

17894. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You, as a general, hold that entrenching is one of the principal things that a soldier should do?—Yes, I think that he ought to entrench just as naturally as he eats his dinner.

17895. (Chairman.) Were the men capable of entrenching?—Yes, they were capable of entrenching; and, subject to what I have said in the memorandum which I have already read, they greatly improved with experience.

17896. (Viscount Esher.) The whole system of entrenchments is undergoing a considerable change now; that is one of the effects of the campaign, is it not?—That opens up the question of entrenchments. It depends very much upon the ground. If you are digging in clay, or digging in sand, or digging in rock, the work of entrenchment takes such very various forms. A company is sent down on Salisbury Plain to entrench, and it is taught what is thought very good entrenching; it goes to South Africa, and has to entrench on a kopje, and its training on Salisbury Plain is absolutely useless to it.

17897. What do you consider the remedy for that?—I think only common-sense and telling an infantry officer that he has got to entrench. There is no mystery about it.

17898. (Sir Frederick Darley.) And then there is some art, is there not, in choosing the site of the trench?—Yes, but that is one of those things about which there are always two opinions. It is a most difficult question. The point, to my mind, is that they must entrench, and it must be done with the personal superintendence of general officers, and regimental officers, on the spot, and as the circumstances require.

17899. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) How do you think the Boers got their extraordinary skill in entrenching?—I never understood how the Boers got anything. I wish you could tell me. It puzzled me for two years. I cannot answer that question.

17900. (Viscount Esher.) Still, I suppose a good many lessons have been learnt, have they not, from the war as to the best forms of entrenchment? There have been new regulations, for instance, issued quite lately, have there not?—Yes, but, of course, the Paardeberg trench, which is the celebrated trench which revolutionised the whole thing, was only a pit about *that* broad (describing), of whatever length was wanted. The earth was dug out and simply scattered to show nothing. A man walked round under cover down in the trench, and he simply put his head over; you never saw him. That would not be possible in certain ground.

17901. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) And exactly the same form of trench existed at Colenso?—Did it?

17902. (Viscount Esher.) But in point of fact the men are being taught how to entrench differently from what they were taught before the war; is that not so?—I cannot say off-hand, because we have not begun yet field training. I will look it up. Certainly in my division we adopted the so-called Paardeberg trench the moment we discovered it, and it came upon us like a revelation when we first saw it. We always used to entrench our outposts whenever the ground would allow in this deep trench, with the earth scattered. But that

could not be done everywhere; it could not be done on rocky ground.

17903. (Chairman.) The equipment of the troops for entrenching at the beginning of the war was what was called the Wallace spade, was it not?—Yes, but the Wallace spade is a most benighted article. Nothing ought ever to be put upon the men to carry. We ought to treat our entrenching tools as we do our guns, and they ought to have equal importance in the line of march.

17904. We have had some evidence to the same effect: that there ought to be quite efficient entrenching tools, but that they ought to be carried in a cart. That you agree with?—Quite.

17905. Then, with regard to supplies, your division practically lived on the country?—That is so.

17906. Would you explain how that came about?—We had our groceries, of course, to a limited extent, which I had to more or less curtail, and I seized some flour mills out of which I got a lot of flour; and then I got any amount of cattle, and sometimes I got vegetables. In fact, I took anything I wanted. We required a certain amount of flour, of course, to feed the force in that way. You will understand that the British soldier is taught in England that he is not to touch anybody's property, and is brought up in the right way of going about people's grounds with game and so on, and it took a little time to teach him that he was to look after himself and take anything he saw.

17907. You got flour from the flour mills?—Yes, I took it.

17908. And gave receipts for it?—And gave receipts for it; and in the same way for our cattle that we took.

17909. How did it come about that you had to live on the country; was it owing to deficiency of transport?—I suppose the Director of Supplies only had a certain amount of stuff to supply the main advance with, and therefore I had to shift for myself, which I did. There were great hardships to the men at first, because the British soldier naturally is brought up to expect to march into camp and find his tent pitched and his dinner all ready, and he is very much surprised when he is told that each man must cook for himself. Then there was a deficiency of wood, which was a great difficulty; there was no wood in the country, or, if we came across any wood, it was probably green. That had to be overcome by collecting cow-dung as we got into camp, and the same man who went to bed with very short commons when we first started was able two months after we started to cook his meal. One of the things I would like to bring before the Commission is that it is essential that we should teach our men to cook for themselves and not to be dependent on bully beef and biscuits.

17910. As a matter of fact your division for nearly eight months subsisted on the country?—Not quite; practically from April to August.

17911. And they were well fed?—I cannot say we were well fed exactly, but we were fed quite sufficiently to get along, and there was not an appalling amount of sickness or death. We did not "Jack up." The men suffered, and they grumbled, too, but they accomplished very long distances, and they lived to enjoy the railway when they got to it.

17912. But I thought I understood from your précis that there was a difficulty about transport?—I thought you were talking about the food.

17913. Yes, but I began by saying that it arose out of want of transport; was it not so?—Yes. You see I was ordered to advance when I had no transport at all, and by an accident I took somebody else's transport that I found and carried out my orders; and then we took the transport out of the country as we went along, until, eventually, we had the finest transport, I should think, in the whole of the campaign. We collected it from the various farms that we passed through.

17914. But you began with no transport at all?—Yes. I think we started with some donkey wagons and some mule transport which I appropriated.

17915. Was there none attached to your regiments; was there no regimental transport?—Yes, there was some.

17916. But not enough to carry the supplies?—Nothing like enough. But that was only an incident; it all passed away, and eventually the division became a perfectly self-supporting division with any amount of transport and with any amount of supplies. Really

it was one of the wisest things Lord Roberts ever did, because we tapped all these mills; it was a great question whether 10,000 men could be thrown upon the country in that way; but nothing went wrong over it.

17917. As to ammunition, what is your experience of that?—The ammunition was very good.

17918. And as to equipment?—The equipment was bad. I should like to say that the weight must be got off the men; it is practically always got off; but dealing with the regulations about all this valise equipment, I think the only thing they should carry should be their ammunition and either a blanket or great coat, and a haversack, of course, and water bottle. We shall never do what foreign nations do, get our men along with all sorts of kits and things packed upon them; it is an exploded idea.

17919. We have had some evidence to the effect that the great coat is a troublesome thing to carry?—I think it may be, but if you carry it when you start and you eat out your wagons you can always put your great coats on to the wagons that you have eaten out; and thus use the wagon for your great coats.

17920. One point that was mentioned about the great coat was that it showed, that if a man took cover it was an object?—But they have altered that; it is a khaki coat now. That was quite true, and you might say the same of the Highlander's kilts, because they only wore the khaki cover in front, and when we retired a company or moved it to a flank they had the whole of the dark kilt showing behind; nothing would induce the Highlander to put the khaki cover over the whole of his kilt. The same thing of course happened with the great coat, but that is altered now because the great coat is the same colour as the men's clothing and the blanket, I suppose, too.

17921. Do you wish to make any other criticisms of the equipment?—I do not think so. I think that has all been dealt with, so far as I can see, by the issues they are making now, except that the puttie is quite the most useful thing that could be given to an infantry soldier.

17922. Have you anything to say as regards horses?—I had very little experience of horses in the early stages of the war as remounts, except the horses that the Yeomanry brought out with them, and they were excellent. A great many of them were their personal property, and nothing could have been better than the stamp of Yeomanry horse that I had to deal with. There was a certain amount of wear and tear, and we exchanged captured cattle with the Basutos, through the Resident at Maseru, and in that way we got the very best stamp of Colonial pony for mounted infantry work to be got in the country—that is to say, the Basuto pony. We practically depleted Basutoland of its ponies, and we gave the Basutos instead the cattle that we captured. I think it ran three oxen for one pony, and we never had any difficulty in keeping the division fully mounted.

17923. And you had plenty of transport afterwards?—Any amount, more than we were entitled to.

17924. As to the medical services, would you say they were adequate?—Owing to the exigencies of the service, I was short of a field hospital; they took it away for some other division, and, generally speaking, I think the medical service was overworked, undermanned, and under-ordered.

17925. The only other question that you raise in your *précis* is about the effectiveness of the guns, rifles, and other armament used; did you find them effective?—No, I did not, not from any fault of the gun, but because there was never any target. When the Boers gave a target I think the guns were most effective, but, of course, the Boers very seldom did. I think that was the reason of the want of effectiveness of the guns. They were wonderful in their life; the number of rounds that they fired was appalling before they showed any signs of giving out. The fuses at first were not as effective as they might be, but that was remedied by the Director-General of Ordnance, and the fuses eventually became very good; the effectiveness as regards artillery fire was never very great, but it was for that reason that the Boers never presented a target.

17926. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Previous to the war, were our regimental officers trained in entrenching?—Yes, all these things exist. We have any number of text books, and any amount of instruction in entrenching, but, as I said before, take, for instance, Dover, where I am quartered now. A man is taken out and taught to entrench on the Downs of Dover. It is a

totally different thing from teaching him to entrench in a hilly country like the Transvaal, and, until the country is varied, which means getting different sorts of manoeuvring grounds in England to entrench on, instruction will not be given in entrenching which will meet every case that is to be found on active service. That is what I mean by saying that the spirit of entrenching must be fully enforced, and people must be taught theoretically that they will have all sorts of different natures of ground, and it must be done on the spot, when they get there. No amount of entrenching on Dover Downs will teach people to entrench on the kopjes of South Africa.

17927. (Sir John Edge.) Had you to use the guns to cover the infantry in attack, in the operations that you have been speaking of?—Yes, always.

17928. And there, I suppose, they were of very great use?—Yes, of very great use, and the moral effect was very great. My contention is that a great deal too much is expected of artillery fire, and I think anyone who has had much experience of it would say the same of infantry fire. We are so accustomed to see experiments at Shoeburyness and Okehampton, and various places on targets and dummies, where they get a number of hits, that we expect to see the same thing in war, which I do not think will ever be the case; but, as regards the moral effect in support of infantry, I do not think the value of the guns by keeping them in action up to the last moment of the infantry attack can be over-rated. And they have also this effect, that they prevent the opposite side from putting their heads up and firing on the opposing infantry, which is half the battle.

17929. You found that they had that effect, I suppose?—Yes, absolutely—that men will not put their heads up and fire at you if they are under a heavy artillery fire.

17930. (Sir John Hopkins.) Were you satisfied with the range of your field guns, as compared with that of the Boers?—No, I do not think I was, but, then, the Boers, you see, more or less had a prepared position, and, therefore, they could lower the trail, and go through all sorts of tricks for getting the extreme range out of their guns, which did not give them very accurate shooting. Their shooting was never wonderful for its accuracy; it was wonderful for its range, but not for its accuracy. I came under Boer artillery fire, but it really had very little effect.

17931. But that is practically what we have heard, that, though their range was very extensive, they had very few hits?—Yes; therefore, I doubt very much whether our shooting can be compared with theirs, because we did not, of course, fire at extreme ranges.

17932. Would you be satisfied if you were entering upon a campaign with the range of our field guns as they are at present?—No, I would not, because my tendency is to go for a much heavier gun. I think we go for too light a gun. I do not think horses galloping about is necessary in modern warfare, and I think that horse artillery is almost a thing of the past. I want to see heavy field artillery brought in and dragged up by mules, traction engines, or anything that would do it; that would be my tendency.

17933. Have you any improvements to suggest in the Field Artillery, so far as equipment goes?—No, it is excellent. The whole of our harness and woodwork and splinter bars cannot be beaten; in fact, it is almost too good, everything, as far as I can see in the Field Artillery, is put together on the principle that it is to be thrown down a precipice one day, and left in a river for a week, and then come out and be just as workable. I think we might go in for much more lightness and less durability than we do.

17934. And get a lighter mount?—Yes, and lighter harness, too; all our harness is wonderfully good, and lasts; an elephant might be put into it almost.

17935. (Sir John Edge.) I do not know anything about these things, but if you were pressing a rearguard with your cavalry, would not horse artillery be of great use very often?—Yes. Perhaps I was putting it in rather an extreme way, but what I really wanted to emphasise was that I want to go for a heavier gun and a less mobile gun as regards trotting and galloping, which I do not believe in. I believe we can get the gun into action as the Boers did, with mules or oxen, which will conform quite well to the advance of our infantry, which is, and must be, very slow, and that we do not want all this trotting and galloping about.

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17936. What I was really driving at was this: that occasionally in warfare you want horse artillery to accompany the cavalry?—Yes; that is a rôle, of course, for which we must have a few light guns, but even then I do not see why field artillery should not do.

17937. Would they get along fast enough?—Cavalry, in a campaign, do not go so very fast, according to my experience.

17938. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal*.) I gather, from what you have said of the antipathy or disinclination of both officers and men to forming entrenchments, that you do not think the advantages of entrenching and of selecting cover were profited by, generally, as they might have been?—No, not at first; but, of course, we gained by experience. The observations which I have made were on what was very marked at the beginning of the war. At the end of the war that passed away. I am sorry to say, at the end of the war even some had not learnt, but the majority had learnt by experience their value, and wherever they had learnt it it had a most marked result.

17939. (*Chairman*.) Is there any other point you would like to deal with?—I attach the greatest importance to the training of troops being in not too large bodies, and I believe that if we trained our companies and our squadrons and our batteries, and devoted time and money to it, we should get a better value than by manœuvring in large bodies, where instruction to the smaller units is practically nil.

17940. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Would you approve of double companies rather than the present system?—If the double company officers are mounted, yes.

17941. If you mounted the double company officers you would approve of that rather than the present

system of single companies?—Yes, I am all for double companies, if the double company officers are mounted and the battalion commanding officer is treated as commanding so many units under him.

17942. (*Chairman*.) But you do not mean, by what you have just said, that you do not approve of manœuvres, do you?—No, I do not mean that. I like manœuvres, but I want the manœuvres to be for the training of the company officers more and the squadron officers more, not large masses of troops. I would like to see more time devoted to the training of the company officer if we are going to get the company officer the individual that we want to make him.

17943. But are the two things compatible? That you can have additional training of the company officers and yet for the management of a large body of troops have manœuvres on the large scale that they require?—I think the two things ought to be distinct. The manœuvres ought to be for training the troops, and the generals and the staff should be trained by staff rides without any troops. At present these large bodies of troops are trained, and the training largely goes to the generals and their staffs. The troops themselves go through an enormous amount of work of a most uninteresting nature, and the company commander gains nothing. I believe the generals and the staff could be trained equally well by means of staff rides, without any troops, and then the manœuvres could be devoted to the training of small bodies of troops, and not the generals and the staff.

17944. (*Sir John Edge*.) But if you had not manœuvres of large bodies of troops, how would you ascertain whether a general who had never commanded in the field was fit to command?—I do not think it can be ascertained till he is put into the field, and then I think it would be a toss up.

FORTY-FIFTH DAY.

Thursday, 12th March 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Major-General H. C. O. PLUMER, C.B., called and Examined.

17945. (*Chairman*.) When did you go out to South Africa?—In July, 1899.

17946. And with what object were you sent out?—I was sent out to raise one of two mounted infantry regiments which were under the command of Major-General, then Colonel, Baden-Powell, whose instructions were, in the event of hostilities with the South African Republic, to operate on the northern and north-western borders of the Transvaal. The instructions that I had were dated the 10th of July from the Adjutant-General: "You will proceed by mail steamer of the 15th to Cape Town, where you will report yourself to the Governor and to the General Officer commanding, showing this letter of instructions to both."

17947. The purport of the instructions was that you were to go and raise these two regiments?—One of the two; Colonel Hore was to command one and I the other, and we were both under Colonel Baden-Powell.

17948. You have been good enough to prepare a short statement of your operations?—Yes, I have; I have prepared it from my reports which I sent in week by week at the time.

17949. We shall be glad to hear it?—In the first paragraph I have given the instructions that I have mentioned. Recruiting began at Buluwayo on 10th August, and by the end of September we had nearly reached our

establishment (450), and started to march to Tuli, about 80 miles south of Buluwayo, and about 20 miles north of the Limpopo River—the northern boundary of the Transvaal. General Baden-Powell at the end of September proceeded to Mafeking, where the other mounted infantry regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hore, was being raised. He left me in command of the force in Rhodesia. I have here a copy of his instructions. Shall I read them now?

17950. If you please?—The instructions I received from General Baden-Powell on my arrival at Tuli at 8 p.m. on 10th October, 1899, were:—(1) To defend the border as far as it can be carried out from the neighbourhood of Tuli, as a centre. (2) By display of strength to induce the Boers to detail a strong force to protect their northern district. (3) To create diversion in the north of the Transvaal, co-operating with the invasion of the south by our main force, if necessary advancing into the Transvaal for the purpose. No portion of your force is to cross the frontier till you receive orders. Instructions will be sent to you as to the date for co-operation with the other column." As a matter of fact we were immediately cut off from all communication, and no other instructions were possible. The Rhodesian regiment—as my mounted infantry regiment was called—reached Tuli on 11th October. There were there about 100 men of the British South African

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.
12 Mar. 1903.

Police, and a Maxim Nordenfeldt 12½-pounder gun, two 2·5 inch screw guns R.M.L., and two 450 Maxim guns on naval carriages. The total number of men was about 550. From the point of junction of the Transvaal, Portuguese, and Rhodesia boundaries on the east to Mafeking is about 500 miles, and the River Limpopo, which forms the boundary, is passable almost anywhere excepting for short periods when in flood; but the extreme eastern portion of the border was never threatened, and the western portion defence was undertaken by additional troops from Buluwayo—as will be explained—so that on the force at Tuli devolved the defence of about 200 miles of frontier. From the outbreak of war on the 11th October till the 26th November the Tuli force was constantly engaged on the Limpopo River with the Boers, who at one time had about 1,700 men there; but on the latter date they left the border, and retired back to Pietersburg and Pretoria, leaving only small parties to watch our movements. Owing to our small numbers, the difficult nature of the country, and the Limpopo River coming down in flood, we could not follow up the Boers much, though we made some incursions into the Transvaal, and it was not till about the end of December that we could ascertain that the Boers had retired south of Pietersburg. Meantime strong parties of Boers early in November had been seen on the western border of the Transvaal, apparently threatening Khama's country. To meet this Colonel Nicholson, the Commandant-General of the British South African Police, had collected and despatched to Palapye and Mochudi, about 350 men of the British South African Police and Rhodesian Volunteers. Palapye and Mochudi are on the railway from Buluwayo to Mafeking, distant from Buluwayo about 200 and 380 miles respectively. Mafeking had been cut off since the beginning of the war, and was closely besieged. As soon as it was certain that the Boers had retired from the northern border I left 100 men at Tuli, and marched with the remainder to Palapye (175 miles), and moved thence by rail to Mochudi, where I joined the force there, and moved southward with a view of endeavouring to relieve Mafeking. Gaberones, about 100 miles from Mafeking, was reached on the 14th January, the railway north of that point having been but little damaged. About 10 miles south of that place, however, the Boers had taken up a strong position astride the railway at a place called Crocodile Pools, and had blown up an important iron bridge which took us a long time to repair. We were constantly engaged with them, but it was not till the 25th February that they evacuated their position and retired southward. During January and February the strength of my force fluctuated, but I find that on 17th February I had, all told, 998 officers and men, and 502 horses. These numbers included sick and wounded, men along the line of communication, and on the armoured trains. These three armoured trains which had been improvised and despatched from Buluwayo were of the greatest possible assistance. When the Boers retired southward we followed, repairing the railway as we went, and on 6th March we reached Lobatsi, a station about 60 miles from Mafeking. During February we had been receiving despatches from Mafeking pretty regularly, and knew that the garrison were holding their own well. I had, however, realised that it was unlikely with my small force I should be able to advance much further along the railway line, and had despatched during February convoys of wagons with supplies to Kanya, the capital of the Chief Bathoen's country, about 30 miles west of Lobatsi and 70 miles north-west of Mafeking, and early in March had a small depot there. As was to be expected, the Boers when they found we had established ourselves at Lobatsi moved northwards from Mafeking with a view of cutting us off from our base at Buluwayo. They were getting round us on 16th March, and that night I sent the dismounted men under Colonel Houldsworth, 7th Hussars, to Crocodile Pools, and marched with the mounted troops to Kanya. On 17th March I had at Kanya 550 men with two 2·5 inch guns and one Maxim. Colonel Houldsworth, to defend the railway, had one 12½ pounder gun, one 7 pounder; one Maxim, and 350 men. On 21st March I reached, with the mounted troops, a place called Sefetili, about 30 miles north-west of Mafeking. From there I despatched a message to General Baden-Powell, saying that if he was in need of assistance I could advance at once, but that I could not bring in supplies. I had 11 days for my own force only, and with the railway only available as far as Gaberones, supplies from there had to be brought 60 miles by wagons, of which there were very few. On 28th March I received an answer from him stating that the circumstances of the Mafeking garrison were not

then critical, and not such as to justify an immediate attack by our small force. On 26th March (two days before that) we made an incursion into the Transvaal to within 12 miles of Zeerust, in the hope of drawing off in that direction some of the Boers besieging Mafeking, and on 31st March reconnoitred to within about six miles of Mafeking, but were attacked by a considerable force of Boers, and had to fall back to Sefetili. During April we had to remain stationary. The Boers round Mafeking, who numbered at the beginning of April about 2,000, were reinforced during the early part of that month, and by the 15th had increased to about 3,000. I had received a few recruits and convalescents, but had to send a great many men away owing to fever, and could never muster more than 500 men. I was in constant communication with General Baden-Powell, and he deprecated our attempting, until reinforced, doing anything except endeavour to pass in food. This we attempted to do in the shape of cattle, but without much success, very few getting in. On the 4th April Lieutenant Smitheman succeeded in getting through the Boer lines into Mafeking, and returned on 8th April. By his influence he induced the natives in Mafeking to endeavour to break out in small parties, and they did so so successfully that over 1,200 reached us between that date and the relief on 17th May. This was an enormous saving of food for the Mafeking garrison. During the month we had frequent rumours from natives of the approach of a British column from the south, and had runners constantly out on the watch for it. General Carrington was sending from Salisbury via Buluwayo to help us a Canadian battery and about 200 Queenslanders (without horses). These reached Buluwayo on 6th May. On 1st May 100 men of the British South African Police reached me from Mashonaland, and brought another 2·5 inch gun. On 12th May a telegram was received from Lord Roberts to the effect that a column from the south had left on 4th May, and might be expected near Mafeking about 15th May. Runners were sent out to communicate with this column, and on 13th May a message was received from Colonel Mahon saying he expected to be on the Molopo River on 15th May. He had about 900 men and six guns. On 14th May the Queenslanders and Canadian Battery (four guns) arrived from Buluwayo. I had withdrawn the 12½ pr. gun from the railway, so had altogether eight guns and about 800 men, of whom about 450 were mounted. All the guns were drawn or carried by mules. We marched that day and joined Colonel Mahon on the Molopo River on 15th. The two columns had a successful engagement with the Boers on 16th, and entered Mafeking at daylight on 17th May. On the 18th May I took my column back along the railway line to Pitsami to repair the railway. This was completed on 24th May, on which day a train with supplies was brought in to Mafeking. On 25th May we moved westward into the Transvaal, and occupied Zeerust without opposition on 28th May. General Baden-Powell moved out of Mafeking about 5th June, and we occupied Rustenburg on the 10th June, which was five days after Lord Roberts actually occupied Pretoria. I understand that you do not wish anything after that date.

17951. That is the period comprised in our Reference. What class of men did you get at that time?—I had up to that time South African Colonials, and I was joined, as I said in my report, by this Canadian battery and a detachment of Queenslanders. Subsequently to that I had Colonials of all kinds.

17952. Under your command?—Yes.

17953. I was speaking of this regiment that you raised?—They were mostly Rhodesians; they were recruited in Buluwayo. We could not get all the men we wanted in Buluwayo and Rhodesia, and we brought them up before the war from different parts of South Africa, Cape Colony, and the Eastern Provinces, Kimberley, and Cape Town.

17954. So that if I caught the number correctly you began with a strength of about 450?—Yes, that was what I authorised to raise and pay.

17955. Then in February you had 980?—Yes, we were reinforced from Buluwayo by Rhodesian Volunteers and British South African Police.

17956. They were separate forces?—Yes, they were under my command inasmuch as I was in command of the whole forces in Rhodesia, but they had different terms of payment.

17957. Were the men that you raised yourself in this regiment a good class of men?—Yes, very good; they were much better, of course, after the two months'

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.
12 Mar. 1903.

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.

12 Mar. 1903.

training. That is why I consider we could do what we did, because we began training on the 10th August, and war did not break out until the 11th October, which gave us two months to train the men before we had any hostilities at all.

17958. What were the terms on which they were enlisted?—They were enlisted for three months, or for such time as the Government might require their services—as long as the war lasted—at the pay of 5s. a day.

17959. And the officers?—I had seven Imperial officers with me, a medical officer, and a veterinary officer—nine altogether.

17960. Whom you brought out?—Whom I brought out from England.

17961. And as to non-commissioned officers?—The non-commissioned officers we had to make from amongst the troops, except one sergeant-major I had whom General Baden-Powell brought out of his own regiment, the 5th Dragoon Guards.

17962. And looking at your experience in raising a regiment of that kind, is that the sort of arrangement that you think suitable?—I had had experience in 1896 too, and I am very strongly of opinion that to get the full benefit out of Colonial troops Imperial officers have to be put with them.

17963. Commissioned officers?—Yes.

17964. And non-commissioned officers, too?—If possible, but I do not think that is so important as the officers. I should have been very glad to have had some non-commissioned officers, but they are not nearly so important as the officers.

17965. But Imperial commissioned officers you think are essential?—They are of the very greatest importance, there is no question, with all classes of Colonials.

17966. Have you been asked to draw up any memorandum with regard to the raising of a force of this kind?—No. The telegram that General Baden-Powell sent to me was: "The corps will be equipped on the same lines as your regiment in 1896." Those, of course, I had with me—conditions of service for the regiments I raised in Matabeleland in 1896, and I worked on the same lines.

17967. I meant have you been asked since to put your views on paper?—No.

17968. Have you any suggestions with regard to the matter which you would like to lay before the Commission?—I think the most important point is to have Imperial officers, as I have already told you. I think also the Commanding Officer ought to be allowed a free hand in the way of dismissal. That was a point on which I insisted at both times—that there should be a contract entered into in which the man should agree that if he was found by the Commanding Officer to be of no use without his having committed any offence, the Commanding Officer should have the power of dismissing him. That I found was the best instrument to have in the hands of the Commanding Officer.

17969. That is more effective than any form of punishment?—Yes, it is the best power that can be given to Commanding Officers.

17970. Had you to exercise a power of that kind?—Yes, at the beginning we did—quite freely.

17971. While they were recruits?—Yes, not after war broke out. Then I wanted every man, and I hesitated to throw away even an inferior man; but at the beginning certainly I exercised it freely.

17972. But I understood from another witness that even in the field the power was a great advantage?—Yes, and, of course, if one was in a position where one could get reinforcements easily, one would exercise it then certainly.

17973. But, as a matter of fact, you did not have occasion to exercise it much then?—Not after that for that very reason—that I was very short of men; and by that time, of course, we had got men who were pretty reliable.

17974. Those are the main suggestions you have to make on that point?—Those are the main suggestions, I think, on broad lines. Of course, if the question of pay and so on is gone into, we have to see what the situation at the particular moment is to attract the recruit.

17975. Although our Reference is limited as regards military operations to the date of the occupation of

Pretoria, any experience that you had during the whole of the war we shall be glad to have the benefit of?—Quite so. I have based the remarks I have made in my précis on my whole experience.

17976. You said just now that you had yourself other Colonials under you. Have you any remarks to make with regard to them?—General remarks, do you mean, or on what particular point—about the class of men?

17977. Yes?—The over-sea Colonials were a very fine class of men, and especially the earlier contingents.

17978. What Colonials had you under you?—I have referred to the Canadians, and I had Queenslanders, New South Wales, Victorians, West Australians, and New Zealanders.

17979. And generally they were a good class of men?—Generally they were a very fine class of men indeed.

17980. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Did those men land at Beira?—I had some that landed at Beira.

17981. New South Wales men?—Yes, the New South Wales men came in that contingent. The New South Wales men, then the West Australians, a small contingent of Victorians, and some of the Queenslanders came, and then I had afterwards other contingents from the same Colonies, but different contingents.

17982. (Chairman.) You have mentioned as the chief point the need of Imperial officers. Was there any difficulty with regard to that in the over-sea Colonial corps?—We did not have Imperial officers as such, of course, with any of these contingents, but there were among the officers a certain number who had had previous training in the Regular Army—officers who had gone out to Australia. I can mention a major who left the West Yorkshire Regiment and had gone out to Australia afterwards, and came out with a contingent. His contingent was one of the very best. Colonel Craddock, who commanded the New Zealand contingent, had previously served as a subaltern in the Carabineers. His contingent was excellent. I might mention another contingent of New Zealanders commanded by Major Andrews, who is now serving in the Hyderabad contingent in India, and was in Australia on leave: his contingent was good. I always found when officers had had previous experience the results were better, with the exception of a very few of the Colonial officers. But, as a rule, where the Colonial officer failed was that he was very good up to a certain point, up to the command of about 200 men, but there were very few indeed in my experience whom we would care to send out with a force much larger than that on their own responsibility—independently. They were quite capable of carrying out orders with a force of about 200 men, many of them, but very few indeed beyond that point.

17983. You mean men who had not been in the Regular Service?—Yes, men who had not been in the Regular Service.

17984. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Had you amongst the Canadians any who had been officers of the North-West Mounted Police?—No, I do not think so. I had only one battery of the Canadian Artillery.

17985. They were not men from the North-West?—No, I did not have any Canadian infantry or mounted troops, only one battery of artillery.

17986. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Do you remember who commanded the New South Wales contingent that landed at Beira?—Colonel Airy.

17987. He had served with the Regular Forces?—He had been with the Regular Forces, and I think out there he was an artilleryman; that was a curious thing, because he was commanding the Mounted Rifles.

17988. He had served with the British Forces in Burmah?—Yes, he had.

17989. And he got the Distinguished Service Order there?—Yes.

17990. (Chairman.) You have gone over the different points in your précis. First of all, what have you to say about the shooting?—I think the shooting was very disappointing.

17991. The shooting of all the forces?—Of all. I had very few Regular infantry, of course—in fact, practically none—or cavalry. I think the shooting of the Colonials was very disappointing. I thought the over-sea Colonials would have been much better shots than they were; there were some exceptions, of course, fine individual shots, but on the whole they were very disappointing.

17992. (*Sir John Edge.*) Including the shooting of the guns?—The Canadian Battery after they had been three months in the field were very fair, but that was the only one battery I had—that Canadian Battery.

17993. (*Chairman.*) The shooting of the men did not compare with that of the Boers?—The Boers were the best.

17994. Do you mean collectively or individually?—Individually certainly, and I should think collectively too.

17995. (*Sir John Edge.*) What class of Boer did you have against you?—I think I had every class. I had every portion of the Transvaal; I had most of the Orange River Colony commanders—De Wet, and so on.

17996. Did you find the shooting of the later levies of the Boers was as good as the shooting of the earlier levies?—No, I do not think it was; and, of course, ours improved.

17997. Then which levy are you comparing the shooting of with the British?—I think generally. Generally, I think the Boers' shooting was better than that of the troops I had.

17998. Including both levies; including the earlier levies and the later levies?—When you talk about levies, at the end of the war there were men in the Boer forces who had been fighting right throughout from the start; in fact, it was almost at the end the survival of the fittest among the Boers; some of the best men were still left fighting. In the action we had on the 4th January, 1902, the Boers fought very well, and charged right home to us. They had then some of their very best men under Christopher Botha, and those were certainly as fine fighting men as any I met with at the earlier part of the war. That was about the hottest fight we had so far as man to man was concerned, in the whole war.

17999. (*Chairman.*) But our men improved?—Yes, of course they did with practice.

18000. And eventually they became equal to the enemy?—I should have said that at the end of the war the Boer, man for man, was the better shot.

18001. Except the British South African Police?—Yes, I should say perhaps they were better, because they had had a lot of previous training; some of them had had a year and more training in the police, and had had a good deal of shooting, and they were certainly better. I do not think they were exceptionally good, but I think they were better.

18002. Were they a good force?—A very fine force. They were thoroughly well trained, and were good in many ways which others failed in, such as horsemanship; their horses were well looked after.

18003. The horsemanship as a rule was not good?—The horsemanship, I consider, was not at all good, and the over-sea Colonials were disappointing in that way. As I have said in my précis, both horsemanship and horsemastership improved very much during the campaign. The horsemastership did, of course. There again was where the Regular officer came in; those contingents which had Regular officers were certainly much better in that way than those which had not.

18004. It was to some extent a matter of discipline?—Certainly.

18005. What do you say about physique?—The general physique of the South African Colonials that I had was very fair, and that of the over-sea Colonials very good. That would be natural, perhaps—they were all picked men. The morale and intelligence of both were good. The intelligence of all developed very rapidly during the campaign, and their fighting efficiency increased proportionately, and the way they worked was very satisfactory. I think at the end, so far as that kind of work with intelligence was concerned, we were quite equal to anything we had to meet.

18006. Man for man?—Man for man, so far as intelligence, looking after himself, and finding his way about the country, and scouting, and so on. After a year they were as good as anything we could want.

18007. So that the fighting value increased?—I estimate the fighting value of the units I had after 12 months in the field, as compared with when they started, at the ratio of five to two. I would rather have had 200 of them as they were after a year's service than 500 of them as they were when they started, if I had the choice.

18008. You could have done more with the 200 than

with the 500?—I consider that if Lord Kitchener had offered me at the end of the war 200 of the men I had had under me for a year, or 500 men imperfectly trained, I would have taken the 200.

18009. Do you throw that out as a general observation applicable to the Army?—I do not know. I would rather speak of what I had actually in my own experience. I had always mounted troops, and there are certain things more important with them than with dismounted men, such as scouting, and that sort of thing, and the capabilities of the men to look after themselves, and find their way about, and not get into a mess when left alone. That was the enormous difference after about six or seven months in the field.

18010. You consider that the experience of the war has shown that the principal object to have in view in the training of the soldier is the development of individual intelligence?—Yes, training the individual man. As regards entrenching, it was very difficult to get them at first to do it. They did not think it was much use, and they rather resented the kind of work, especially the South African contingents, as they had been accustomed to employ Kaffirs always, but after they had once had a few actions and they found out what an immense advantage it was, they were very good at it, they were very intelligent, and in fact it did not require at the end of the war to tell them to entrench themselves; they always did it as a matter of course. We took up a position, and expected after an hour or so to find our men entrenched, and, with very rare exceptions, it was so; but at the beginning of the war we had to explain to them how very important it was and what a difference it would make.

18011. That would depend upon the officers too?—A great deal.

18012. And as to the training of the soldier what do you say?—I think it is of great importance to begin at the beginning of his military service to make the individual man independent and self-reliant, capable of finding his way about and of looking after himself in every way, such as cooking in the field (it is most important to be able to make the best value of what little food he has and make the most of it), sufficiently expert as a shot to be able to hold his own, man for man, with any opponent, and sufficiently intelligent to be able when left to himself to carry out the orders of his superiors. I think myself we have been accustomed rather to what I call dry-nurse the soldier from the start; he is accustomed always to look to his non-commissioned officers and to his officers for everything. That is where he differed from all the Colonials. They were accustomed to look after themselves and shift for themselves, and they made the best of what the circumstances provided for them in the way of food and everything else. The difference was most marked. We had very long marches and very hurried marches, mounted troops covering long distances, and all we could give them was just the cattle we picked up. The man trained to look after himself had his meals cooked in a very short time, and another man coming out fresh, a townsman, did not know what to do with the sheep or ox when it was given to him, and by the time he found out what to do with it probably the short time left for his food was almost over; consequently he had to go hungry, and thereby he decreased his own efficiency; he was not able to keep as fit as he ought to be. I think it is most important that a man should be able to look after himself. The same thing applies to scouting, finding his way about the country by landmarks, and by the sun, and so on, which the Colonial does naturally in his own natural life, and so was very superior to the townsman who came out and had no idea of finding his way about.

18013. It is rather difficult to teach them that in this country, is it not?—Extremely. We are trying to begin it, and I think it would be better to do it from the time when a man joins. Some men, who have led country lives, are much more easy to teach than men brought up in towns.

18014. You say that there are difficulties in the way of commanding officers at home in the training of their men by having to furnish the large number of "employed" men that they are called upon to do?—Very great difficulty; that is a thing that is rather outside the scope of the Commission perhaps, but I think we are much hampered in the training of our men by having to furnish the large number of "employed" men that we are called upon to do. The consequence is

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.
12 Mar. 1903.

that, as I have seen at Aldershot now, we have really very few men actually available for the work of the soldier.

18015. You mean on account of so many men being detailed for fatigue duties?—For fatigue duties. A large number of men in all garrisons are employed as clerks and orderlies, and on many duties of that kind.

18016. Who are on the strength of the company?—Who are on the strength of the company. We just manage to relieve them for their training periodically, but they do not get a systematic and regular course. After they have done their month or so they go back to their duties.

18017. We have had a good deal of evidence about it; but are you of opinion that it is a very serious matter?—Yes, I am sure it is.

18018. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Particularly with the short service men?—Yes, we have a very short time to train a man. We pick him up in the streets of a town, and try to teach him to be of use in a campaign like that in South Africa, and you can imagine it takes a very considerable time.

18019. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Your remarks refer mainly to a campaign like that in South Africa?—Yes, naturally I am thinking of the experience one has just been through. I found it so very marked. I can assure you that it makes all the difference to a commander if he knows that he has a couple of hundred men whom he can depend upon, and that he can send out a body of 50 men on their own account, and not to be anxious about them until they come back. To be able to send out 50 men, and know that if they get into a difficulty they will get out of it, and get back all right, and that they will not lose their way or starve themselves because they do not know what to do, makes all the difference.

18020. (*Chairman.*) As regards regimental officers, what have you to say?—The great thing is to encourage the junior officers from the beginning in some way to act more on their own responsibility instead of as at present, subaltern looking to Captain, Captain to Colonel, and Colonel to General. I do not think I should give them financial responsibility. I think that weighs them down more than anything. If a young officer knows that if anything happens to his accounts he may have to pay £5, £10, or £20, he naturally thinks more of that than he does of failing to carry out his training, when he only gets a reprimand from his Colonel perhaps. Therefore I would try to relieve officers, especially junior officers, of financial responsibility, because I think in the natural order of things it must be the one thing they devote most attention to.

18021. Do you mean by having regimental paymasters?—Yes, I do; something of that kind. I would relieve the company officer of accounts as much as possible.

18022. They have been simplified?—Yes, they have been simplified, and they have a system, I think at Dover, in which they will hand over the company accounts to the paymaster.

18023. But you would wish them to be relieved altogether; you do not think that any simplification of the accounts by itself would be enough?—That is a step in the right direction; but I think the real thing is to relieve them of financial responsibility altogether if possible. Many officers are poor men, and it is a frightful thing to them to have to pay up £20 or £30.

18024. And as to staff officers, what have you to say? I think a greater number should be allowed to go through the Staff College. Perhaps I am rather prejudiced, because I am a Staff College officer myself; but wherever I came across Staff College officers, I found the work was done in a far more systematic and satisfactory way than where it was done by officers who had not had that training. I think we had to put officers into staff appointments who had had no experience, and the very fact of their not having had any experience and not knowing the A B C of things rather hampered them; it exercised them so dreadfully in having to learn the routine work, that it took up all their time, whereas an officer who had had training and knew the A B C of the work would be at once at home, and he could devote a great deal more of his time to more important matters, such as advising his General in the operations in the field.

18025. What do you mean when you state in

your précis that a certain number of selected staff officers should be relieved from peace routine duties?—I think that in peace time, somewhat on the line of the German staff, we should have certain officers who have nothing to do with the peace routine. I think that they should be attached to divisions or districts, as the case might be, and that they should supervise the training to a certain extent, and be the confidential advisers to the General on all matters connected with tactical problems and manoeuvres, and that they should assist in training the other officers to teach, because most of the junior regimental officers with the best will in the world do not know how to set about teaching, and if they were able to have the benefit of the advice of men who had nothing else to do, whose time would not be taken up in doing the ordinary peace routine of discipline, and so on, I think it would be a great benefit.

18026. Would those officers not revert in any way to regimental duties?—Yes, they should take their turn; but I think my experience as a staff officer, and for a short time as a general officer, is that the ordinary staff officer has no time to devote to this, because he has a full day's work in carrying out the ordinary routine work of his peace command. At Aldershot and at most places a staff officer is fully occupied in the ordinary peace routine which he cannot neglect.

18027. But you do not mean by that the separation of a class of staff officers who would definitely abandon regimental duties?—No, I think it is an excellent thing that an officer should be kept in touch with his regimental duties. I mean only that out of that staff there should be one officer who never had peace routine duties, but who should be the confidential adviser of the General, and should have the General's problems given to him to work out, and also that he should supervise the tactical work of the regimental officers, and so on.

18028. Then the next subject you deal with is supplies?—I should like to put on record the fact of the remarkable way in which my force, and the whole of Rhodesia, was kept supplied when we were actually cut off. That was really due to Colonel Nicholson, Commandant-General of the British South African Police, who, previous to the outbreak of hostilities, had collected supplies in Buluwayo sufficient to last the whole of the white population of Rhodesia for eight months. That was the situation there, and he saved the situation in the north; and in January, 1900, three months after the war began, he arranged for further supplies to be sent from Port Elizabeth to Beira, so that we were not only able to feed ourselves, but when we relieved Mafeking we were able to throw supplies into that town.

18029. Those supplies were collected before the outbreak of the war?—Yes, in October he had them there. I saw his storehouses; he did not buy all himself, of course, but he had gone round and encouraged the merchants, pointing out to them what might happen, and what good business it was for them to do it; and there were actually in Buluwayo sufficient supplies for eight months for the whole of the white population of Rhodesia, 7,800 men.

18030. And after the war began we could not have done that?—We could not have got it from the south; we could have got it by railway from Beira to Salisbury, from Salisbury to Buluwayo, 250 miles by wagon, and then down by railway again; that was done, but it took a long time.

18031. At any rate, it would have been very difficult to have got the same amount of supplies up after the war began?—We should have been on very short commons indeed.

18032. That is an instance of the advantage of adequate preparation beforehand?—A very great instance.

18033. Was the quality of supplies good?—The quality of supplies was good. No failure on the part of contractors came to my notice.

18034. Have you anything to say as regards horses?—Prior to the outbreak of hostilities horses were purchased for my force at an average price of £19 10s. from different parts of South Africa (about 500) and up till the occupation of Pretoria these could only be supplemented by the few obtainable in Rhodesia, and they were very few. These horses stood the strain of the campaign remarkably well, and nearly 30 per cent. were effective at the end of twelve months' service in the

field. They compared wonderfully with anything that we could get afterwards, and I think a great deal of that was due again to the two months that we had previous to the war, when we had slow and steady work to get them fit. We got them really fit in those two months; after that they were wonderful, and they stood the work in a wonderful way. I myself rode a horse for which I only paid £19 10s., and I rode it throughout the whole campaign; I hardly had another horse.

18035. Was that a South African horse?—Yes, that was a South African horse, and he was perfectly fit at the end. The last trek I did was 60 miles.

18036. I suppose the South African horses had an advantage?—I think so. I think they were a long way the best horses, when they could be got, for the work; they knew the country, and they were good horses. The little horse will do with less food than the big Australian horse; he starves on a ration that the South African pony thrives on. The British South African Police were very well mounted, and were very good horsemasters, and their horses were really a pattern of what a horse should be after twelve months' service in the field.

18037. (*Viscount Esher.*) What size horses?—About 14·2; some of them up to 15 hands; hardly any up to 15 hands, some smaller; between 14 and 15 hands we bought them as a rule. We tried to buy them about 14 to 15 hands, and preferred them 14 to 14·2.

18038. (*Sir John Jackson.*) In which district did you get the best horses?—The Orange Free State.

18039. What about the Basutos?—The Basutos are rather hard to get; I do not think they could be obtained for that price. They are very good ponies, but the Basutos did not like selling them. We had a remount officer in Basutoland, and he did get a certain number.

18040. Is the Basuto pony considered the best?—The Basuto pony is even a smaller pony than what we had. I do not think one could do better than with the Orange Free State ponies as they were then in the beginning of 1899. In 1896 I had to buy 1,100 of them, and they did extraordinarily well. I bought them for as little as £17 each.

18041. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Looking at the enormous number of horses used up, you must have been much more fortunate than others?—In the earlier part yes, but in the latter part I was no better off than anybody else, and that I say is due to the fact that the horses were worked too soon after landing in the country. That was unavoidable. We had an enormous number of mounted troops employed, and an enormous number of columns, and unless Lord Kitchener had knocked off some of the columns altogether, which might have prolonged the war (at any rate, he thought so), the columns had to be kept going, and we were constantly kept moving, and the supply of horses was not equal to the demand.

18042. Still your men must have been very careful of their horses?—In the first part they were very good indeed.

18043. Had you greater facilities for grazing them generally throughout the country?—No.

18044. Yours was a peculiar service, as we are aware?—Yes, but I think in the two months we had got the men into a thoroughly good routine. We had had two months of peace when we were our own masters, during which the horses themselves were made very fit, and we were able to keep that up for the first year. Then my Rhodesian men were disbanded, and after that I had many different contingents, and the horsemaster-ship amongst the over-sea Colonials, I am sorry to say, was not at all good. My experience was that it rather acted in this way, that if the Australian got a bad horse, he did not care a bit about it, and was very careless in looking after it, and, therefore, it went from bad to worse, because if they once began getting bad horses, they took less trouble about them.

18045. Your men came to feel that horses were a necessity, that they could not be replaced always, and therefore must be carefully looked after?—Yes, that was in the early part of the war; every man knew the value of his horse then, and if a horse was ill we all went and looked at it, and considered it a very serious thing. In the latter part of the war, of course, no such consideration was possible.

18046. (*Chairman.*) You did a good deal of work on

the railway?—Yes, in the earlier part of the war a good deal of work was done on the railway, because we depended on the railway entirely for getting up our supplies on our advance to Mafeking.

18047. And also you had armoured trains?—Yes, and the armoured trains were excellent; they were improvised in Buluwayo by the railway employees there; and the little guns we had were very good, too. We had a Maxim and a 7-pounder gun, very ingeniously made, and they did extraordinarily good work in keeping open the railway. We always ran the armoured trains in pairs. We always had one in support, with the construction train close up behind, so that any damage to the railway was repaired at once by the second armoured train in support, and really we never had any difficulty.

18048. What were they used for, to bring up supplies?—To convoy the supplies, and also to prevent any damage being done to the railway. They used to halt for the night at different places, such as bridges, and any dangerous places. We used fuel entirely for the trains; there were only 75 tons of coal in Buluwayo, and we never touched that.

18049. You used wood?—Yes, entirely, hard wood. We had to cut the wood as we went along, and it did very well. And it was very useful in one way, there was very little smoke with it, and so the Boers did not see it very much.

18050. What was your experience of mules and oxen?—The mules we got in Rhodesia were excellent, and some of the mules that we bought went through the whole of the campaign. The quality both of the mules and oxen deteriorated as we went on, and the difficulty in feeding the transport animals caused very heavy losses.

18051. Were you fully equipped with transport at the beginning?—I had very little transport. I could not carry more than about eight or nine days' supplies on wagons.

18052. Were the wagons good?—The South African mule wagon is the best wagon, I think, of all for that country. We had two very good Canadian wagons which were excellent, and they lasted very well; they were rather heavier, but they were very solidly made, and they stood extraordinarily well. Otherwise, I think, the South African mule wagon is quite the best mule wagon for the country.

18053. And with regard to the medical services, what do you say?—With regard to the medical services I had only one medical officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps with me, but I engaged civil surgeons from Buluwayo. The civil hospital of Buluwayo was used as a base hospital, and a station hospital was established at Tuli and others afterwards at places on the railway. We had hardly any tents at all, but we managed to use buildings and so on, and native kraals in places. I think, considering everything, the medical arrangements were well carried out; they all worked well. The serious cases of wounded and so on, as long as we had the railway, we sent back to Buluwayo.

18054. Was there much sickness?—There was a good deal of fever in Bechuanaland, that was the country just north of Mafeking, and a great deal especially amongst some of the men who came from Mashonaland. I had as many as 70 per cent. of those down with fever at one time.

18055. And the absence of tents would affect that?—Yes, certainly.

18056. Did you manage to get them under cover?—I had to send those cases back to Buluwayo, and then after a week or a fortnight perhaps they recovered and came back again.

18057. As regards Engineer services you have something to say?—In connection with Engineer services I should like to record the excellent work done by the Engineer troop of the South Rhodesian Volunteers who came and repaired the railway. They were all railway employees, and it was owing to their work that the railway from Buluwayo, on which so much depended, was so rapidly repaired. I think in the latter stages of the war more use might have been made of the field telegraphs. When columns were working all over the country I do not think they had as many field telegraph and cable carts as they might have had.

18058. Did you have any field telegraphs?—Yes, I had one always with me. I managed to keep it all

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.

12 Mar. 1903.

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.

12 Mar. 1903.

along, and it was of the greatest possible assistance. I always kept it as long as I could.

18059. In the latter phases of the war I suppose the number of columns again affected that?—Yes, I do not think it was quite realised how much use might be made of it. It is rather a troublesome thing; it must not be wasted, and we have to arrange to send back to collect it; we cannot scatter it all over the veldt. But in the latter part of the war everything depended on intelligence and communication between columns. If we had intelligence and communication between columns we could do a great deal.

18060. You had some native pioneers, I think?—I had what I thought worked very well, that is to say, natives mounted on little ponies or donkeys, or anything they could pick up, with picks and shovels to go on right ahead behind the advance guard to prepare drifts and roads, and any bad parts of roads, so as to prevent any delay to the guns and wagons when they came up. They were very good indeed, and did very good work; they were very useful.

18061. Have you anything to say as regards guns?—The guns that I had up to the relief of Mafeking were of various and mostly old patterns, and were ineffective. We had altogether seven guns and 12 machine guns. Out of seven guns three only were efficient. There was one Maxim Nordenfeldt quickfiring gun, which was really one of the Jameson raid guns; the Boers took one at the Jameson raid, and they did not take the other. I had one and they had the other; and the situation at Crocodile Pools was that these two guns were fighting against each other for about a month.

18062. You had only three efficient guns?—That is all at first, and the two little 2·5 in. screw guns, mountain battery guns, were very small, and they had black powder, which was a terrible target for the enemy, and they could only shoot up to about 3,000 yards.

18063. (*Viscount Esher.*) Where were they got from?—They were two guns that came up from Natal in 1896. In 1896, when I was in the Matabele War, I recommended the Chartered Company to buy them from the Government, which they did, and those are the guns that I had three years later. They were very good guns for mountain work and that sort of thing, but they were no use at all against the longer range guns.

18064. (*Chairman.*) Had you any galloping guns?—Only the Maxims; I had three Maxims; they were on naval carriages.

18065. So that they could go with the mounted men?—Yes, they could go with the mounted men; they were rather slow, but they could go. Then later on we had another of these mountain battery guns from Mashonaland, but we had to carry it on a cart; it had no equipment. And then later on we got the Canadian battery guns, just before Mafeking; they were the ordinary field guns, but they had no horses, and we had to draw them with mules. Afterwards we had the service horse and field artillery guns.

18066. But you think the range was not good?—They were not useful for the kind of work we had to do then, because we very seldom got in much artillery work at the Boers at the latter part of the war under about 4,000 or 5,000 yards, and these guns were of little use over 3,500 yards, I think.

18067. You had some pom-poms?—I think pom-poms used singly are excellent with mounted troops; I think they are very valuable; I think they saved life. If they are sent with the advance guard of the force with mounted troops it very often happens that small bodies of the enemy are trying to delay them in taking up a position on a hill and so on, and if we have pom-poms as a rule they clear away without offering an resistance. If we have not any we have to make a turning movement probably or to attack a position, and, perhaps, lose three or four men in doing so, with no other result except that we get the position with the delay of an hour and the loss of four or five men, whereas with a pom-pom we get it without the loss of time and without the loss of a man.

18068. We have been told that the effect of the pom-pom shell is more a moral effect?—It is entirely so. I do not think they very often hit anything, but the moral effect was excellent.

18069. Would you say the same of the very long range of the Boers big guns?—I had no experience of the Boer big guns.

18070. Not in the subsequent stages of the war?—No.

Once when I was with General Paget he had two long-range guns, but I was always with the mounted troops in front, so that I never saw them working. In the latter phases of the war it was certainly not worth while dragging about heavy guns, because mobility was then of the greatest importance.

18071. What was your experience of machine guns?—I do not think that machine guns are much use with mounted troops. In fact, I discarded mine in the latter phases of the war. In attack I do not think they are much use owing to the difficulty of getting them in position in time. Of course they are extremely valuable in defence of a position, and with convoys; they are excellent to protect a convoy if there is one in front and one behind; and I found them extremely valuable with the armoured trains.

18072. You are of opinion that the artillery officers should be equipped with field glasses?—I think that all artillery officers should be equipped with the best field glasses obtainable. I mean to say that the Government should provide them, and should insist upon their officers having only the best glasses. Some of the officers only had very inferior glasses, and in the latter phases of the war, when they shot at very long distances, the glasses were not good enough.

18073. Had your scouts no glasses?—Yes, they had a certain number of field glasses.

18074. Were they good glasses?—Yes; of course they only had what they happened to provide themselves with. Some of the Colonial contingents had a certain number of glasses, and their officers had glasses.

18075. But trained military scouts you think ought to have a good glass?—A glass, and a telescope, too.

18076. Do you prefer the telescope?—Personally I cannot use the telescope, but all my good scouts could—they always used it. I think certainly they ought to have it. I have been talking to scouting officers, and they say they ought really to have both.

18077. You think you ought to have some men who can use both?—Yes, a good scout really wants both, because of the different lights.

18078. But, of course, it requires training to use the telescope?—Yes.

18079. And you think there are a great many men who could use the telescope, and that it would be an advantage for them to have it?—Distinctly. We had some men, guides and so on, who all had their telescopes.

18080. And what is your opinion of the service rifle?—I thought the rifle came out very well indeed; I thought it was an excellent rifle; the sighting might be improved, but I think it stood the wear and tear extraordinarily well, and I think at the end on the whole the majority of the Boers would have preferred it to their own rifle. At the end, of course, they had to take it, because they had not any Mauser ammunition, but I think among the intelligent Boers the majority preferred our rifle to their own.

18081. Is there anything else that you would like to add?—I would like to say, with regard to the war, that I think it showed us what could be done by mounted rifles, mounted troops. I think it is important that we should train men to act as mounted infantry, and the more we can train the better. I think the fact of their being so trained, so far from being adverse to their training as infantry men, is very much in their favour, because they learn all the duties of scouting and so on after having been mounted, so that when they come back to their battalions they are certainly better men.

18082. The conditions in South Africa were peculiar, of course?—Yes, in any other war we may not be able to use mounted infantry to such an extent as we did in this last war. And one of the chief points, of course, was that the enemy were all mounted rifles practically. Still, I think it showed us what can be done with mounted infantry or mounted rifles, whichever you choose to call them—mounted men with rifles, I mean.

18083. (*Viscount Esher.*) What you mean I suppose is that there is every advantage to be gained by increasing the mobility of infantry?—Certainly.

18084. Then do you think it would be a good thing to pass all the men of an infantry battalion through a mounted infantry course in time of peace; is that your suggestion?—I do not think they could all be passed through. If in every battalion there was a fourth trained, I think that would do very well.

18085. Would there be any objection to passing them

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.

12 Mar. 1903.

all through?—Only the difficulty of doing it all in the time, and providing the number of horses for the training and so on, if the present system is retained and one company at a time trained.

18086. How long does it take to train a company?—They train them now in three months.

18087. Then you would only be able to train one company of a battalion annually, I suppose?—I do not think they do more than that at present; they have not the establishment at present to do more; they have not the number of horses to do it.

18088. Then you could not very well train mounted infantry, I suppose, except during the summer months?—Not effectively.

18089. Then you might get two companies of a battalion under training in a season?—Yes, but then they have to be taken away from other duties.

18090. I mean in succession. Is not that the present scheme in point of fact?—I think the present scheme is to train two companies.

18091. To train as many as you can?—Yes, to train as many as we can.

18092. You do not see any objection to passing as many men through a mounted infantry course as possible, do you?—No, because when it comes to war, if we had a Reserve who had been through a mounted infantry course, I think it would be of very great value.

18093. Were the men under yourself all through the war exclusively mounted men?—I had three or four companies at a time to do convoy and baggage work, but I never commanded infantry in action.

18094. But towards the end of your command, towards the end of the campaign, did your command differ as regards the men—did you have more Regular troops under your command then?—I had some mounted infantry then.

18095. How did they compare with the Irregular Force which you commanded in the earlier part of the war?—I should not like to say very much as to that, because the mounted infantry that I had happened to be men who had just come out, one of the later battalions that came out from England, and they compared of course very unfavourably, so far as scouting and finding their way about, with the earlier ones. I would send out 100 Colonials, as I say, and would go to sleep quite happy, knowing that they would be all right. If I had sent 100 mounted infantry out, I should have been very uneasy. They would fight well enough, but they had not a knowledge of the country, or how to find their way about, or of scouting; that could only be got by experience and training.

18096. I suppose the mounted infantry showed a great want of knowledge of horsemastership, too?—There, of course, the regular officer came in. No, they did not show a great want of knowledge of horsemastership at all. I think they were better in that respect, because the regular officer and regular discipline came in.

18097. Then as regards the care of horses, you think it is as much a matter of discipline as of knowledge?—Yes, I think quite as much. A man can be trained to look after a horse; it does not require any great knowledge to look after his horse, as long as he does things at the proper time—grooms him, feeds him, waters him, and is always thinking about his horse. A man can very soon be taught what he has to do, as long as one can be sure that he will do it, as regards looking after a horse. I am not talking about technical knowledge, of course, such as veterinary knowledge.

18098. Are you at Aldershot now?—Yes.

18099. Have any steps been taken to apply the lessons of the war in that direction, so far as you have knowledge?—About what?

18100. As regards horsemastership?—I am now in command of an infantry brigade, you see, and that is outside my work.

18101. And the mounted infantry course has not begun yet?—Yes, it is going on now.

18102. At Aldershot?—Yes, but I have only just seen them incidentally.

18103. Have you heard it suggested that it would be a great advantage to an infantry battalion to have mounted signallers under them?—Yes, I have heard it suggested, and I think it certainly would be a great advantage.

18104. (Sir Frederick Darley.) There was an attack

and a defence at Elands River, was there not?—Do you mean under Colonel Hore?

18105. Yes. Was that under your command?—No, I was at Rustenburg when that was going on.

18106. Are you aware of the great loss of horses between Beira and Buluwayo in that contingent commanded by Colonel Airey?—Yes, I know there was a great loss there.

18107. That was from eating some poisonous plant, was it not?—I should think it was a very unhealthy place where they were; it was pretty hard on them at times. I cannot remember the name of the place now, but it was in Mashonaland, and it was a very bad place, I know by reputation, but I do not know it personally—I have never been there. I should think that is where they lost a great number of their horses—in fact, I know it is.

18108. To go to another matter, how would you recommend that the staff officer who, you said, should be relieved from peace routine duties should train the regimental officers; would it be by lectures?—Not entirely. I would allow him to take the officers of a certain unit out and go over a tactical problem with them; that is one of the duties which I think he might perform very well. Personally, in my brigade, I should be very glad to have an officer like that. I should say to him: You will set them a scheme and go out and explain to them exactly on the ground how it would work out. And then another thing which he might do, I think, would be to give them lectures in the way of teaching them how to teach, drawing up examples in a short lecture of the way in which they should lecture to the men, because in my experience just lately as a general officer, I have heard officers commanding companies lecturing to their men, and in many cases they have worked up the subject very carefully, and taken a great deal of pains about it. I feel certain that they are absolutely doing all that they know, but they do not seem to be able to put their lecture in the way quite that the men will understand, and I think a little teaching in that way would be a great benefit to them.

18109. That is to say, they do not understand how to impart the knowledge that they have?—They do not know how to impart the knowledge that they have to the men. They could answer any question that might be asked about the particular subject set them; if they were asked questions they would answer very carefully, very intelligently, and very well; but I find that when they come to talk to their men, as I make them do, they do not seem to be able to express their subject in the way that the men might realise, and I think they want a little training in that way.

18110. You think they might be taught how to do it?—I think so. I think anybody might be taught that.

18111. There is only one other question I want to ask you. You spoke of the pom-pom shell, and you said that it is not a dangerous shell, in your opinion?—I do not think it is.

18112. What is the radius of danger?—It is very small, but I could not tell you exactly offhand what it is. It is the moral effect of these shells going off very quickly one after the other that makes them useful. You would think that they must hit; but somehow they do not. In my experience, I know we fired a tremendous number of pom-pom shells, and I am quite certain that they hit very few Boers. The pom-pom officers that I had were excellent, I am sure. I watched them shooting, and I am sure they were shooting very well and carefully. But I think the pom-poms have a tremendous moral effect. I have had them against me, too, in the earlier part of the war, and it was very unpleasant.

18113. (Sir John Jackson.) Did you find the Colonial troops better educated, as a rule?—I found that they varied very much. Do you mean in the way of their being able to read and write, and so on? The New Zealanders, I should say, were better educated than most of them. I think throughout, the New Zealanders were a better class.

18114. Quite so?—I found that they varied very much.

18115. Were they a better class than the Australians?—Yes.

18116. And the Canadians?—I only had one battery of Canadians, and they were certainly very good men; but as compared with the Australians, I think the New Zealanders were the better class.

18117. You spoke of the advantage to the Colonial

troops of being under the command of Regular officers; I suppose you mean regimental officers?—Yes, I mean regimental officers.

18118. Then if you bring in Regular regimental officers to command the Colonial troops, what would you make of the Colonial officers—where would you bring them in?—I think they would have to take the place of the subalterns. If we had a mounted unit, I should make the squadron commander a Regular officer, if possible; if I had the selection, and could do it in my own way, I should make the squadron leader and the adjutant regimental officers, and the troop officers Colonial officers.

18119. Do you think that a plan of that kind would not be much resented?—I do not think so. I think they would have resented it at the beginning of the war, but I honestly think that the majority of the men themselves would far rather have gone into action or gone out on trek under Regular officers.

18120. But would the Colonial officer resent it?—He might; naturally he would prefer to command himself, that is only human nature; but the question is whether it is better for the unit.

18121. Just one question with regard to relieving the fighting officers of clerical work, or, as you term it, financial responsibility?—I do not think I said clerical work. I do not mind their doing clerical work.

18122. You spoke particularly of financial work?—Yes, I did, because I am sure it weighs upon them.

18123. It has been said that where the captain pays his regiment it brings him into better touch with his men, would you say that that was the case?—Yes, it does in some ways; it has that advantage, no doubt; but then, again, it has a little disadvantage, because the man has a little feeling that the captain, perhaps, is, I will not say withholding his pay, but is not giving him as much as he might do for fear of himself, the captain, being a loser.

18124. So that in that way it is a disadvantage, you

think, for the captain to pay his men?—Yes, I think so. I quite agree with you that there is a slight advantage in bringing him more in touch with his men, but I think that that is more than outweighed by that feeling which I think exists; and then I say it is still more outweighed by the enormous advantage of relieving officers of financial responsibility.

18125. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) From your very varied experience during the war, do you consider that it would be an advantage to have a special body of scouts distinct from the Mounted Infantry—trained men selected for their general intelligence and long sight—attached to the Army?—Yes, I think it would be a distinct advantage to any force in the field to have such a body of men, certainly.

18126. There is no such corps now, I believe?—No, there is not.

18127. Then you think it would be well that there should be such a corps?—Yes, I think so; you mean recruited perhaps from any part of the Empire?

18128. Yes?—You might have some Colonials or anybody?

18129. Yes, certainly men selected for their long-sight and general intelligence?—Certainly.

18130. You say that the Canadian wagons were very good and of great strength and durability; they were also, were they not, for their capacity very light in weight, made of the strongest material—hickory wood. I think?—Yes, they were hickory. I should have said that they weighed actually heavier than the South African wagons. I am bound to say that I never actually weighed them, but they certainly seemed heavier in draught so far as one could judge by the animals drawing them.

18131. And though not capable of carrying so much as the ordinary South African wagon, they were good of their kind?—I thought they were very good.

18132. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else that you wish to add?—There is nothing more I wish to say.

Lieut.-General Sir W. G. NICHOLSON, K.C.B., R.E., recalled and further examined.

(See Questions 1 to 158 and 264 to 457, Vol. 1, for Sir William Nicholson's previous evidence.)

18133. (*Chairman.*) When you were before us on the last occasion, the 15th of October, at the end of your evidence then we said that we would like perhaps to hear from you some evidence connected with the offices which you actually held during the war?—Yes.

18134. Would you in the first place tell us exactly what those offices were?—I was first Military Secretary to the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief from the beginning of January, about the 14th of January to the 21st, I think it was, of February. After that, owing to the transport arrangements being in a state of some confusion, Lord Roberts asked me to undertake the duties of Director of Transport at headquarters.

18135. And you held that position throughout?—I held it until I left South Africa.

18136. And you came home with Lord Roberts, I think?—I went back to India. I left shortly before Lord Roberts. I was still Adjutant-General in India, and I had to rejoin my appointment before taking leave to come home.

18137. Then the Directorship of Transport was really the office that you held?—Yes, during most of the time. I also performed certain military secretary's duties while I was Director of Transport, but that is, perhaps, immaterial.

18138. With regard to the question of transport, I think you refer us to a dispatch which Lord Roberts wrote, and which appeared in the "London Gazette" of 16th April, 1901?—Yes, as an appendix to the "Gazette." (*Vide Appendix Vol., page 234.*)

18139. Does it set out in full the argument which you would give for the exchange which was then made?—Certainly.

18140. I daresay you are aware that there is a difference of opinion on the matter of the necessity of superseding the regimental transport?—There is a difference of opinion, but I think that is chiefly due to the fact that the officers who advocate the regimental system are accustomed to it on a small scale, and undoubtedly in the case of a small expedition, a column of a couple of thousand men, the regimental system answers extremely well. Where there are large bodies

of troops, a considerable number of whom must necessarily be stationary, as garrisons or guarding lines of communication, if the regimental transport system is kept up a great deal of the transport is wasted.

18141. Do you think it is altogether confined to an objection of that kind?—I think it is a matter of scale. I have seen both systems used in India for columns of moderate strength; but whichever system is adopted in the first instance, the regimental or the departmental system, in larger operations, such as the Afghan War, we have to go to the departmental system.

18142. We had evidence from Lord Wolseley to the opposite effect; he was strongly in favour of the regimental transport system?—Well, I can only say that in South Africa we could not have moved at all with the regimental transport system. We never should have got to Bloemfontein for about six months, I should imagine.

18143. That is what I really want to get at, whether it was peculiar to the position in South Africa or whether it is a question of a general system?—As a general system I think it is obvious that, if transport is allotted regimentally, every Commanding Officer wishes to keep it. He sees, no doubt, that it is efficient, but he does not like to part with it; and when he has to halt (and he may be halted for a month or three or four months), the whole of that transport is wasted; it does nothing. The regimental system is a most extravagant system in large operations.

18144. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) The Commander-in-Chief in the field would always have power to call it up at any moment?—If he called it up from regimental charge he would have to take away the regimental officers and non-commissioned officers who look after it. The result would be that he would dislocate the whole machinery. He would take officers and men that could not be spared, and then whom would he get as the superintending or supervising authorities over this mass of regimental transport?

18145. (*Chairman.*) This is the answer to which I refer. The question put to Lord Wolseley was: "It See was represented that there was a great loss on regi-

Major-General
H. C. O.
Plumer, C.B.
12 Mar. 1903.

See Q. 456
and 457.

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

mental transport if the regiment was halted for a considerable time at one place—that that transport was lost for the general movement of the Army?” and his answer was: “That may be the case, but that is easily got over, as I have seen very often, in this way—if you have a halt for any length of time you club the regimental transport together to carry stores and use it under the superintendence of brigade organisation for the time being; but the very moment that any battalion moves it should move with its own regimental transport, and in that regimental transport you almost always carry either a day or a day and a half, and sometimes even two days’ provisions.” I only read it to you as showing that there is some basis for the other opinion?—Yes, I quite understand that, but my experience has been, both in India and South Africa, that if you have a regular transport organisation on a departmental basis, it works much better on a large scale than the regimental system. On a small scale the column is continually moving, or, at all events, it halts together and moves together, and the regimental transport has the advantage that the Commanding Officer, for the sake of the mobility of his own regiment, takes as a rule the utmost trouble in looking after the animals, while the departmental officer has not that personal interest in the matter that the regimental officer has. But as regards the general movements of a large force, I think it stands to reason that a departmental organisation, especially fitted for the purpose of transport, is better than the sort of improvised system which Lord Wolseley would adopt.

18146. But as I understand the organisation of which the regimental transport is a part, there is always behind the regimental transport the departmental system with the supply columns and supply parks?—Yes.

18147. That is always departmental, is it not?—That is always departmental.

18148. So that it is only a question whether the regimental system should continue for the purposes of the three or four days’ or week’s supply?—For what is called the second line of transport. The first line of transport is water carts, ammunition, and entrenching tools. That it has always been admitted should be in regimental charge.

18149. Then there comes the regimental transport for a day and a half or two days’ supply?—It is more than that; in South Africa we generally carried four or five days’ supply in the second line of transport.

18150. But behind that, under that organisation, there must be the departmental organisation?—Yes, certainly.

18151. And that would provide for the movement of larger columns, would it not conceivably?—It is generally a slower and heavier form of transport. In South Africa the second line of transport was entirely mule transport; and the supply columns and supply parks transport was ox transport, which moves much more slowly. So that it would not have effected the object to have utilised the ox transport if it could not have accompanied the troops, more particularly the cavalry. It could not have kept pace with the troops at all, as a matter of fact.

18152. Again I say I want to know whether it is a question as regards South African conditions or whether it is a part of your idea for the general organisation of transport for the Army in the future?—It is my idea of the transport organisation of the Army in future.

18153. That there ought not to be a regimental transport in that sense—a second line?—No, unless in the case of small columns up to, say, 2,000 men, or something of that sort, which is operating as an expeditionary column; then it is just as well to hand over the transport to the units.

18154. Does that mean that you have the departmental system and that you break it up at the beginning of the small war and hand it over to the regiments?—I do not think we can ever have a complete transport establishment in peace time; it is so exceedingly expensive. I do not think even in India they could keep up anything like the amount of transport they would require on a large scale, and therefore the organisation has to be very largely expanded in the event of war.

18155. Of course; but still, as it stands at present, the theory of the organisation is that each regiment has a certain amount of regimental transport in the second line?—Yes, but without animals.

18156. You would do away with that?—I would do away with that.

18157. And you would have a substitute of some kind—I suppose the departmental system?—I would have a departmental system capable of expansion.

18158. How would that work in peace time?—No regiment has transport allotted to it in peace time. There is a purely departmental system in peace time anyhow, because the Army Service Corps are simply quartered at the stations where their services are required, and they are not attached to regiments.

18159. I ought to have put it perhaps on mobilisation. Under the former system each regiment took its transport, did it not?—Yes.

18160. Instead of that you would have the departmental system with the same general amount of transport?—Yes.

18161. And if you had a small column operating you would sub-divide it, and hand it over to the regiments?—Yes, simply hand over what they required.

18162. Instead of under the present system, as Lord Wolseley says, you would have it sub-divided for regiments, but club it?—Yes.

18163. You consider it is better to provide a general departmental system for the larger expeditions?—Yes, certainly.

18164. Even if you had to sub-divide it if it should come to a small expedition?—Even if for a small expedition it is temporarily handed over to regimental charge.

18165. It has been represented before us that though this operation was carried out under your superintendence for the march to Bloemfontein, in the subsequent stages of the war the transport really became regimental again?—I have no knowledge of that. We made no change through the march to Pretoria; and down to the time to Komati Poort the transport was entirely under the departmental system, but what Lord Kitchener may have done afterwards, when the country settled down, at least to a certain extent settled down, and he garrisoned it, as it were, by columns in different districts, I cannot say.

18166. I do not think it was exactly put to us that there was a general reversal of your decision, but that, as a matter of fact, the transport became attached to regiments with this disadvantage, that it was not the regimental transport of which the regiment was proud, but was simply a transport which by an accident had become attached to it; but that, as a matter of fact, it went back to the transport allotted to each regiment?—They did away with my appointment, and converted the head of the transport into Assistant Adjutant-General for Transport. The new appointment was held by Colonel Wickham, an officer of the Indian Staff Corps. I saw him when he came home, and I asked him how the thing had been working, and he seemed to imply that it had been worked on the same system; but here was the difference, of course, that, especially towards the end of the war, they were operating in the way I say; that is to say, in small columns of about 2,000 or under, and in that case practically the transport remains permanently with the columns; there is no necessity or no advantage in transferring it from one column to another; and in that way it certainly does become, as it were, attached to the column. But, still, there were the departmental officers and the transport officers in command of the various mule companies; they did not hand over the mule companies to the officers commanding units. But certainly the transport became much more attached to the various columns than it was attached to the regimental units which we were moving, or halting in pursuance of a large scheme of operations during the earlier period of the war, because we continually transferred it as the necessity arose. I think that is the explanation of that.

18167. If the departmental system was to be adopted as the general system for the Army, you would require to expand the department, would you not?—I do not think we would require to expand the department in peace time, because almost all of the transport officers in South Africa were special service officers of all branches of the Service who went out to South Africa, and were placed at my disposal for transport work.

18168. Did not that create some difficulties?—They worked very well. There were very few failures. I was quite astonished at the way they worked.

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

See Q. 14008.

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

18169. We have had here some evidence that when you had the Army Service Corps officers things went quite right, but that there was a little less regularity when you had not the Army Service Corps officer in charge; was that your experience?—I cannot say that. Of the two officers who particularly distinguished themselves in the matter, one was Colonel Money, an Artillery officer, who was Persian interpreter to Sir William Lockhart. He really, I should say, was one of the very best of the officers. Then there was Colonel Wickham, of the Indian Staff Corps, who succeeded me as the head of the department. If I had a list I could point out many of the officers. I should say that although the Army Service Corps officers did well, there were several officers of other arms of the Service who did better.

18170. Oh, no doubt, that might be; but for the general work of the department would you not require to have the trained Army Service Corps officers if you establish it on a large scale—a separate department?—We certainly would require that nucleus of officers.

18171. Lord Esher refers me to a piece of evidence of Lord Kitchener: "Lastly, in urging the formation of a separate transport department, I would point out that there is no more important work in any branch of the Army, and none in which a thorough and careful training is more necessary, more especially at a time like the present, when mechanical transport will probably be an important adjunct to the military transport service." That was the point that I was putting.

(Viscount Esher.) You think there should be a separate transport department now. Is that what you said just now you were trying to work out?—We are trying to work out a method of providing a certain amount of personnel and a certain number of trained officers in transport work.

18172. Is that practically a separate department?—That in peace time would be under the Quartermaster-General, and the officers would be found from the Army Service Corps.

18173. It would be a branch of the Quartermaster-General's department, of course?—Yes.

18174. Who is working it out; is it being worked out by the Quartermaster-General, or by you?—I have to work out the war establishments on which the amount of transport required for an armed force in the field is based, but we are confronted by this very considerable difficulty, that we operate in so many different countries. If we provide at home wheeled transport and harness, and so on, on a large scale, say for six Army Corps, we may never require it, and if, for example, an officer is trained with reference to horses and so on (wheeled transport and horses), that officer is not of very much use if we are using camels, as we are doing at present in Somaliland; or, if we sent out reinforcements to India, where we have mules and camels, there again this training—it is of some use, but is not as valuable as it would otherwise be. But I may say that they had a very exhaustive Committee in India, of which General Sanford was president, to consider the question of transport, the report of which I can no doubt furnish to the Commission if desired (I believe I have a copy). Their report is in entire accordance with this departmental system; they condemn the regimental system.

18175. Are they necessarily inconsistent, because I should have thought the transport department could, in certain instances, where required, apply the regimental system?—That is what I say, certainly there is no difficulty. This proportion of transport (the second line transport), which in the case of South Africa was mule transport, is simply handed over. Say a column is going to relieve Mafeking (there were four mule companies wanted for it): you can say, if you like: "Here we hand over to you four companies of mule transport; you can place them if you like in regimental charge."

18176. But you could do that through the central organisation, such as you mention, in every case if you thought it desirable?—Certainly, but I say that unless there is the organisation of the departmental system the reverse cannot be done.

18177. (Sir Frederick Darley.) When you hand over the transport, would you hand over the transport officer?—Yes, he would remain probably there with the General until the operation was concluded, when he would take it over again.

18178. If you were handing over a small column, you would hand over the transport officer with it?—If the transport were placed in regimental charge the transport officer would be relieved of responsibility for it for the

time being, but when the column had completed its work there would have to be somebody to pick it up again and move it away to wherever it was wanted, therefore the departmental transport officer would probably accompany it, though not in charge of it.

18179. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) There the argument on the other side comes in, that a small unit, having temporary charge of the transport, would not take the same care of it as it did in the past when it had special charge of it?—I quite admit the disadvantage, but it is much less than the other disadvantage, that the regimental system in large operations is so frightfully extravagant; and then if you maintain complete regimental transport you have a difficulty in feeding it, as the number of animals increases so enormously. We should have had to have more than double the transport that we actually had.

18180. (Chairman.) I do not quite understand why the regimental transport, as it existed, could not be picked up and made part of the departmental transport as well as the contrary conversion which you have just described?—Because, I should not have had the departmental officers needed if I had had to pick it up at the moment. In each mule company I had the officer commanding it and one or two junior officers under him; I also had non-commissioned officers and certain subordinates. When it was in regimental charge there was a regimental officer appointed to take charge of it, and he had non-commissioned officers from the regiment under him. If it had been handed over to me they would not have spared those regimental officers. In the first place, they said they had too few officers as it was, and they would not spare them; and I could not have taken away the non-commissioned officers and men from the regiment.

18181. Were those men who were in charge of the transport ordinary regimental officers on the strength of the regiment?—Yes, that was the system—to appoint a regimental officer. So much transport is handed over to the commanding officer, who says to some captain or subaltern, "I place you in charge of that, and you will accompany it, except when we engage the enemy," and in action with the enemy he is supposed to leave the transport and join his company.

18182. With the result that the personnel of the transport must separate from the regiment?—No, it was not so under the regimental system.

18183. And the non-commissioned officers must go into action, too?—No, I think that the non-commissioned officers were supposed to remain with the transport.

18184. He would be left with the transport?—Yes, the non-commissioned officers and men would be left with the transport. Probably there would be two or three men with it.

18185. I only bring to your notice the fact that there has been a good deal of evidence before us still maintaining that the regimental transport system is the preferable one?—Well, all I can say is, I do not think it could have been adhered to. In fact, Sir Elliot Wood, the Commanding Royal Engineer, told me that when Sir Redvers Buller first went out there he was in such despair about his transport that he consulted with Sir Elliot Wood, and they both came to the conclusion that a flank movement to Bloemfontein was out of the question across the Orange River until they had made the railway, and that the railway would take six months.

18186. (Sir John Edge.) I suppose anyone looking at it from a regimental point of view would stick to the regimental transport?—Yes, certainly; and it has the advantage that it is the personal interest of the regiment to keep it as efficient as possible.

18187. (Chairman.) Is there anything else on the transport question that you would like to say?—No, I think not. I think that Appendix to the "Gazette" gives the whole story of it. (Vide Appendix Vol., page 234.)

18188. Then you are prepared to speak to the training of staff officers?—Yes.

18189. And you have been good enough to put down some views on paper. Perhaps we might take that as your evidence?—Yes, that is my view on the subject.

Training in Duties as Staff Officers.

It will probably be of interest to the Royal Commission to contrast the system of the organisation and training of the Staff of the Army which existed at the time of the Peninsula and Crimean wars with that which was

See Q. 186.

in force at the outbreak of the South African war, and to consider what has been learnt in this matter from the practical experience of the recent campaign.

From the eleventh report of the Royal Commission which was appointed in 1805 under a special Act of Parliament to enquire into the conduct of public business on the Military Departments of the Army (page 14), it appears that the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department at that time comprised the movement, quartering, and encamping of troops; the disposition of troops in the field, the preparation of plans of defence, military surveys and reconnaissances, and the maintenance of a dépôt of military plans, maps, and memoirs and of a military library. A Quartermaster-General's Staff was at this time assigned to all British armies in the field, and to all commands at home and abroad. In peace, Assistant Quartermaster-Generals of districts were, under the "General Regulations and Orders for the Army," dated 1811, charged under the orders of the General Officer Commanding with the duty of quartering, encamping, and the marches of troops. In coast districts they were expected "to possess accurate information as to practical points of landing, the best positions for defence in their immediate vicinity, and the particular winds and periods of tide which afford an enemy facility in approaching the coast." In all districts they were expected to have a perfect knowledge of the state of the roads and the features of the country applicable to defence; also of the course of rivers and the power of inundation. They were required to attend the embarkation and disembarkation of troops. As an instance of the nature of the work which was carried out under these orders, it may be mentioned that during the short truce of 1802-3 officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department were employed in reconnoitring and sketching, in fullest detail and on a large scale, the south coast of England from Portsmouth to the mouth of the Thames. Officers employed in the department, as a rule, received special training at the Royal Military College, which was founded originally at the close of the first French Revolutionary War as a school of instruction for young officers of the staff.

From the "special instructions" issued in 1810 by the Duke of Wellington's Quartermaster-General to the officers of his department then employed with the Army in the Peninsula, it appears that their duties in the field comprised the movement of troops, their disposition on the march and in the field, including the throwing out of outposts, billeting, all reconnaissance work, and the provision of guides and interpreters. It was laid down that "one of the first duties of the officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department is to acquire a knowledge of the country which is the theatre of operations of the Army. This supposes not only an acquaintance with the nature and political condition of the country and with its principal features, but also detailed information on the following points:—

1. The peculiar nature of each district of the country and its productions.
2. The rivers and lesser streams and the canals.
3. Population, resources, accommodation of troops, etc.
4. Roads.
5. Camps and positions."

It is apparent, therefore, that at this period the officers of that branch of the staff, which was held responsible for directing the operations of the troops in the field under the orders of the General Officer Commanding, were practised and trained in those duties in peace time by the exercise of similar responsibilities, so far as peace conditions allowed.

The result of this system may be gathered from a very interesting report on the British Army prepared in 1820 by a field officer of the French Engineers, M. Charles Dupin, in which he attributes the success of the British forces in the Napoleonic wars against his own nation in a great measure to the excellent training of the British staff. He says: "The English, in bestowing extra attention upon the general formation and accidents of ground, have acquired great tact and an extraordinary facility of rapid judgment in the selection of advantageous positions on an important emergency. The excellence of their lines of battle at Aboukir, Vimiera, etc., may be adduced in proof of this."

The duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department at the outbreak of the Crimean War had remained unchanged since the Peninsula war, and the "special instructions" of the Duke of Wellington's Quartermaster-General, above referred to, were re-issued from

the War Office on the 20th March, 1854, for the guidance of the Quartermaster-General's Department. There is reason, however, to fear that during the long interval of peace the practical training of the staff had been allowed to fall into abeyance.

In April, 1873, an Intelligence Branch, under a Deputy Adjutant-General, was created at the War Office for topographical and statistical purposes. In July, 1874, the branch was enlarged, and placed under the Quartermaster-General, its head being styled Deputy-Quartermaster-General. In 1882 the Deputy Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Branch, was replaced under the orders of the Adjutant-General, and in 1887 he was again called Deputy Adjutant-General, his title being converted the following year into that of Director of Military Intelligence. He remained subordinate to the Adjutant-General until 1895, when he came under the direct control of the Commander-in-Chief.

As regards the Quartermaster-General's Department generally, no radical change was made in the allotment of staff duties up to the year 1888. In the Queen's Regulations for 1885, Section 5, Paragraph 81, the general nature of the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department was classified as follows:—"The officers of the Quartermaster-General's branch are entrusted with the duty of quartering, encamping, embarking, disembarking, and moving of the troops in every situation of the Service. Their special duties in the field will be to regulate the order of march; to define the positions to be taken up by the troops, to conduct reconnaissances, to superintend the arrangements necessary for collecting information regarding the movements of the enemy, and the local resources of the country, to maintain the lines of communication, to have a general direction over the railway, postal, signalling, and telegraph services of the Army."

In 1888 the Commander-in-Chief was made directly responsible for the supplies of the Army, and in consequence of this the duties of supply and transport were taken over by the Quartermaster-General's Department at the War Office. It was decided at the same time, with a view to improving the status of officers employed on these departmental services in districts at home and abroad to give such officers the status and title of Staff Officers of the Adjutant-General's Department, the previous titles of Assistant and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, except at headquarters, being abolished.

The old Quartermaster-General's Department was thus completely reorganised, and, except as regards the movement of troops, became mainly responsible for departmental duties, especially those of supply and transport.

The Queen's Regulations for 1889, Part II., Section 5, Paragraph 71, divided the duties of the General Staff into two groups, (a) and (b); (a) including discipline, interior economy, drill, military training and instruction, musketry, signalling, camps and schools; (b) arms, ammunition, clothing, equipment, supply, transport, movements, distribution and quartering, barracks, charge of garrison libraries, hiring of buildings and land for camps, ranges, etc., Royal Engineer services, works and fortifications. Subsequently, in 1895, so much of Artillery, Engineer, Ordnance, and Medical services as were included in the above were dissociated from duties (a) and (b), and dealt with separately, the officers of the (b) branch of the staff remaining responsible solely for supply, transport, movements, distribution and quartering, barracks, camps, and hire of buildings and land for camps, ranges, etc.

From 1888 onwards the officers appointed to the (b) branch consisted almost entirely of Army Service Corps officers, who, though possessing expert knowledge of the departmental portion of their duties, i.e., those connected with supply and transport, had no special training or qualifications for the performance of the other staff duties originally appertaining to the Quartermaster-General's Department.

It resulted from this system that, when the South African war broke out, the officers of the (b) branch, who under the old system should have been responsible for the movement of troops and conduct of operations in the field, were not qualified to carry out those duties by special training and practice in peace time. Even had they been qualified, they would not have been forthcoming, inasmuch as every Army Service Corps officer who could be spared for field service was needed for supply and transport duties, and to meet these requirements the establishment of the Army Service Corps had to be largely increased.

In India alone the system of maintaining a specially-trained Quartermaster-General's Department had been adhered to, and the Commissariat Department had been

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

kept separate from the General Staff, although even in India, except at headquarters, the titles of Assistant and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General were converted at the instance of the War Office into those of Assistant and Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General. Officers, therefore, with Indian experience were the only officers who since 1888 had received practical peace training in the most important duties devolving on the General Staff in war. This defect was much felt in the conduct of operations in South Africa, and as a result in the present Army Corps organisation, staff officers, styled Assistant or Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-Generals, have been provided, whose duties include the movement, distribution and quartering of troops, concentrations and manœuvres, mobilisation and intelligence, and the preparation and revision of local defence schemes. Similar changes will shortly be made in the staffs of Colonial commands, and it is hoped that this reversion to the system in force under the Duke of Wellington will enable staff officers in Army Corps, divisions, and districts to be properly trained in peace for their work in the field.

18190. The general question involved is the position of the Quartermaster-General's Department, is it not?—Yes, it is the question of the department which has to carry out the duties originally allotted to the Quartermaster-General because at present the Quartermaster-General's Department is for all practical purposes a Commissariat Department.

18191. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Will you specify the duties to which you refer that he should carry out?—That he did carry out; because you allude to different dates there.

18192. The duties that you say he should carry out?—The duties he was supposed to carry out up to 1888 were in most respects the duties originally laid down.

18193. At which period—the Crimean war period?—The period of 1810, it appears to me.

18194. (Chairman.) Does that include your department in the Quartermaster-General's Department?—The position is an extraordinary one at the present time, because a great many of the duties which, under former regulations appertained to the Quartermaster-General's Department, have now been transferred to my department. All duties connected with preparation for war, mobilisation, and so on; in fact, my department performs almost the whole duties of the original Quartermaster-General's Department, with the exception of the movement of troops. The movement of troops is an old Quartermaster-General's duty, and it is the only one of the old duties that the Quartermaster-General has retained.

18195. (Viscount Esher.) Then you have become Quartermaster-General under a new name, that is really it?—It is practically so if the movement of troops, which is rather a routine matter, is handed over to me.

18196. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But that is executive work?—Yes.

18197. And your work at present is not of an executive character, it is rather of a thinking out character, is it not?—It is rather of a thinking out character, but many of my duties I should call administrative. For example, in all matters connected with defence or mobilization I have to convey the Commander-in-Chief's instructions or orders to the various subordinate military authorities. I have also to communicate with those authorities to obtain the necessary information. As an instance, I am in charge of the strategical distribution of the Army. When the question of the reduction of the garrison of South Africa came up, it was my duty to telegraph to General Lyttelton, and find out what his proposals were for the strength, composition, and distribution of the future garrison, and Colony, the Cape, and Natal. When I got his views, and the views of Lord Milner, it was my duty to lay the case before the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State, and to obtain their decision as to the strength of the garrison in South Africa. The moment I had obtained that information, and got that decision, it was then my duty to inform the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General; the Adjutant-General, in order that he might select the units of cavalry, artillery, and infantry that were to remain in South Africa, to form this garrison; and the Quartermaster-General, that if units had to be sent out, he might send them out, or, if units had to be brought back, he might bring them back.

18198. Then the executive work of this organisation falls on the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General?—Yes.

18199. You have to think out the process?—Yes, and also to obtain information for that purpose. I will give you another instance. Say there is a case of a defence scheme for Malta. That comes up to my department and is examined there; it then goes through the various other officials, if any, concerned, and then to the Commander-in-Chief for decision on any point that requires modification. When I get that decision I communicate it to the General Officer Commanding at Malta. It would not be my business to take such further action as might be consequent on the decision, but I should communicate the decision.

18200. That is the distinction I wish to draw between the active departments and yours?—Yes, I should not take the action.

18201. Then does not the movement of the troops and so on, which you have not got, come rather into the active department or is that a matter of scheme and thinking out. You plan what movements have to take place, do you not?—Not in detail. For example, I should not plan what the next reliefs are to be for India, or anything of that sort, because that does not affect the established strength of the Indian garrison. If there was a question of increasing the British garrison in India, a question of what the increase should be, whether cavalry, artillery, or infantry, that would be one of my questions; but when that has once been settled, at present it would rest with the Adjutant-General to say what units are to go to India, and the Quartermaster-General has the arrangements for sending them out.

18202. Those are matters of detail?—Yes.

18203. Do you not think it is a healthy thing that your department should be kept entirely separate from mere questions of detail and administrative work. Have you not already plenty to do in thinking out those great schemes?—More than sufficient. Still the curious anomaly is that the Quartermaster-General only possesses one detail of the functions of a Quartermaster-General.

18204. (Viscount Esher.) That is to say of the old functions of the Quartermaster-General?—The old functions of the Quartermaster-General; and I do all the rest of the old Quartermaster-General's duties.

18205. (Chairman.) Was all the work you are now describing part of the old Quartermaster-General's Department?—It used to be undoubtedly. It is still in India, where they did not change.

18206. (Viscount Esher.) But in India are the duties which you perform performed by the Quartermaster-General in addition to those of the Quartermaster-General similar to those that the Quartermaster-General here performs?—No, the Quartermaster-General in India has nothing whatever to do with what corresponds to the Army Service Corps' duties; that is to say with Supply and Transport.

18207. Who looks after that?—The Commissary-General-in-Chief.

18208. He is another officer?—He is another officer.

18209. It is little more than a name then is it not; because it only means in India certain duties which you say formerly appertained to the Quartermaster-General's Department transferred to another officer under a different name; and in this country certain duties are transferred to the head of the Intelligence Branch under that name?—But in India there never was any idea of giving the Quartermaster-General Commissariat and other departmental duties, nor was there any idea in England until the date mentioned in this paper.

18210. But then except that it was formerly the case, and there is an old tradition in favour of it, what is the strong argument in favour of the old system, because I understand you are in favour of the old system?—I am in favour of the old system on this account, that at headquarters the present system may work well enough. But Assistant and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-Generals have now been appointed in the First, Second, and Third Army Corps, and we are doing the same in the Colonies. But they are nobody's child, because though they are Assistant Quartermaster-Generals as regards their functions of concentration,

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K. C. B., R. E.

12 Mar. 1903.

manœuvres, field work, reconnaissance, and all that, they are in no way under the Quartermaster-General. If they communicate with anybody except through the General Officer Commanding they communicate with me.

18211. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Then let us suppose for a moment that you are re-christened Quartermaster-General, and the Quartermaster-General at the War Office is re-christened Commissary-General; would not that meet the whole case?—It would meet the whole case, but for the movement of troops. The movement of troops has always been the obstacle. I attach but little importance to that, of course, because if I had an Assistant Quartermaster-General under me who dealt with that, that would meet all the requirements.

18212. (*Chairman.*) Then, it is chiefly to bring about a connection with the separate Army Corps that it is of importance to clear up this matter?—Yes, I think it is advisable that there should be some decision arrived at on that point. The Commander-in-Chief entirely concurs in what I say and has on several occasions urged this; but I think the authorities are of opinion that they have had so many changes lately that possibly they might let matters remain as they are for some time longer.

18213. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) To what extent do you think there might be a connection made between your department (whether called the Quartermaster-General's Department or whatever name it might be), and the Assistant and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-Generals in the Army Corps—should they report direct to you?—I think they must submit through the General Officer Commanding all official information. They furnish as it is unofficial information to me, but I say it is anomalous. They have no connection with the Quartermaster-General; they have even now an unofficial connection with me.

18214. Then I ask, looking at it as a practical matter, what further connection could they have?—They could have no further connection than that it would make it more symmetrical.

18215. Then it is really for the purpose of making it symmetrical?—Exactly.

18216. (*Viscount Esher.*) Supposing the change were to be made to-morrow, would you have to alter the organisation of your department; would you be able to remain, for instance, in St. James's Square?—I think so.

18217. You think if you were called Quartermaster-General to-morrow you would not have to expand your clerical branch?—All I should do would be to take over the section of the present Quartermaster-General's department that deals with the movement of the troops, which is quite a separate section.

18218. That is practically everything you would take over?—Yes.

18219. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And painting a new name on the door?—Yes.

18220. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is the General Officer Commanding an Army Corps responsible for the movement of troops within his own corps, or is that done by the War Office?—I cannot answer positively, but I believe it is still done by the War Office.

18221. So that a regiment may be moved from one district within the Army Corps district to another within that district without the General Officer Commanding the Army Corps having any say in the matter?—He may have a say in the matter. I do not think he issues the orders. But I think it is most desirable that he should; and on several occasions I have urged that General Officers commanding Army Corps should arrange for the moving of units within the United Kingdom, and carry out the movement without any reference to headquarters. However, it is said that there is some difficulty about the railway companies, or something of that sort; I do not know what it is.

18222. (*Chairman.*) They never would be moved without the knowledge of headquarters?—No, they never would be moved without the knowledge of headquarters, but at present the actual arrangements are made at the War Office. In India, where we have the command system, Army Headquarters never interfere. The Lieutenant-Generals holding these commands, equivalent to a large Army Corps, carry out the movements, not only within their own commands, but between commands, without any reference to the Quartermaster-General or the Commander-in-Chief.

18223. (*Viscount Esher.*) But I suppose the General Commanding the Army Corps now could not move troops from one part of his command to another, could he, without reference?—I do not think it is so much a question of reference as of actual movement. An Army Corps Commander at home has to send up to the Quartermaster-General, and I believe the Quartermaster-General makes all the railway arrangements, or if the troops are moving by sea he makes the shipping arrangements.

18224. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Take this instance. A battalion at Aldershot has gone through sufficient training there, but there is another battalion at Dover which I believe is in the First Army Corps District, and the General Officer Commanding may desire to bring that battalion up to Aldershot, and send the battalion sufficiently trained to Dover. Can he do that of his own motion?—I do not think so.

18225. (*Viscount Esher.*) Not even if they went by road, and there was no question of railway involved?—No, I do not think so.

18226. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Decentralisation has not gone so far as that?—No.

18227. He is still subject to the War Office?—He is still subject to the War Office.

18228. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Before you leave that point is the Quartermaster-General at present under the control of the Commander-in-Chief?—I forget for the moment?—No, he is under his supervision.

18229. Then it would be a very large alteration made in case your department was made the Quartermaster-General's department?—I have never yet been able to understand the difference between control and supervision.

18230. Between 1885 and 1889 was there no difference in the relation between those under supervision and those under control?—I do not know what the meaning of the expression is.

18231. (*Chairman.*) I thought the meaning of it was that there was separate access to the Secretary of State in one case and not in the other?—Yes, undoubtedly that is the interpretation placed upon it.

18232. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You said in your evidence in October that you must report through the Commander-in-Chief to the Secretary of State?—Exactly.

18233. But the Quartermaster-General I understand can report direct?—He can report direct, but in any military matter that the Quartermaster-General has to do, the Secretary of State would insist upon having the Commander-in-Chief's views, and, as a matter of fact, in any military matter all these officers under the Commander-in-Chief's supervision obtain his Lordship's orders or opinions before they go to the Secretary of State.

18234. That is so at present. But does that follow from the wording of the Order in Council?—I cannot say. I know that is the practice.

18235. Supervision does imply rather a knowledge of what is going on, whereas control implies actual command?—Yes; supervision implies knowledge combined with direction.

18236. There is a distinction there?—Yes; to some extent.

18237. One is watching over, and the other is actually controlling?—Yes.

18238. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you want to say on that head?—No.

18239. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) I suppose, as a matter of fact, not a single regiment is moved without the Commander-in-Chief's approval?—It is nominally so; a general list of reliefs, and so on, would be submitted to him, but I do not think he would go into it in detail.

18240. He would approve of the general list?—Yes.

18241. (*Sir John Edge.*) But I suppose it is absolutely necessary that there should be at the headquarters the means of knowing where the different regiments actually are at the time?—Certainly.

18242. It would not do to let the General Officer Commanding in the district be moving his men, and withdrawing his garrison here, and sending them somewhere else?—Certainly not without reporting it.

18243. Therefore, it is more convenient to do the thing from headquarters?—It is more convenient to

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

give the order from headquarters, but I do not think it is more convenient to let the actual movement be carried out by headquarters, because it does not train the officers in the work of moving the troops.

18244. I am not talking of the actual movement, but the general orders that such a regiment shall move from one place to another had better come from headquarters, because then you know where they are?—Quite so.

18245. (Chairman.) Then you have also given us a note with regard to the organisation of the Army, which, perhaps, you would like to put in, too?—Yes.

Organisation of the Army.

The establishment of the Regular Army in 1899 was 249,466 all ranks (exclusive of staffs of Militia and Volunteers). This force was intended for distribution as follows:—

	Men.
India - - - - -	73,157
Colonies and Egypt - - - - -	51,204
Home - - - - -	125,105

In addition to the Regular Army the Estimates provided for:—

	Men.
Army Reserve - - - - -	90,000
Militia (including Militia Reserve) -	129,572
Yeomanry (including staff) - - -	11,891
Volunteers - - - - -	264,833
Channel Islands Militia - - - -	3,996
Malta and Bermuda Militia - - -	2,732

The total number of men and officers maintained, including the British garrison of India, was therefore 752,490.

This force was organised in conformity with Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum of 1st June, 1891, which laid down that "the objects of our military organisation" were:—

- "(a) The support of the Civil power in the United Kingdom;
- "(b) To find the number of men for India, which has been fixed by arrangement with the Government of India;
- "(c) To find garrisons for all the fortresses and coal- ing stations at home and abroad;
- "(d) To be able to mobilise rapidly for home defence two Army Corps of Regular troops, and one partly composed of Regulars and partly of Militia, and to organise the Auxiliary forces, not allotted to Army Corps or garrisons, for the defence of London and for defensible positions in advance;
- "(e) Subject to the foregoing considerations and their financial obligations, to aim at being able, in case of necessity, to send abroad two complete Army Corps with Cavalry Division and Line of Communication. But it will be distinctly understood that the probability of employment of an Army Corps in the field in any European war is sufficiently improbable to make it the primary duty of the military authorities to organise our forces efficiently for the defence of this country."

It resulted, therefore, from this organisation that out of a force of 750,000, of whom about 630,000 were normally stationed in the United Kingdom, only two Army Corps and a Cavalry Division—about 70,000 men in all, were organised and available for despatch across the seas for the reinforcement of any part of the Empire that might be attacked, or for offensive action.

Moreover, both these Army Corps were an integral part of the Field Army allotted for home defence.

The first phase of the war in South Africa showed that 70,000 men were inadequate to our needs. We had thus exhausted our organised Field Army, and were forced hastily to build up the Field Army to a total strength of 250,000 men. An army hastily improvised in this way obviously labours under many disadvantages.

The war conclusively proved, therefore, that Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum did not make sufficient allowance for the general needs of the Empire.

It is apparent that contingencies are not unlikely to arise in the future which may again imperatively demand the despatch of a large organised force for the

protection of Imperial interests or possessions across the seas.

Under the six Army Corps scheme, three Army Corps and three Cavalry Brigades will be available for despatch across the sea. The sufficiency of this force to meet possible demands for reinforcements and expeditionary action is a matter for the consideration of the Government. On the other hand, the numerical strength of the Regular and Auxiliary forces which would, with our existing establishments, remain in the United Kingdom, after the despatch of this force, is believed to exceed what would be needed to defend the United Kingdom under existing strategical conditions, provided the Auxiliary forces were efficient.

From the surplus thus left, and from the Colonial forces, it would no doubt be possible in time to improvise such additions to our Field Army as circumstances might demand. But it is impossible to foresee whether time would be available to allow of such forces being equipped, organised, and sufficiently trained to meet Regular troops in the field. It would be wise, therefore, to carry out these processes in peace time, and thus adjust the general organisation of the land forces of the Empire to actual war needs. It is believed that this could be done without augmenting their existing numerical strength.

18246. That shows the establishment in 1899, and refers to the purposes for which the Army was organised under Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum and at the present time?—Yes.

18247. And the material remark that you make is that the war has conclusively proved that Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum did not make sufficient allowance for the general needs of the Empire?—Certainly.

18248. But are you of opinion that the present organisation will?—I am not of opinion that the present organisation will. I think it is inadequate.

18249. Would you explain why?—Under the present organisation we have three Army Corps, say 120,000 men, available in the event of the most serious war we are likely to be engaged in for reinforcements or for offensive action outside the United Kingdom. The question has been gone carefully into in my department, and I am of opinion, instead of having 120,000 men available for reinforcements or expeditionary action, we should have at least 200,000 men.

18250. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) On a permanent force?—I cannot say a permanent force; it appears to be very expensive to keep up such a force; but some expedient, unless we are going to be in a very awkward position, must be devised for producing it. Take, for example, the Militia; there is no obligation upon them to serve abroad, unless they volunteer, in the event of war. The Militia is a branch of the Service voluntarily enlisted; they are on the same footing in this respect as the Regular soldiers. Why should not the Militia be made liable to war service outside the United Kingdom?

18251. Then unless you employ the ballot for the Militiaman would he join?—I see no reason why he should not join as much as the Regular soldier joins. The obligation is a remote one, he thinks, and he does not much mind.

18252. Is it not usually the fact that the Regular soldier has no employment whatever when he joins and the Militiaman has employment?—There is a considerable portion of the population of the United Kingdom that is permanently without employment. There was a Council of Trades Union delegates, who were interviewed on the subject of the food supply of the United Kingdom, and they stated, I was told, that they, out of their funds, have to pay an average of 100,000 men out of employment; that is the annual average; and they also stated that as the reason why they restricted the output in their several trades, because if they did not they would have a larger number of men to support. Well, if there are 100,000 men permanently out of employment in the United Kingdom, I see no reason why we should not get a few of them.

18253. That is recruits for the Regular Army. That is a different question from sending the Militia out?—But we get our recruits for the Regular Army and for the Militia, and in addition to that we have 100,000 men out of work.

18254. But putting the men out of employment into the Militia would not give them food all the year round?—Personally, of course, I should be in favour of compulsory Militia service.

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

18255. For how long?—I would have them out for a year. I would train them for a year. That would give them food, and so on. I would have three years' service. In the first year, the whole of the time they should be accommodated in barracks, and be fed, and so on, and get some small amount of pay. Then the next year a month, and the third year a month. Then they should go into the Reserve for five years, and be called out for training just like the Volunteers are.

18256. Would you take them by ballot, or would you have the whole nation trained in that way?—I would take them by ballot, because if we took the whole nation in that way we should get such an enormous number that we should not know what to do with them. I should enforce the ballot without substitutes, and take 70,000 men. That for the three years would give 200,000 men, and for the five years would give about 500,000 men.

18257. If they all went abroad?—If they all went abroad.

18258. Would you make it compulsory for them to go abroad?—I would make them liable to go abroad in time of war, just as every foreign nation does.

18259. In time of national emergency?—In time of national emergency, but not otherwise.

18260. (*Viscount Esher.*) Would that enable you to reduce your Regular Army?—I do not think very much.

18261. You would leave the numbers very much as they are now?—Very much as they are now.

18262. Do you think it would interfere with recruiting for the Regular Army?—No, I think the effect of this ballot without substitutes would be advantageous all round. It would make everybody more anxious to enter the Regular Army, or the Imperial Yeomanry, or the Volunteers, because they would then be exempt from ballot.

18263. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have had evidence from experts of high authority that while a year would be necessary for a certain number of men, those of more intelligence could be passed through military training in six months; would you think so?—That might be so; but the advantage of the ballot applied without any respect of persons is that not only the lower classes are got, but the higher classes as well, and these men, according to their intelligence and position, are turned into non-commissioned officers and into officers. One of our great difficulties is the want of a reserve of officers. This ballot system would give us officers who would be trained at any rate for a year, and would no doubt continue in the Militia afterwards, and would produce a reserve. Besides that, it would give us men of better education, so that they might become non-commissioned officers.

18264. Why do you think you could not deal with the 350,000 men physically sound who annually come to the age of 17 or 18?—No doubt they could be dealt with, but we should find it a difficult thing to provide them with accommodation.

18265. Could not billeting be used a good deal?—It is very unpopular; 10d., is it for meal, vinegar, and salt, and so on?

18266. In that way you would not require compulsory service at all for abroad, because out of the large number who had had military education there would always be a sufficient number who would volunteer for service abroad. The only difference would be that, say, in the case of the South African War we should have had trained men volunteering to go out instead of untrained men?—That is so; but it is difficult to make plans for military operations if we are to rely upon Volunteers. It is very much more convenient—I do not say it is absolutely necessary—if we know exactly what force we have at our disposal. A force dependent upon volunteering would be a very varying force. If the war was an unpopular war it is possible that nobody might come forward.

18267. For how long do you say you would make the liability of the Militia to serve abroad last, how many years?—Only in the event of war.

18268. But for how many years?—This is a scheme I roughly worked out: Three years with the colours, so to speak, one year of complete training, two years one month each, and then five years in the Reserve.

18269. So that their liability would extend over eight years?—I chiefly fixed those dates to get the force I consider would meet our military requirements.

18270. (*Viscount Esher.*) That would give you the 200,000 men you mentioned?—Yes.

18271. If I understand you, you say you practically want 80,000 men more than you have got?—Yes; but that is the minimum. I should like to have many more.

18272. (*Chairman.*) As regards the Militia, you will have an opportunity of giving evidence before another Royal Commission before long?—Yes, I see. But the difficulty I find in compulsory service is that there is no system of registration in this country of the habitat of the individual.

18273. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But if you take him fairly young you get him before his School Board address is lost; you get that up to 14 or 15 years of age?—Yes.

18274. (*Viscount Esher.*) At what age do you propose to take your Militia?—I have not gone into the question of age at all.

18275. (*Chairman.*) That is more applicable perhaps to the other inquiry under the circumstances, because, since the other Royal Commission has been announced, we do not probably propose to go so deeply into the question; but supposing that you could not carry out a scheme such as you have been sketching, you would have to fall back, I suppose, in the event of war, upon having something like the expedients that we had to employ in this last war?—Yes.

18276. And enlist Volunteers for the various corps?—Yes, that would be the case.

18277. Has anything been formulated in the War Office, founded on the experience of the late war, to enable that organisation to be put into rapid and effective operation?—Not that I am aware of.

18278. Would not that be a natural step to take?—Yes, I think so.

18279. Would it not come under your department?—It would come under my department, but hitherto I have received no decision on any of the numerous points raised, so that further action has hardly been possible.

18280. We have had a good many witnesses before us who have been concerned in these various organisations, and we have often asked them whether they have ever been invited to give the result of their experience, and we have, I am bound to say, not found many affirmative answers. Would not that be a natural step to take in the War Office?—That is so. I may say that in one case I proposed that the question of the Colonial forces used in South Africa, their organisation, equipment, and so on, should be considered, and a scheme drawn up for future use, but owing to financial objections the proposal was negatived.

18281. Would there be much financial difficulty in simply drawing up a scheme?—It would involve the employment of a capable officer for about six months, I suppose.

18282. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And any large staff with him?—No, no staff.

18283. (*Sir John Jackson.*) It would not cost a thousand pounds?—It would cost much less than that.

18284. (*Chairman.*) Still, I suppose a good deal of the difficulty that arose at the time, and of the criticisms that have been made of the organisations of various kinds, arose simply from the fact that there was nothing to guide those who undertook the work?—I think so; but whether they could have done better—whether, for instance, the Yeomanry Committee could have done better than they did, I cannot say; it is very difficult to say. They were doing things in a great hurry, but if they had had regulations or a record of past experience no doubt they might have done better.

18285. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It was not only a question of the Yeomanry, but with regard to the South African Colonial Corps and with regard to Volunteer contingents, and so on; if there had been something to put before them, past experience to go upon, surely they could have done better?—I am sure they could have done better.

18286. (*Chairman.*) Do you think there is any prospect of your department taking that matter in hand?—I should be delighted to take it up if I could only get any increase of staff, but at present we are exactly *in statu quo*, and my work has very much increased with the creation of a Committee of Imperial Defence, while my staff remains the same.

18287. Your staff remains the same as when you last came before us?—Yes.

18288. (*Viscount Esher.*) I thought Mr. Brodrick

Lieut.-
General Sir
W. G.
Nicholson,
K.C.B., R.E.
12 Mar. 1903.

said the other night that he had given you an additional staff?—A reference to the Estimates published just lately would show that there has been a decrease in the amount allowed for my department to the extent of £300 for next year. This, of course, is not really a decrease, because the Permit Office, which is under me, and cost a thousand pounds a year, has come to an end, so that I have a net increase of £700.

18289. And what will that provide you with as regards numbers in addition?—It will provide me with no additional numbers. What has happened is this. When I put forward my proposals at the end of 1901 they were warmly supported by the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not listen to them. Then I brought them forward again with some slight additions about last October, and again the Commander-in-Chief strongly supported them, but they were referred to a committee consisting of Lord Hardwicke as president, Mr. Chalmers, of the Treasury, the Accountant-General, and a retired officer of Engineers, Major Darwen, and this committee began its sittings, I think, in October, and I do not know what they are doing now. The report is not ready.

18290. (Chairman.) Is that a War Office committee?—An inter-departmental committee at the War Office.

18291. Is the Treasury represented?—Yes, by Mr. Chalmers, of the Treasury, but from what I can learn their conclusions will be such that I shall be quite unable to accept them.

18292. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) There have been many proposals which might have led to such an addition to the Army as you spoke of, formed somewhat on the lines that you recommend, and to provide 80,000 men more?—Yes.

18293. That is your own view?—Yes.

18294. (Viscount Esher.) With reference to what the Chairman was asking you, have you contemplated, if we were to embark upon a war with a first-rate European Power, adopting the methods which were adopted in the late war for the employment of Colonial forces, Volunteers, and so on, or has the whole trend of your mind been in another direction?—The trend of my mind is this, that I am very much in favour of knowing exactly what forces we have to rely on in war for military purposes in the event of war. On the other hand, I admit that owing to our insular position we may have two or three months—it is not an immediate matter of mobilising very large forces, because we may have a month or two months or three months' time for training purposes. Therefore, I have quite an open mind. I have simply put down the requirements. How the requirements are to be met, whether by compulsory Militia service or by a better organisation of the existing Militia or Volunteers, I have a perfectly open mind. But, if I might explain, I put forward my proposals for the military needs of the Empire, but I have never had any decision about them, and it is no good my going into the question of how this large force is to be raised until I have ascertained from the Government that they accept the conclusions put forward.

18295. That is, of course, one of the points you imagine that the Defence Committee are going to settle?—I hope they are going to settle it.

18296. (Chairman.) This is the reference we have in our mind to the Secretary of State's statement in the House of Commons. Perhaps you will just explain it, because I do not quite understand it. Speaking of comparing the Intelligence Staff of the German Army, he says: "Our Headquarters Intelligence Staff must be taken in connection with those who are employed in districts, and it must not be forgotten that this Empire has to keep three staffs. These are a British Intelligence Staff, an Indian Intelligence Staff (military), and a Naval Intelligence Staff. The expenditure on these three staffs taken together must be regarded as the amount which the Empire gives to military intelligence. I can only say this, it is perfectly true that the additional amount put down in the Estimates for intelligence this year is only a sum of £3,000, but that is by no means the measure of what has been done. I confess to the House that I had not been able to frame the total in connection with the Intelligence Staff before the Estimates." That Intelligence Staff, as I understand it, is not the Intelligence Division—not your department at all?—I do not know at all what the Secretary of State meant by saying £3,000.

I looked with anticipation to the Estimates, and was surprised to find that there is £300 less.

18297. Instead of £3,000 more?—Instead of £3,000 more.

18298. What does it mean by the British Intelligence Staff? What does he mean by that? He does not mean your department?—Yes, I suppose he does. Naval Intelligence, of course, is distinct.

18299. (Sir Frederick Darley.) There may have been an additional sum for Naval Intelligence?—But that would not be under discussion.

18300. (Viscount Esher.) But you see you are so near the end of the financial year that if there had been any question of increasing your staff you would have been warned by now, would you not?—I might have been. But the Treasury can sanction it, I suppose, after the Estimates are out.

18301. But you have seen the draft Estimates?—They are published, but even if they had been passed I fancy the Treasury could subsequently sanction an increase.

18302. Yes, they can?—I think they are relying upon that.

18303. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Your opinion. I say it is most inconvenient and imprudent to be raised there should be no question as to the men being under obligation to serve in time of war?—That is my opinion. I say it is most inconvenient and imprudent to trust to volunteering in war time entirely.

18304. It is not safe to trust to volunteering?—No.

18305. (Sir John Edge.) Volunteering for foreign service do you mean?—Yes. I am speaking of a force for reinforcements or for expeditionary action abroad.

18306. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) But, as a matter of fact, do you not think we should be quite safe if the whole nation were trained to arms by degrees, and that we could depend positively upon having a sufficient number of trained Volunteers coming forward if the nation were properly trained to arms year after year?—I should say it is exceedingly probable, but I would not, on the other hand, reduce, and you cannot reduce the Regular Army.

18307. I am not suggesting that?—It would certainly be a very great advantage to have them trained in that way.

18308. (Chairman.) In fact, you think the three Army Corps is the minimum of the Regular Army?—It is the minimum, yes.

18309. Is there any other point you wish to speak to?—No.

18310. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Are there three Army Corps at the present moment ready for immediate service?—No.

18311. Are there two?—I should say about one and a-half is ready. It is not so much the men that are not ready, because in the course of next month I fancy they will be almost up to strength, at least the units will be up to strength, because the Army is in excess of the establishment; but there are certain things which have not yet been fully completed, such as transport arrangements and the vehicles, and harness, and the arrangements for horses, and so on.

18312. How soon may the nation anticipate that there will be three Army Corps ready for immediate service?—I should imagine by the end of six months.

18313. There is one other matter I would like to ask you about, in reference to transport; must there not always be necessarily a certain amount of regimental transport, for instance, transport for the entrenching tools?—Certainly, that is called the first line, that is always regimental, water carts, ammunition, and entrenching tools.

18314. Carts for carrying the men's haversacks on the march?—No, men always carry their haversacks, but transport for carrying the men's greatcoats, blankets, etc., cannot well be put into the first line. If they do not carry them themselves they come up on the second line transport, but the first line transport are entrenching tools, ammunition, and water carts.

18315. Do you not think they might have sufficient transport in the first line to carry their haversacks also?—It would add very largely to transport of the Army, besides which, haversacks contain rations, and must be carried on the person. As it is, carrying their great

coats and things they formerly carried themselves, has added per regiment, I think, two general service wagons, and all these things add up enormously; you get such a long transport train that it can hardly move.

18316. But would it not make the infantry regiment more mobile, and able to march better if the man had not to carry besides his ammunition his haversack?—Yes, it does; it makes the unit more mobile, but it makes the force less so, because the moment you increase transport, vehicles or animals, beyond a certain extent they block up along the roads, and they move so slowly.

(After a short adjournment.)

Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. MORGAN, C.B., D.S.O., called and examined.

18320. (Chairman.) At what time did you go to South Africa?—I went out on the 1st July, 1899.

18321. Before the beginning of the war?—Yes.

18322. In what capacity?—I went out as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, Natal.

18323. As part of the regular staff there?—Yes. I had been in Egypt, and I went on direct from Egypt to South Africa.

18324. After that, at the outbreak of the war, what position did you occupy?—I still occupied the same position. I did all the disembarkation of the Indian troops and the Indian Contingent. I made arrangements as far as I possibly could for supplies, and other things, contracts and supplies in anticipation of the war, and then, when Sir George White arrived, Sir Edward Ward came with him, and he took over the position of Director of Supplies, and I was made his assistant.

18325. Were you with Sir George after that?—No, I was at Maritzburg, and Sir George was at Ladysmith, but I was acting under his orders until Ladysmith was cut off.

18326. But you were not in Ladysmith?—No, I just got out.

18327. After that?—After that I still held the position of Assistant-Director of Supplies, and I was afterwards made Director of Supplies for Natal. I was Director of Supplies for Natal, with Sir Redvers Buller, all the time he was there, and when Lord Roberts came home Sir Edward Ward came home with him, and I was made Director of Supplies for the whole Army. I was Director of Supplies with Lord Kitchener until the end, and I came home in November last.

18328. You were at Pretoria eventually?—Yes.

18329. You have been good enough to give us some notes about the sufficiency of supplies and the quality of supplies; will you just put that in?—Yes. I have nothing to add to it.

Sufficiency of Supply in the Field.

Except at the commencement of the war, supplies were at all times sufficient.

Ladysmith suffered through this lack of supplies, and it was only through energetic action, and our being able to make large local purchases, that that town was provisioned as well as it was.

With this exception, the supplies available were always ample for all purposes. Transport from the coast and in the field was always very limited, but at no time was the Natal Force, and seldom during my experience the whole Army, ever on short rations of anything.

The method of supply was admirable, and leaves little to be desired. It may have been costly at first, owing to the fact that those holding the class of goods required knew we must have them, and put up the price accordingly. No sound previous provision can possibly avoid such being the case in the first stages of a war of this magnitude, as the majority of the supplies required are of a very perishable nature, which precludes stocking them to larger extent than will admit of their being turned over by consumption sufficiently rapidly to avoid deterioration. Many articles of supply in time of war are not an issue in time of peace, and consequently stocks of these cannot be kept at all. To do so would entail wastage, and it is far cheaper to buy when the demand is established, even at high prices at first.

Too much credit cannot, I think, be given to the

18317. (Viscount Esher.) There is one thing I wanted to ask you. Have you sat on the Defence Committee of the Cabinet yet under this new arrangement?—We sit every week.

18318. If you remember, on the last occasion, when you were before the Commission I do not think you had ever met that body?—No, we only met some time in January; that was the first meeting, I think.

18319. You had never been called before the old Defence Committee of the Cabinet?—No.

Lieut.-General Sir W. G. Nicholson, K.C.B., R.E.

12 Mar. 1903.

Director of Contracts, and all concerned at the War Office, for the really admirable way in which all demands from the seat of operations were met.

The method of receiving and distributing supplies in South Africa to the various depôts, and through them to the troops, was, I think, excellent, both as regards theory and practice. No theory can be practised without modifications and improvements, and the war gave ample opportunities of this, with most satisfactory results.

The greatest difficulty the Army Service Corps had to face was its want of sufficient personnel, both officers and men. As a consequence, all ranks had to perform more than four times the work they could be expected to do efficiently, and proper and efficient accounting had to be subordinated to the more pressing duties of forwarding and distribution to the troops. Fortunately, there was available in Natal and Cape Colony large, though not sufficiently large, numbers of business men, clerks, shop assistants, etc., refugees from the Orange River Colony and Transvaal, who came forward readily for employment with the Army Service Corps, and to this I attribute the success of the supply arrangements locally. Had we had to depend solely on the Army Service Corps personnel failure must have resulted, and even with the aid of civilians, who, though admirable material, required technical training, the strain on the Army Service Corps of all ranks was at all times, and especially at first, far too great, resulting in the early collapse of many of the best men.

To avoid this additional Army Service Corps must be provided by a large increase to its peace establishment, and I would further suggest the formation, not only at home, but in all our colonies, of auxiliary branches of the Corps on similar lines to Militia and Volunteers.

The Quality of Supplies.

The general quality was excellent. It is not to be expected that such large quantities as were required could be collected, all of a perfect nature; that there were few instances of bad, or at all inferior articles, says great things, both for those who collected them, and also for those who supplied them.

Failure or Delay on the Part of Contractors.

There was none of any moment on the part of local South African contractors, and to judge from the way in which supplies came to hand in compliance with our demands the contractors employed outside South Africa must have performed their duties well.

Other matters upon which I may be able to give information are:

1. The meat contracts.
2. The nature and quantities of the rations supplied to the troops, with suggestions for their alteration and improvement.
3. The provision and organisation of Field Canteens.
4. The collection, care, and management of captured stock, etc.
5. The requisitioning of supplies in the field, with suggested improvements.
6. The provision of a corps of unskilled labourers for the handling of supplies.
7. The necessity of making provision for the production of vegetables, milk, eggs, etc., both on lines of communications and at advance depôts.

Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Morgan, C.B., D.S.O.

12 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
Colonel H. C.
Morgan,
C.B., D.S.O.
12 Mar. 1903.

8. The provision of a Field Detective Department, as a part of the supply establishment.

9. The general system of supply accounting, with illustrations of variations adopted, with reasons for, and advantages claimed in favour of their permanent adoption.

10. The issue of rations, etc., on repayment to newspaper correspondents, with suggestions.

11. The necessity of placing the administration of both supply and transport in the field, under one head.

12. A comparison of the English and Indian methods of supply.

18330. With regard to the period before the war, what were you occupied in doing at that time?—General B duties; the B staff duties of the Natal command; as far as I possibly could I was trying to make myself acquainted with the country, and also with the various contracts that existed, and I made a few small contracts that I thought might be useful in the event of war; for instance, I made some contracts for various stations on the line between Maritzburg and Ladysmith in case troops had to march, contracts for their supplies at the various stations at which they were likely to stop, and the ordinary yearly contracts also came under my supervision.

18331. That is to say, based on the number of troops then in the colony?—That is so.

18332. But not in any way in preparation for a larger force?—No, I had no instructions to that effect, no more had General Penn Symons, who was then in command, and under whose orders I was acting.

18333. At what date did you get any instructions to prepare for a larger number of troops?—We got instructions that the Indian contingent were to arrive early in October, and we also got instructions that they would bring with them three months' supplies for themselves of everything, which they did, but it was not a full three months' supply, and as they arrived that was all sent up to Ladysmith with them. They all disembarked at Durban, and were entrained up to Ladysmith as fast as they could go.

18334. Before that time what was there in Ladysmith?—Practically nothing.

18335. Was there no store of supplies in Ladysmith before that time?—Not before then; everything was done under contract, and we simply drew from the contractors as we required it from day to day. There was no store of supplies at Ladysmith.

18336. And nothing began to be put into Ladysmith until the beginning of October?—Nothing; the stores arriving with the Indian contingent were the first real Army stores that were sent up to Ladysmith. When Sir George White arrived he instructed me to purchase as much as I possibly could, and I did so, and we sent it into Ladysmith as fast as ever we could pump it in by the railway. Of course a lot of it which was purchased did not get into Ladysmith, but was cut off.

18337. I think certain schemes of defence which we have seen provided that there should be sixty days' supplies for the garrisons intended to hold Ladysmith and Dundee; those supplies were not in position before war was declared?—Certainly not; the only thing I know of was that at all foreign stations we kept a certain reserve of 30 days' supply of preserved meat, biscuits, and groceries, and those reserves for the actual garrison of Natal were in their various places with the troops, but beyond that there was nothing.

18338. Thirty days for the actual garrison?—Yes.

18339. There was a garrison in Ladysmith?—Yes, and there would be 30 days' preserved meat and biscuits for them at Ladysmith. I think I am right in saying that there were two battalions of infantry, a cavalry regiment, and two batteries of artillery, as far as my memory goes.

18340. But only 30 days' supply?—Thirty days' supply for that force.

18341. Was there no provision for further supplies being thrown in except what the Indian contingent brought with it, until you began to make contracts?—None, until we began to make special purchases; supplies were on the way from England, but they had not arrived, nor were they likely to arrive for some little time.

18342. Did they not arrive before the siege commenced?—No.

18343. Nothing arrived from England?—Nothing.

18344. All the supplies that were thrown into Ladysmith you had to arrange for on the spot?—Except what came with the Indian contingent.

18345. Would you tell us what steps you had to take in order to get the amount of supplies that were put into Ladysmith?—I had to purchase everything I could find in the colony that was suitable, and I had a good deal of difficulty at first, because the merchants all made a ring against me, and put up prices, and I found that directly I advertised for supplies in certain quantities they made a ring, and put up the prices, and I only got one tender. I broke that by not letting them know when I wanted certain things, and by writing out the requirements myself, and posting them to all the tradesmen I knew of who were likely to have them. I posted them to them myself, so as to keep them out of my clerks' hands, and gave them only 24 hours in which to give me replies as to what they had in their hands and the prices, and in that way they had not time to corner, and we got things at a very fair price. I think taking it all round we did not pay excessive prices.

18346. (Sir John Jackson.) That was before martial law was declared?—Yes.

18347. (Chairman.) You mention meat contracts here; was that included in that period?—Of course I had to make the meat contract for the Army in Natal, and that was made just after Sir George White arrived. We advertised for tenders, and did not get a single reply. I then had to send for those who I thought could possibly carry out the contract, and we were practically at their mercy. We were not in a position to carry out the contract ourselves, because we had not sufficient personnel, and we were practically at their mercy, but we managed to make a contract after a good deal of trouble at 9d. a lb. for fresh meat, and 7d. a lb. for frozen meat.

18348. (Sir John Jackson.) Who was the contract made with?—With Thomson and Son, of Natal.

18349. Had you any dealings with Mr. Weil?—No. Afterwards the second meat contract with the South African Cold Storage was made by me practically under Lord Kitchener's instructions, and as to the last contract with the Imperial Cold Storage, I came home for the purpose of that contract.

18350. (Chairman.) As you are mentioning them, would you give us the details of those contracts?—Of course, when the first contract was made I knew nothing about the making of that contract. The prices were undoubtedly high, but I do not think under the circumstances they were excessive. The contractors knew nothing of what they had to face, there was no one there except them to make the contract, and we were practically at their mercy, because we could not have carried out the contract ourselves, and we had to pay some one to do it.

18351. You are talking of the contract made by Colonel Richardson?—Yes, and the prices were high undoubtedly; but the difficulty would have been to find anyone to do it for less, because they were facing the unknown entirely. As to the next contract, nobody could be found to take it up, and I believe I am right in saying that it had been recommended to the War Office that the old contract should be extended for another twelve months.

18352. May I ask at what time?—That was after the first twelve months.

18353. Could you give us the date?—From the 17th February, 1901.

18354. The first contract was for 1899-00?—Yes, up to the 17th February, 1901, and it was recommended to the War Office that the same contract should be extended from the 17th February, 1901, to the 1st April, 1902.

18355. (Sir John Jackson.) Was that the 8d. and 9d. a lb. contract?—That was the 11d. and 9d. a lb. contract.

18356. What did they do for that? Was this for Australian meat?—The 11d. was for fresh meat, which would naturally be local meat.

18357. Where did they deliver that?—Anywhere we asked for it.

18358. Anywhere in the colony?—Anywhere, with the columns in the field, everywhere.

18359. What did they get for the Australian?—For

frozen meat they got 9d., which they had to deliver anywhere.

18360. (*Chairman.*) You are speaking of the first contract?—That is the first contract; the second contract was for 10d. and 7d. a lb.

18361. (*Sir John Jackson.*) That would be approximately about double, more or less, what they would get in ordinary times for the meat?—Oh, no, it would not be double.

18362. At the present time for the meat delivered in any of those South African ports is it not the fact that it is usually done about 3d. or 4d.?—Yes, but then there is storage after it arrives.

18363. I quite understand that, but in consideration of the extra cost that they had in delivering it wherever you wanted it, and so forth, the price was enhanced about cent. per cent.?—Yes, taking all risks it would be about that.

18364. (*Chairman.*) The second contract was for what did you say?—10d. and 7d., 10d. fresh and 7d. frozen.

18365. And that was concluded by you?—Yes.

18366. And that continued during what period?—From the 17th February, 1901, to the 31st March, 1902.

18367. And then after that?—The next contract was for 9d. and 5d., and that was from the 1st of April, 1902, to the 1st April, 1903—that contract is still running.

18368. These contracts you are speaking of are all Cold Storage Company contracts?—Yes. I see from my papers that the last contract was for frozen meat 45s. 8d. per 100lbs., and fresh meat 70s. 6d. per 100lbs.

18369. With regard to those contracts, you say as to the first that the prices were high, but you think they were not unreasonable considering the circumstances?—No. I think if I put myself in the place of the contractor I should have been afraid to go into it as a contractor unless I was quite sure I was going to come out of it all right. It was a speculation, and the South African can hardly be called a speculator; he likes to make sure of his ground, and to make sure that he is coming out on the right side. He was taking it up practically as a favour to us almost, you might say, and I think he was right to put up the price. I think it was a mistake to make the contract for 12 months.

18370. It might have been made for a shorter period?—Yes, until they saw how things were working.

18371. And that means to say that you might have got the reduction of price in the second contract a little sooner?—I think we might. I was very much afraid we would not even when the second contract was made, and it was purely by bluff that we got it.

18372. Even then the circumstances were risky for the contractor?—Very risky; in fact, the contractor knew then that he could ask what price he liked; he knew what he could do it for, but naturally he wanted to make all he could out of it.

18373. At the time the third contract came the circumstances were somewhat changed?—By that time we had been able to make arrangements to carry out the contract ourselves in case we did not get a sufficiently satisfactory contractor; we were quite prepared for that. I had made all arrangements in South Africa to do that if necessary, and I had also been able to bring several large firms together, and there was likely to be more than one tender, and as I thought it would be better done at home, Lord Kitchener sent me home for that purpose. I came home, and I tried to get as many as I could to combine and tender for the contract, with the result that we had a very fair lot of tenders sent in. We calculated that we had tenders for everything; we had tenders for meat delivered at the coast c.i.f. f.o.b. at the various ports, and also for delivery on rail and delivery at various centres in South Africa. We had tenders for every possible thing we could get, and when we got the tenders in we made a very careful calculation, and we found that had we taken tenders c.i.f. the cost to us of landing and storing, railing and distribution to the troops would have come to exactly the same as the price at which one firm tendered to supply us entirely themselves, delivering for us to the troops, so that naturally we accepted their tender rather than do it ourselves when we could get it done at the same cost, because it meant a certain amount of personnel being taken away from supply work, which we could not afford to take away, unless there was very ample reason for doing it.

18374. That was the most economical way at that time?—It was; at first we could not have done it ourselves, as we had not the organisation to do it.

18375. In the first case, although it may not have been an economical arrangement, looking at it from the purely money point of view, it was the only practicable way open to you?—Yes. I think where the contractors were a little bit grasping was that they insisted on getting captured stock at 2d. a lb. estimated dead weight less than they were paid for it when they issued it to the troops at so much per lb. dead weight. On the Natal side, under the contract we had there, any captured stock we got we handed over to the contractor at so much dead weight, and they issued it to us again. They killed it, dressed it, and issued it to the troops, and they only got paid for the actual amount, and they paid us for the actual amount, so that all they got out of it was the offal and the hides; they got nothing in the way of money; they got the offal and the hides, which were no value to us.

18376. (*Sir John Jackson.*) They were charged at the same rate?—Exactly; we charged them at the same rate as they delivered to us; they killed it, dressed it, and delivered it to the troops.

18377. In consideration of getting the offal and the hides?—Yes.

18378. (*Chairman.*) Do you think that was sufficient? They were quite satisfied.

18379. I think, speaking from recollection, what we were told was that they had a certain amount of risk as they had to keep the captured cattle?—Yes. Of course, that was quite right; but in Natal we kept it, and handed it over to them for slaughter.

18380. So that when under the other circumstances it was handed over to them to keep, perhaps the twopence was not so unreasonable?—It was not, except that they got, under the conditions of their contract, compensated for any stock captured by the enemy, and their only loss was through disease.

18381. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Did the offal include the internal fat?—There was practically no internal fat in those cattle, they were too lean; in fact the meat was hardly fit for issue.

18382. They did not make tallow?—They had no means of transport; it was all buried. The only thing they really got from it was the hide, the head and the tail, and things of that sort they used to sell to the Kaffirs and the men.

18383. They had the tongue, I suppose?—Yes. I do not suppose that the value of the offal was more than at the outside 3s. 6d. or 4s.

18384. But the hide would be worth about £1?—No, the hides were very much damaged; they had to kill them in the field, and they were very roughly killed and very roughly skinned. I do not think the hide was at the outside worth more than half-a-crown; in fact, you could not have sold it for half-a-crown.

18385. (*Chairman.*) They would have difficulty in removing them?—Great difficulty; the hides were so valueless that we used to have to pay to get dead animals taken away. Usually you can get paid for having them taken away.

18386. Those are the main facts about the meat contracts?—Those are the main facts about the meat contracts.

18387. Taking them as a whole, looking back upon them, you do not think there was anything exorbitant about their terms?—I do not think although we had to do it over again we could improve upon them.

18388. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) How did the prices compare with the ruling prices then, the butchers' prices in Maritzberg, for instance?—The prices of the contract we made were practically, if my memory is correct, about a halfpenny a pound more than the existing contract for the supply of the troops in Natal.

18389. At the Cape it was one penny a pound less than the ruling butchers' prices?—It would be, than the ordinary retail butcher's prices.

18390. (*Chairman.*) And the meat was of good quality as it was delivered?—Oh, yes, it was very fair quality; we had no trouble with the contracts, and they were very well carried out indeed.

18391. And the frozen meat?—The frozen meat was excellent.

18392. Of course, it could only reach those portions.

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12 Mar. 1903.

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12 Mar. 1903.

of the forces which were within reach of the dépôt?—Yes, we would not take frozen meat to any place more than three miles away from the railway line.

18393. But, subject to that limitation, it was a good supply?—Very good indeed—excellent.

18394. I suppose this is the first time it has been used for a force in the field on that scale?—I should say it was the first time it has ever been used. The Americans used it in the Philippines.

18395. And you think it was a satisfactory experiment?—I think decidedly; I think it is much preferable to fresh meat.

18396. The fresh meat being hard?—It was generally of bad quality, because it was the trek ox practically or the old cow, and it was of bad quality—hard and stringy.

18397. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Where did your frozen meat come from?—I think principally from the Argentine. Of course, the Australians wanted to get more money than they ought to have asked, and directly we tried to buy from them up went the price.

18398. (*Chairman.*) You are prepared to say something about the nature and quantity of the rations?—Yes, I do not think there is very much there. I think the nature of the rations was excellent, and the quantity was quite sufficient, in some cases a little bit too much—for instance, for biscuit it gave the troops a pound a day, or a pound and a quarter of bread; now they could not eat the biscuit; no man living could eat a pound of that hard biscuit. A pound of that biscuit is six of those square biscuits, and there is not a man living who could eat it.

18399. What did they do with it then?—It was wasted.

18400. They threw it away?—Yes, it was thrown away. I can give you an instance. In Egypt in 1896 I was up the Nile in charge of the supply of a regiment, and on leaving our base Lord Kitchener told me he wished to take 30 days' supply, and he could only give me certain accommodation on the river in barges to take it up. I calculated it up, and I found I had either to leave some of the supplies behind, or I would have to leave the forage for the mules I had behind altogether, as I had not transport to take it all up. I decided that it would be better to leave the forage behind than to leave behind the men's supplies, which I did. I had 87 mules, and I fed those 87 mules entirely on the biscuit that was thrown away by the one infantry regiment, and they came back quite fat.

18401. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) On the waste biscuit?—Yes, and I think that if we gave the men, say, 2 ounces of Quaker oats or rolled oats in lieu of the extra biscuit and some more sugar and cocoa, we would do them better. I should give them the powdered cocoa, such as Epps', and those sort of things, instead of the hard rock cocoa, which is no use to them. The powdered cocoa is very useful in the early morning, and so are the Quaker and rolled oats, because the men put it in their haversack loose, and they can pull it out with their hands and eat it as they march along. They like it immensely, and it would be far better to have some of that and less of the biscuit.

18402. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Where does the need for the sugar come in?—They want the extra sugar if you give them the extra tea or cocoa.

18403. They must have it sweetened?—Yes. Tommy will not have it unless it is sweetened; he is always crying for more tea, coffee, and sugar, and I think if we gave them cocoa instead of the tea it would be better for them. With regard to the rum ration, I think it would be better if we only gave the rum ration as a regular pick-me-up under the General's orders absolutely; there should be no rum ration at all unless ordered by the General as a pick-me-up after a very long march in wet weather, and a better pick-me-up for the troops would be an issue of Liebig or Bovril, or something of that sort, after a long march. The troops in blockhouses ought never to get rum, as they get the issue and they drink it all at once, and the result is that half of them are drunk.

18404. (*Chairman.*) Do they get an issue of rum now?—They get in the field an issue of rum three times a week, or every day if the General orders it, and it is not a good thing for them. That is all I wish to say with regard to that part of the subject.

18405. We have had some evidence about tinned meat to the effect that there was some difficulty in

the provision of tinned meat in 2lb. tins?—That is a long question. For a long time the home authorities would not see the advantage of having 1lb. or 2lb. tins. They said that the cost was greater, and that it did not keep as well, and that it was not as good, and undoubtedly it is not so good in the smaller tins as in the larger tins.

18406. (*Sir John Jackson.*) The larger is the 6lb. tin?—Yes, but for years and years I think we have all pointed out that the 1lb. and 2lb. tins were the most advantageous for active service, and I do not think at first there was sufficient of it sent out. I managed to purchase a large quantity of 1lb. and 2lb. tins in Natal, and we did not feel the pinch of the want of it in Natal at all, because we had this large quantity, which was purchased really for Ladysmith, and was not got up there in time, so that really in Natal we had plenty of 1lb. and 2lb. tins.

18407. (*Chairman.*) We had some evidence from General Buller's force, I think, that they had these large tins, and as the soldiers could not of course eat the whole of one, the balance was thrown away?—I think that must have been after they joined hands with Lord Roberts' army, because there were plenty of 1lb. and 2lb. tins in Natal, and we always issued it, my instructions to supply officers being that they were always to issue it to small parties. I do not say that we had sufficient to issue it to everybody, but I think certainly 30 per cent. of the meat in Natal was in 1lb. and 2lb. tins.

18408. We also had evidence from the home authorities that the supply of 1lb. and 2lb. tins actually ran out, and they could not be got?—That I can quite believe, but, as I say, I was very lucky; the grocers and other people in Durban and Maritzburg stocked more of the 1lb. and 2lb. tins than of anything else. I bought up all their stocks, and I did not get any 6lb. tins in what I bought. I bought 300,000lbs.

18409. These were supplies you got locally?—Yes, and, of course, a small proportion of 2lb. tins came out with the Woolwich supplies, and with the two together, what I purchased and what came out, I think I am right in saying that about 30 per cent. of what we had was in 1lb. and 2lb. tins.

18410. But the trade at home would not have an unlimited supply of 1lb. and 2lb. tins?—Not to the quantity we wanted.

18411. They would naturally have it in the larger tins?—Yes, because it would be made for us in that tin, you see.

18412. For the general trade I suppose the larger tin is the one that is used, is it not?—That I could not tell you.

18413. It has been alleged that there was an accumulation of tinned meat in Natal which became an actual nuisance?—That is quite so; there was. We had very large stocks at all our base ports of tinned meat and biscuits, and it became a nuisance in this way, that we had no storage for it. It had to stand out in the open, and, of course, with the wind, weather, and sun acting upon anything of that sort one or two, at any rate, of the outside tins in each case would rust, and perforation was set up in that way, and that would go bad. If one tin in a case went bad with the thousands of cases that were all stacked there, you can imagine what the nuisance would be. It was not that it was all bad; we had it unpacked afterwards and picked over, and I think the average was only about half a tin per case that was found to be bad. That was due entirely to exposure.

18414. And exposure which could not be avoided?—It absolutely could not be avoided.

18415. What did you do with that?—It was taken out to sea and destroyed.

18416. And the nuisance prevented in that way?—That was the only way we could do it, and, of course, it took time; even if there is one tin bad in a big stack containing thousands of pounds of meat it makes sufficient stench to make you think that the whole stack is bad.

18417. So that the casual observer might think the whole was bad, whereas as a matter of fact it was not?—That is so. You can generally tell the bad boxes, because it runs and stains the wood, and we picked them out as far as possible.

18418. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) When the meat was bad did not the top part of the tin bulge upwards con-

sequent upon the gas inside?—Yes. Of course we had to use boxes containing tins of biscuits and boxes containing tins of meat for dunnage too, and that was very disadvantageous. We stopped that in the end, but we could not get dunnage at first, and we did not want to put stores like flour, rice, tea and coffee right on the ground. It was very difficult to avoid everything undesirable, but of course one lives and learns, and we may do better next time.

18419. Your demands on the Home authorities were always met?—Extremely well.

18420. And you had sufficient supplies throughout?—Plenty; our difficulty was to get them up from the coast, and it was a great strain on the railway. During the last eighteen months of the war we required 350 ten-ton trucks a day from the various coast ports to keep the Army supplied, and, of course, that was not easy to do.

18421. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Was the difficulty with the congested state of the railway near the disembarkation ports?—I do not think the railways were congested, except that they were not capable, with one single line, and the rolling stock they had got, of dealing with the traffic; they did it well enough, considering.

18422. The rolling stock was short?—Yes, and, of course, it was not added to, but on the contrary kept on decreasing every day with accidents, trains being hung up and destroyed, and one thing and another.

18423. At Cape Town we were told that there was no room alongside the quays to get the ships unloaded?—It was very cramped directly we began to store supplies on the quays, and we could not get it away from the quays, because we had no means of taking it away.

18424. Were there ever any food supplies brought into Simonstown and taken on the railway from Simonstown?—They did land some stores at Simonstown on one occasion, and they were all brought back again to Cape Town.

18425. (*Chairman.*) You had a difficulty in the numbers of the Army Service Corps?—Yes, we were very much undermanned, in fact we had no officers at all considering the size of the Army; we could hardly find one Army Service Corps officer per brigade.

18426. What did you do?—We had to use anybody; the one Army Service Corps officer had to do supply and transport, and he had to get any one he could to help him, and it generally resulted in his having to do the work himself, as the officer or civilian he employed had to be taught the work. The civilians were the best, because they had a certain amount of commercial training, but they had to be taught, and the strain on our officers at first was something terrible.

18427. There were a certain number of special service officers employed on the work, were there not?—Some of our own officers came out in special service at first, but usually the special service officer was only an ordinary officer, who had no training in Army Service Corps work, and was no use for that sort of work at all; he had to be taught; he was a special service officer for anything, and when he got out there he was detailed to anything they liked to put him to. Beyond our own officers who came out as special service officers I do not remember any officers who came out as special service officers being put to supply duties or transport duties; they generally went to general staff duties.

18428. We heard of them being placed to transport duties at any rate?—That may have been on the Cape service, but at the beginning of the war I was in Natal entirely, and we were hardly in communication with the Cape.

18429. There you were able to get in civilians?—We got numbers of civilians, but they wanted training, of course; it was not until two or three months that they were much use to us. We were able to get on by allowing accounting for supplies, and that sort of thing, to be in abeyance until we could get time to do it, and pull it up.

18430. Of course the strain all round was very great in consequence of the size of the operations, but you think that the Army Service Corps peace establishment ought to be increased?—Certainly, I think it ought to be at least doubled.

18431. So as to provide for the contingency of another expedition of the same kind?—Certainly.

18432. I think you mentioned field canteens also?—Yes, I started a field canteen at the very commencement in Natal. My original idea was not so much a field canteen as a sales dépôt for Army stores, and the idea

first occurred to me in Egypt, because I found that up the Nile, and places of that sort officers and men could not get luxuries. They came howling round the supply officer, asking him to sell them hospital supplies, and things of that sort, which were luxuries to them. They had no money to pay for them, and it generally ended in their giving a small chit of paper for the value of the things they took. A young supply officer who was there got perhaps in one day £300 or £400 worth of these small chits; a storm would come and blow them away; he would say "I have lost £400 worth of chits"; he would lose his head, and the supplies would go to the bad altogether. In order to avoid that I thought it would be a good idea to bring in a sort of repayment branch of the Army Service Corps, where we would have men who would be prepared to take these chits and have no other responsibility besides, and where the men could go and buy the few extras they wanted in the field. From that it developed into field canteen. I got permission from Sir George White to start that sort of canteen, and I started it on my own credit, buying the stores from merchants at Durban on credit, agreeing as to the prices I was to pay them, and I agreed to pay them 5 per cent. over and above that for credit. As I sold the things I paid the cash over to the merchants, and eventually I got on until I found I could pay cash for everything, and then I bought in the open market, and paid cash for everything. Eventually we did very well. The idea was that any profits made by this canteen were to be given to the next-of-kin of the men killed in action or dying of wounds in the field, and the profits made by the Natal Army under Sir Redvers Buller amounted to very nearly £14,000, which was distributed to the next-of-kin of all men who died in the Natal Army; they got just £8 a piece. Then when we joined hands at Pretoria I was authorised to extend the system to the whole Army, which I did, and we extended it to the whole Army all over the country—Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, Transvaal, and everywhere. We had field canteens in the field; we made up our own transport to carry it, or hired transport for the purpose. We distributed to each regiment as it left the country a grant of £200 towards their regimental institutes when they started again in another country, and we made a distribution to the men who had lost an arm, say; they got a grant of £20, or something of that sort, and altogether, after the £14,000, we distributed in that way £88,000 in various directions, and when I left South Africa the canteen showed a balance credit of £470,000.

18433. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What was it proposed to do with the £470,000?—Just before I left South Africa they re-modelled the whole thing as the South African Garrison Institutes, and it was to be run as a civilian establishment. They were to run all canteens, both wet and dry, in the garrisons, and we allotted to them for that purpose £400,000 capital. They were to reduce the stock, for the stock was very large owing to the large demand being suddenly stopped, and as soon as the stock was reduced that £400,000 was to be reduced to £250,000, and that was to be their working capital on which they were to run the canteens. There was a plan drawn up of garrison institutes to be built. At Pretoria there was to be a very fine building indeed, which was very nearly finished before I left; it was to be of stone and brick, and to contain billiard rooms, reading rooms, writing rooms, supper rooms, and everything possible as a club house for the soldier.

18434. Under the new arrangement what becomes of the profits?—The profits go to pay for these buildings and also for their upkeep, and for the upkeep of the canteens, and the profits made afterwards in each district go to the General Officer of the District for distribution in such manner as he may think right, such as the upkeep of their recreation grounds, and so on. We also gave grants for the building of officers' club houses, and things of that sort.

18435. (*Chairman.*) Is that an entirely new system?—It had never been started before, and was an entirely new idea; it was marvellous the way it worked. I remember the time when I had a sleepless night because I bought 200 cases of whisky, as I did not think I would ever sell them. I happened to get the lot cheap, and I was afraid I would never sell them; but after that, towards the end, we were doing a turnover of over £4,000,000 a year.

18436. How does it differ from the ordinary canteen?—Because it is not regimental; it is run entirely by a civilian personnel.

18437. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were these canteens

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you speak of large shops in which everything could be bought?—Everything.

18438. Clothing?—Everything. It was a regular sort of William Whiteley in the field. The only thing we did not sell was liquor; we sold liquor to officers and beer to the men when we could get at them, but they were only allowed a pint a day, and only when it was available, of course. The principal thing was really the groceries, the dry goods, and the clothing.

18439. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Where did you get the civilians from?—From the refugees.

18440. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) That accounts for a notice I saw in connection with an auction sale the other day in which a whole quantity of ladies' dresses and so on were sold for the Government: would that be one of these canteens being sold out?—When first the burgher camps were formed they asked if I would establish canteens in the burgher camps for the Boer refugees, which I did, and, of course, for them I got women's underclothing and children's clothes, and everything possible, and it is very possible that some of these stocks may have been still left over, and were being sold by auction.

18441. (*Chairman.*) Is that an organisation which is peculiar to South Africa?—Yes, absolutely.

18442. It would not be one that would be continued elsewhere?—I think it could be extended to the whole Army. I would rather not say much about it, because it is my hobby; but I would like very much to see it extended to the whole Army. I am quite sure it is the system, as it has the advantage of doing away with the tenant system, because although you are practically a tenant, the canteen belongs to the soldier, and you do not want to make profits, any profit you do make going back to the soldier himself. You put in the very best article at the cheapest rate, and you have no object in putting in bad stuff. It is all very well in a canteen under the tenant system to say that the officers will see that a certain brand of an article is put in, but we all know that there are qualities and qualities of every brand, and the tenant, who wishes to make money out of it, will put in an inferior quality of the brand he is obliged to put in until he is found out, which is only after eight or nine months; and when he is found out, he says "Certainly," and puts in the other article; but he has made his profit, whereas with this system you have no tenant, the tenant is the soldier himself.

18443. How do you make this large amount of money out of it?—The way the money was made was in this way: our turnover was very, very considerable, and very quick. For instance, we would turn over our capital very nearly five times a month. The canteen was worked on this principle: the articles sold in the canteen were divided into three classes; there were the soldiers' necessities, which were sold at just under cost price; there was the soldiers' luxury, and the officers' necessity, which were sold at just a fraction over cost price; and then there was what we called the officers' luxury, such as whiskey and things of that sort, which were sold at 3 per cent profit. Then by registering ourselves as brokers in the four Colonies we bought in South Africa from the merchants direct, and did away with the brokers, and we claimed the 1 per cent. brokerage; that 1 per cent. brokerage on a turnover of practically £500,000 a month meant a very considerable profit, and that 1 per cent. brokerage and the 3 per cent. we made on the officers' luxuries paid all our expenses and gave us our profit.

18444. The next point you mention is captured stock?—That, of course, we had great difficulty with, and there ought to be some organisation in connection with some branch in the Army to take possession of captured stock in the field; for instance, in South Africa we were robbed of hundreds of thousands of pounds through not having a proper organisation of that sort till practically near the end. A column goes out on march and it captures, say, a lot of cattle, and any of these scallywags coming along, who are following the Army all over the place, will come up to the Commanding Officer and say: "I am a drover with this column; I will take your cattle and drive them for you." The Commanding Officer naturally thinks it very good of him, and says: "All right, give me a receipt for them," and he gives a receipt signed "Tom Jones," and goes off with the cattle to the nearest market and sells them. If there was some recognised organisation in the field and proper people with passes attached to the various columns to take over the cattle as they were captured, there would

not be those losses, and there would be some organisation which would properly look after them.

18445. Do you think the losses in that way were considerable?—Very considerable; it was done principally by local Colonial corps undoubtedly, who used to send a man out saying: "I am a drover"; they used to take them, and drive them off. They knew the country well, and they would secrete them somewhere until they could get them up into Rhodesia or somewhere or other. That occurred very considerably up in the Northern Transvaal, where they could get them across more easily to Rhodesia.

18446. It would not be so easy to dispose of them in the other parts, such as the Free State?—It would not have been hard, as they always had the contractors; the contractors' agents were in it as much as anybody else. I have got a form of pass which I had drawn up for the last contract to try and prevent that sort of thing. (*Exhibiting the same to the Chairman.*)

18447. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are the cattle branded there?—We used to brand them as far as possible.

18448. Are they branded by the owners originally?—Oh, yes.

18449. Is there registration of brands?—No, they had no registration of brands. In Natal they had to a certain extent, and in Cape Colony also, but we could not discover any registration of brands in the Orange River Colony or Transvaal. The branding was our great difficulty; we branded, of course, all we got; we put them into depôts and branded them with the broad arrow, and then when we sold them to contractors they had the condemned mark put on them before they were issued to them.

18450. (*Chairman.*) Now as to the requisitioning of supplies?—I say the same thing with regard to the requisitioning of supplies, namely, that we wanted some organisation with columns, and the same organisation really that had the care of captured stock could very well do for the requisitioning of supplies. You see a column went out into the field, and they were collecting supplies in the country, and anybody going along who came across anything would give a receipt for it. There were no possible means of knowing what receipts had been given, or who had got them, or whether they were given to the legitimate people or not, and I think there was a good deal of abuse in connection with that, and a great many receipts that eventually came in were forgeries. I think we lost thousands of pounds through not having a proper organisation for requisitioning supplies. There ought to be so many officers per brigade; in fact, I would have two officers per regiment.

18451. Who was supposed to requisition—the Commanding Officer?—The Commanding Officer or someone deputed by him. A squadron of cavalry would arrive at one of the villages, and the commander of the squadron would tell off five or six sergeants to go round and collect everything they could lay their hands on. They would go round, and in some cases give receipts for what they got, and the prices put on in nine cases out of ten were exorbitant. The man going round had no idea of the value of the articles he gave the receipt for, and he would put on the price to be paid for them which was dictated by the Jew owner, and which was probably three times what it ought to have been. We had to abide by receipts given like that. We tried to beat down the prices as much as we could, and did to a great extent. In a great many cases bogus receipts were given, and there were many forgeries; heaps of receipts came before me that I knew were forgeries, and which I threw out as such. I think if we had an officer with a small staff for each small unit in the field, and let him do the requisitioning, no receipts to be signed without his keeping a record of them, there would be a record of all the receipts given in the field from day to day, and we could tell what our expenditure in the requisitioning of supplies was. As it is now we shall not know for three or four years.

18452. The matter is still under consideration?—They are still being paid as far as possible. In Natal I think General Buller's system was rather better; as the troops advanced officers went behind the troops paying for the things requisitioned; they went backwards and forwards in the country behind the troops paying requisitions. They made inquiries as to where the owner of these things was, if he was a man, and if he did not produce the receipt himself that receipt was torn up and thrown on to the veldt and not paid at all. If he pro-

duced the receipt himself it was taken as satisfactory evidence that he had not gone off to the enemy, and he was paid for it there and then. That was carried on for a long time, but Lord Kitchener's objection to that, and a very right objection, was that if he paid this money it meant that the man, having received his money, rejoined the enemy, and that it was better not to pay until the end of the war.

18453. It is very difficult to check things three or four years afterwards?—Yes, but it would be easier if a record was kept of every receipt given.

18454. You want a corps of unskilled labourers?—Yes, that we had, but we ought to have it formed immediately a war is thought of even. When stores come flowing into the country people have to be employed at the coast at exorbitant rates to off-load them, whereas if we had our own corps of unskilled labourers we would do it for next to nothing.

18455. But you employed natives?—Yes, I had a corps of unskilled labourers; in Lord Roberts' Army it was done by the Director of Railways; he got his natives for railway purposes, and he also supplied from his railway native labour corps the requirements of the Army, but that did not work very well.

18456. (Sir John Jackson.) What did they pay these natives?—£2 a month, to include all overtime.

18457. And you fed them?—Yes, on mealie; we gave them 3lbs. of mealie and ½ oz. of salt a day. When I ran the corps for the whole Army we had, I think I am right in saying, 14,000 natives employed as labourers in the whole of South Africa; that included herds, farm labourers, and everything else.

18458. As to the necessity of making provision for the production of vegetables, and so on?—I think that is very important, because at all times on active service the railway must be very hard pressed to get supplies of material up for the war, and the railways can be saved to an enormous extent if vegetables and other things can be supplied, particularly for the hospitals. It is absolutely essential that the hospitals should have fresh eggs and milk, and they can be produced undoubtedly on the lines of communication and at the base depôts.

18459. Do you mean that the vegetables should be grown?—Yes; take, for instance, potatoes, one truck of seed will produce eight trucks of potatoes, and see what that saves the railway. We made money out of it also. In the accounts the farms were debited with the cost of the seed and labour, rations, arms and ammunition, implements, tools, and all that sort of thing that they had for their use, and they were credited with the value of the supplies they produced and handed over for the use of the Army at the lowest price at which they could be obtained by contract at the various places—that is, their cost, we will say, at the nearest place where we could make a contract for them, plus the railway carriage to the place where they had to be delivered, and the balance at the credit of the military farms to the 31st of the third 1902 was £25,636 7s. 6d.

18460. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Was that more than one farm?—That was right through South Africa, about 70 farms. In addition to that we provided the troops on the lines of communication, especially blockhouse lines, with vegetable seeds free, and we had instructors going round to instruct them in gardening, and encouraged them to sow vegetables round their blockhouses for the provision of fresh vegetables to themselves, and that worked very well indeed.

18461. (Chairman.) Did the farms supply milk too?—Yes, all the hospitals were supplied with fresh milk from the farms; we collected the best cows from the captured stock and put them into the dairies.

18462. What has happened to those farms now?—They are all done away with; the majority of those farms belonged to Boers and various people who were on commando or refugees, and we paid no rent for them. We simply occupied the farms, but we improved them immensely, and as soon as the war was over we had to hand them over again.

18463. You were occupying the actual farm buildings that existed?—Yes.

18464. (Sir Frederick Darley.) I suppose you had a good season which produced that?—A fair season; I

would not call it an extraordinary season. There is no doubt about it that agriculture in South Africa would pay 40 per cent. on the capital invested. We were farming something like 70 farms, and I suppose the total would be about 5,000 acres.

18465. And your profit was how much?—£25,000. Of course, where we had the advantage was that we had a certain market for our produce.

18466. (Sir John Jackson.) You had not to pay long carriage to get your goods to the market?—No; of course, where we had the advantage was that we took all the debilitated stock from the transport and gave it, say, an hour's work a day and good feeding and rest on the farm, and in that way it was fit to go back to transport work again. It cost us practically nothing to feed on the farm, because we had plenty of cabbage leaves and things of that sort to feed that stock on which would only have rotted otherwise, and we were able to resuscitate the old trek oxen and to exchange them there for more poor ones whenever the transport came near us again. In that way we kept the transport going, and we also got our traction practically free; that is where we made our profit. I think that even if it had cost £25,000, instead of leaving that amount of profit, it would have been cheap.

18467. (Chairman.) You want a field detective department?—Yes, that is very important, because the amount of pilfering of supplies and things that went on was really astonishing. At every town and village we occupied the civil populace seemed to think that the British Army was their perquisite to rob as much as ever they possibly could, and without a detective department going to the various houses and places to discover and recover Army stores, our losses would have been immense. I had a detective department going on for some considerable time. It was very difficult to get convictions when you did lock these people up. The magistrate would never convict, but it had this desired effect, that although we got very little in fines, we recovered an enormous value in property. Here is the working of the detective department. I started to organise it in March, 1901, and up to the 31st March, 1902, the expenditure on it had been £5,563, and the receipts—that is, the value of supplies recovered and fines—amounted to £19,300. I got General Lyttelton before I left to give the staff between them a bonus of £1,000, which he did, and taking that into account, from the 1st March, 1901, to the 15th July, 1902, the cost of wages, rations, and everything with regard to the detective establishment was £14,523, and the value of stores recovered £28,979, showing a credit balance of £14,455; so that you see the detective department actually paid for itself over and over again.

18468. Was that chiefly pilfering by the people of the country?—By the people of the country.

18469. Did you find any trouble with the soldiers themselves?—Very little, except with rum and things of that sort—luxuries.

18470. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What class of men had you as detectives—some of the troops?—Nearly all civilians; in fact, as to the actual detectives themselves we, as far as possible, set a thief to catch a thief; we had men who had been convicted at various times, and who knew the ropes, and these men we employed.

18471. (Chairman.) Is there no provision for a detective force in connection with the Army?—I do not think so, as far as my knowledge goes. Of course they have got the Provost-Marshal and his policemen, who are supposed to do all that sort of thing, but their establishment was not sufficient, and they have quite enough to do without doing that. Where I found this so useful was that I could work it in with my unskilled labour corps; most of my overseers of the natives were practically detectives, and I could keep them moving. I moved a detachment of natives, and I would order one of the overseers to go with them; that overseer would be a detective, and he would be sent to a place where nobody knew he was a detective, and in that way I was able to work in the two things together.

18472. Something in the nature of a detective department is necessary in connection with any big expedition?—Undoubtedly.

18473. As to the system of supply accounting, what have you to say?—There I think our system in the field is a little too elaborate. We have to put very young officers into the field, and you want to reduce their responsibility as far as possible, to take responsibility off their shoulders and

Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Morgan, C.B., D.S.O.

12 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
Colonel H. C.
Morgan,
C.B., D.S.O.

12 Mar. 1903.

enable them to keep their accounts up to date; give them a very simple form of account which they have to make up monthly; take all responsibility off their shoulders, and give them the one idea that they have to feed the men. Instead of that, under our present system, it is a little too elaborate; the young officer gets a bit flurried, and thinks more about his accounts than his supplies, and the result is that the men are not perhaps as well fed as they would be otherwise. If he got more latitude, more freedom, and less responsibility, he would feed the troops better, and there is no doubt about it that the feeding of the troops rests entirely on the supply officer of the brigade or division. If he does not do his work they will get nothing.

18474. How would you relieve him?—The idea I had has been very much criticised at the War Office by the Finance Department, but I formed what I called a central account, which was really a Clearing House account. The difficulty was that trucks of supplies would be consigned, say, from Cape Town to Bloemfontein, and on their way they would be re-consigned or diverted somewhere else, say to Springfontein, or some place of that sort, and they would be lost entirely. The difficulty was then that the supply officer to whom they were consigned would have to keep his accounts open for months until he could trace those trucks and render his accounts complete. In order to avoid that I instituted a Central Clearing House account, by which, when he found that he had certain trucks that had been consigned to him, and which never arrived, he gave credit to the person who consigned them to him from the base; he signed the way-bills, and signed for them as having received them, and thus cleared the base account all right, but in order to clear his own account he sent the way-bills on to the central account, which took them on charge as nominally having been received by them, and gradually when they turned up, as they would turn up, each depôt at the end of every month closed their accounts finally. If there was anything deficient, that is to say, if supplies never reached them which should have reached them, and they were consequently deficient of those supplies, they sent on the way-bill to the central account, which the central account accepted. If, on the other hand, they had supplies surplus, they sent a way-bill for those supplies, or rather, they accepted a way-bill for those supplies, from the central account, so that the central account got a surplus account, and a deficiency account, and the one was set against the other, and it became a Clearing House account, and so enabled each depôt and each supply officer in the field to close his account at the end of the month. If there was any question to be inquired into it was all done by the central account at headquarters, and it was very much easier done than it would have been done by some 50 columns in the field who had no method of communication and could not carry on a correspondence very successfully. That worked very well indeed; I started it in Natal, and it worked well in the Natal Army, and then I extended it to the whole Army.

18475. It is not approved at home?—The finance people do not approve of it, because they say it is only a paper account. I admit that, but it is the only possible means I see of avoiding difficulty. In fact, we could never have rendered our supply accounts at all for the war unless we had done it; the accounts would still be open. As it is, all the columns have been able to close their accounts; directly a column ceased to exist, the supply officer was able to render his account straight away, and he got credit for surpluses, and gave credit for deficiencies, and that ended his responsibility. The principal objection of the War Office authorities to it was that it opened the door for dishonesty. I admit it did, but we avoided that by not giving credit to any officer for supplies stated to be deficient unless we were satisfied that the deficiency was a genuine one, and that he had good grounds for the deficiency. If he could say, "Such and such trucks I never received, and that is the cause of my deficiency," or "Such and such a convoy of stores was consigned to me from such and such a place, it was met by a column on the road which drew supplies from it, I do not know how much they drew, but it arrived here so much deficient, and that must have been what they drew," provided he gave us reasons of that sort, we gave him credit, and, if not, we made further inquiry. I think the one thing really in the field is to reduce the responsibility of the officer in charge of the supply of a column in the field, otherwise the Army will not be properly supplied. Any means which will do that is justifiable.

18476. Is that all you wish to say about accounting?—I think that is the main thing.

18477. What have you to say about rations for newspaper correspondents?—That leads to a great deal of trouble; newspaper correspondents come along, and they want this, that, and the other thing, and they are supposed to pay for it before they get it, but in nine cases out of ten there is no possible means of getting them to pay for it, and even if they could pay for it, the supply officer does not like to get hold of money, as he might be robbed, and the result is that these people have to be given the things on credit, and there is a good deal of difficulty in getting it back from them. I think really we did meet the case afterwards by this form of requisition which we made them fill in (*exhibiting the same to the Chairman*). It is a requisition for all kinds of stores; it is a receipt and it is also a cheque.

18478. This is signed by the newspaper correspondent?—Yes. This is made out in quadruple, and three copies are sent to the supply officer, of which he retains one as a voucher for his account, and he sends two to the paymaster; the paymaster having got this cheque cashed, gives one to the person who cashes the cheque as a receipt, and retains one for the purpose of his account, and sends an acknowledgement back to the officer, who keeps the accounts as his voucher for the transaction. The fourth one is kept by the person who makes out the requisition as his document. It does for horses, mules, and everything of that sort, issued to anybody, and I think that really meets the case.

18479. Is that a new arrangement?—This was brought in about January, 1902.

18480. It is new in this war; it has not been used before?—It is quite new; it is as recent as January, 1902.

18481. Then you think that the administration of transport and supply in the field ought to be under one head?—I think so, certainly; supply is absolutely dependent upon transport; the troops cannot be supplied unless there is the transport. By separating them the supply officer is naturally anxious to get his supplies forward to feed the troops, and the transport officer, on the other hand, is anxious to keep his transport efficient, and the result is that the transport officer will try and keep some wagons in reserve; that is, he will not produce them because he wants to keep some animals fresh, and the supply officer is trying to overload the wagons to get the supplies forward; whereas if there is one officer in charge of both supply and transport, with others under him for the various duties, he has both interests at heart. The two services are so nearly allied to one another that it is absolutely dangerous to separate them.

18482. Have they been completely separated?—The idea was to separate them; they tried to separate them, but I do not think that quite succeeded. I think the idea is to separate them.

18483. What do you mean by saying the idea was to separate them—in South Africa do you mean?—No, for the future; they tried to separate them in South Africa, and I do not think it worked very well, and that is the reason it did not work.

18484. They are both branches of the Army Service Corps, are they not?—Yes, but I think the idea is to separate them.

18485. That you think would be a mistake?—I am quite sure of it. I think it would mean the ruin of the thing; it would be simply going back to the times of the old military train, when they had supply and transport separate. The two things are so intermixed that supply cannot be worked without transport, and they are so nearly allied that they are far better worked by the same officer.

18486. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) Under the old system the commissariat officer had to provide the supplies, and he had to transport them to the place where they were wanted?—Yes, that was the system instituted by Sir Redvers Buller when the old supply and transport was remodelled into the Army Service Corps, and Sir Redvers Buller's organisation, which was that they had to do both supply and transport in the field, is the system, and the only system. To have a separate transport system only means chaos.

18487. (*Sir John Jackson*.) Do you know how they deal with the question in the German Army?—They are all one.

18488. (*Chairman*.) You make a comparison between

the English and the Indian system?—There is very little difference. I was always under the impression that they were very much the same until the Indian troops arrived from India. They had some Indian commissariat officers with them, and we had a very good opportunity of seeing the difference between the two systems. The main difference is that the Indian commissariat run both ordnance and supplies together; they have a system of go-downs; that is, when they get into camp the transport is loaded up separately with each item of supply, and they are told off to their various go-downs; for instance, they have a go-down for grain, a go-down for hay, a go-down for groceries, a go-down for bread, and a go-down for meat. The result is that having these various go-downs is very much simpler for the issue part of the business, but it is very much more elaborate for the troops who have to draw; whereas, under our system it is all put into the one *dépôt*, and the troops go and get everything they want

in the one place. Also in the Indian Army their warrant officers do for them the work our officers do for us; their officers do nothing but administrative work, and they do no executive work of any kind. In the field also their officers in charge of supplies are warrant officers really, and I do not think the troops are as honestly dealt with as they would be by an officer. Otherwise I think their system is a very good one.

18489. But you prefer our system?—Oh, yes; their officers have not the same knowledge as our officers have; they have only administrative knowledge, and they have no technical knowledge. I think they hardly know one thing they issue from another; they cannot tell you the difference between the various supplies they issue; they do not know it.

18490. Is there any other point you wish to direct our attention to?—No.

Lieut.-
Colonel H. C.
Morgan,
C.B., D.S.O.
12 Mar. 1903

FORTY-SIXTH DAY.

Friday, 13th March 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT
ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE,
K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Major-General Sir G. H. MARSHALL, K.C.B., R.A., called and examined.

18491. (*Chairman*.) You have been good enough to give us a précis of the evidence you are prepared to give. The first point is with regard to the official position and functions you occupied during the War?—I proceeded to South Africa in October, 1899, as General Officer Commanding the Royal Artillery under Sir Redvers Buller. On the arrival of Lord Roberts to assume supreme command I accompanied him in the same capacity throughout the campaign. My functions were to advise the Commander-in-Chief on all matters connected with Artillery—to be responsible for the supply and distribution of Artillery ammunition, and for the transport in the field of ammunition of other arms—to be responsible for the administration of the Artillery in regard to *personnel*, *materiel* and horses, including distribution, postings, transfers, and replacement of casualties, and to take personal command when ordered in case of a general concentration of Artillery.

18492. You divide your evidence under four heads?—Yes, I propose to divide the subjects I am speaking about under the following heads: *Materiel*; *personnel*; horses, mules, etc.; tactics, organisation, and general remarks.

Materiel.

I produce a statement of the different natures of guns employed by us, which shows their relative power (*The statement was handed in. Vide Appendix Vol., page 193.*) I have put all these and the different technical information in the form of a statement. I thought perhaps you would prefer that to my going through a long list.

18493. Could you summarise it at all?—I am now going to summarise a few of the principal points.

The 15-pounder gun was the one most largely employed, the batteries, Royal Field Artillery being armed with it. The popular idea that this was a very obsolete and inferior weapon is not quite accurate. No other nation except the French had a better weapon. The French had for some years been secretly experimenting with a quick-firing gun, and had adopted it. Every other nation, including ourselves, was seeking in the same direction. A great nation cannot hurriedly re-arm its

artillery without due experiments. The Boers, on the other hand, requiring only a few guns, were able to go to the manufacturers and take whatever was in stock, and of the newest pattern. That they suffered from their haste and want of precaution I will show presently. I would also point out that even at the present moment the German Artillery is equipped with a gun which is practically the same as our 15-pounder.

18494. They have no quick-firing guns?—No. Krupp, their official manufacturer, has made some, and I believe is anxious for them to be adopted by the Government, but I believe the German Emperor does not agree with the French system; he thinks they have gone into a complicated system. It is interesting to note that the captured 15-pounders (that is the 15-pounders captured by the Boers from us) are said by some officers to have caused more annoyance to our troops than any other Boer gun.

18495. They did use them?—Yes, they did use them, and with very great effect.

18496. How did they get the ammunition for them?—They captured a great deal of our ammunition, and they also made ammunition in Johannesburg. They commandeered the whole of Begbie's works. Messrs. Begbie had very good engineering plant in Johannesburg. They were a very large firm of English engineers, and the Boers commandeered the whole of their works, turned Begbie out, put in Italian workmen and workmen from Creusot, and practically turned it into an arsenal and copied our ammunition, and made ammunition to fit our guns after they had used what they had captured.

18497. Their own ammunition would not have fitted our guns?—No. When I went to Johannesburg I overhauled Begbie's works, and we found there working drawings of how they made the ammunition to fit our guns.

As to the other natures of guns, the Horse Artillery were armed with a 12½-pounder, concerning which my remarks about the 15-pounder would almost equally apply.

18498. Does that mean that you think the Horse Artillery gun was an effective gun?—At that time, yes. Of course, it was an old-fashioned gun; being a 12½-

Major-
General Sir
G. H.
Marshall,
K.C.B., R.A.
13 Mar. 1903.

Major-General Sir
G. H.
Marshall,
K. C. B., R. A.

13 Mar. 1903.

pounder it was not as powerful as a 15-pounder, but it was practically on the same system. It was not a quick-firing gun.

18499. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have had information that the Horse Artillery gun was not useful?—Not useful?

18500. Not effective?—Was that from experts?

18501. I do not know quite what you call an expert—not Artillery officers, I must say?—But even so you might have a man who was an expert who was not an Artillery officer.

18502. In your opinion it was a good gun?—I think it was a good gun at the time. There are many faults about it, and we shall have a very much better gun. I shall presently show how we are to improve it, but at the time it was as good as we could get.

18503. You would not be in favour of abolishing these light guns altogether?—No, the light gun for Horse Artillery cannot be abolished.

18504. And substituting pom-poms?—I do not look upon the pom-pom as an Artillery gun. It has its advantages which I will deal with presently, but it was not considered by most Artillerymen as an Artillery weapon. It has its advantages, but not in that direction.

18505. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was the range of the Horse Artillery gun—the 12½-pounder?—About 4,000 yards.

18506. (*Chairman.*) It was suggested to us that it might be a better arrangement if a gun equivalent to the Field Artillery gun was made sufficiently mobile to be used as the first gun, and abolish the light gun for Horse Artillery altogether?—That was a theory which was a very favourite one at one time, and it always will appeal to people to have the same weapon for the two, for the Field and the Horse Artillery. The Field Artilleryman is tempted to discard shell power and to get the mobility of the Horse Artillery; the Horse Artilleryman tries to get more shell power at the expense of mobility, and we had a case in our own Service a few years ago which was rather interesting. The two met, and we got one gun, that is the first 12½-pounder breech-loader was the same for the Horse Artillery and the Field Artillery. The consequence of that was that they had no sooner met than they wanted to fly apart, and it was absolutely necessary then to go back. The Field Artillery gun had only a 12½-pounder shell, which was not sufficient in shell power, and the Horse Artillery gun had, it is true, a 12½-pounder, but it had not mobility enough. In the manoeuvres in Berkshire in 1890, the Horse Artillery horses died in the shafts in trying to keep up with the Cavalry, and that we shall assuredly get if we try to get an equipment which is the same for both.

18507. I do not think that was the proposition; the proposition was that the 15-pounder gun, the Field Artillery gun, might be so much lightened as to be used by the Horse Artillery, and that for the Artillery, that followed with the Infantry, it would be possible to take the larger guns which were used in this War for the first time, I think?—I think if you went to any manufacturer you would find it would be impossible to lighten the Field Artillery gun so that it should go with the Horse Artillery; you would not be able to get a gun to fire that capacity of shell, and which would keep up with cavalry. As to the question of substituting a heavy gun such as the 4·7 for the present field gun, this would be impossible. Although such a gun can keep up with infantry on the march, it cannot move out of a walk. Field Artillery must have mobility sufficient to enable it to trot to a flank, or to the head of a column. It must be able to change position rapidly when supporting an attack, and also in advanced and rearguard actions. The necessity for mobility is accentuated by the extent of front now occupied by armies in the field.

18508. I am only putting it to you on account of the opinions expressed to us?—I may say that I speak rather with knowledge, because I am President of the Committee which is now sitting to introduce a new armament into the Horse and Field Artillery, and we have had the manufacturers up—we have had Elswick and Vickers Maxim—and they cannot do it. They can hardly give us now a Horse Artillery quick-firing gun, a 12½-pounder, of the requisite mobility we want. We have had the

greatest difficulty to get them to make a 12½-pounder quick-firing gun.

18509. Of course, you have the whole of that matter before this Committee you spoke of?—Yes.

18510. The object being to get a gun for Horse Artillery with as large a range as possible?—That is it. We want a gun for the Horse Artillery that will, when necessary, be able to come into line with the Field Artillery at the same range, and have the same man-killing effect at that range, and if you are going to have it fire the same shell you will not be able to make it keep up with Cavalry. Presently I am coming to what we are doing now for the future, and I have the permission of the Director-General of Ordnance to give you any information you like about what is being done for the future—what steps we are taking.

The 5-inch field howitzer; much has been expected from its lyddite shell. During the War the effect of lyddite did not fulfil the exaggerated expectations. The 5-inch howitzers, however, have, under certain conditions, and when well handled, proved themselves to be of considerable value, and notably in Natal in the case of the Battery commanded by Major Hamilton-Gordon. Of the heavy guns, the 4·7 guns used by the Naval Brigade and by the Royal Garrison Artillery, the 5-inch guns and 6-inch howitzers used by the Royal Garrison Artillery, were very useful and efficient. Two 6-inch guns were used on railway mountings and two on field mountings. A 9·2 gun was also very successfully mounted on a railway mounting, and with a detachment of the Cape Garrison Artillery travelled over the line as far as Machadodorp. Four 9·45 howitzers accompanied the Army to Pretoria in readiness for siege operations. I wish to call attention to the number of different natures of guns employed. This is a matter of serious importance. It can readily be understood how enormous was the difficulty of distributing so many sorts of ammunition amongst the various units operating in different parts of a vast country, and ensuring that there should be no mistake in supplying the right sort to each. I consider it is a matter of imperial importance to strictly limit the number in future, and to insist on the same patterns for home, India, and the Colonies. I suggest that the following should meet all field requirements:—A Field Artillery gun, a Horse Artillery gun, a Field Artillery howitzer, and a heavy battery gun (such as a 4·7 or 5-inch). Those would be the four natures, instead of having, as we had in South Africa altogether, counting heavy guns and all, fifteen different sorts of guns in the field.

18511. It is obvious that the difficulty with the ammunition must have been very great?—It was enormous. It is not right, and at any moment it might lead to disaster.

18512. But you managed it all through?—Yes, I am glad to say there never was any disaster, but it was a very great difficulty, because one had columns moving about in all parts of the country, and one not only had to watch them, but also the different kinds of ammunition to a column; some battery happened to get into it with a different kind of ammunition, and it made great complication. All that came about a great deal from batteries coming out not having what I call a standardisation.

Now, with regard to the system of ammunition supply, owing to the extent of country and the number of separate operations which were conducted simultaneously, it was not possible to carry out the service system of one ammunition park providing a large central reserve of ammunition. It became necessary that each division and the corps troops should have its own complete system of supply. The ammunition park, therefore, was not mobilised with animals in South Africa—the personnel was employed for the formation of advanced ammunition depôts on the railway in advance of the Ordnance Store depôts. The ammunition columns were each divided into two portions—one consisting of B.L. ammunition wagons, S.A.A. carts, and buck-wagons; the other of ox-wagons. The B.L. wagons were at first drawn by horses, subsequently by mules; the buck-wagons by mules. The proportion of ammunition carried by ammunition columns was:—

	B.L. Wagons.	Buck.	Ox.	Total.
12-pounder and 15-pounder	50	100	100	250
5-inch Howitzer	23	27	100	150
Pom-pom	—	1,500	1,500	3,000
Rounds per rifle S.A.A. Infantry	—	25	50	75

The Infantry were supposed to carry with the unit 177 rounds per rifle, in addition to the 75 rounds in ammunition column, but owing to the amount always available, commanders of units generally carried much in excess of these numbers. In some cases, under special circumstances, as much as 200 rounds were carried by each man on the person. The first portions of the ammunition columns were able to keep in close touch with their units, whilst the ox wagons formed a second line. The latter, when necessary, marched to the rear and refilled from the advance depôts at rail-head. These arrangements worked well. On no occasion during the campaign was there any failure of supply to any unit, and no instance of wrong ammunition being supplied. The behaviour of the *materiel* generally under the prolonged strain to which it was subjected may be regarded as eminently satisfactory. Major Bushe, R.A., an expert officer, who carried out inspections of all the equipments, in his last report stated that all Horse and Field Artillery equipment was in serviceable condition, only 10 per cent. requiring extensive repair or replacement. That was a very marked thing about the *materiel*, and so much so that some officers are apt to say that one margin of safety was too great, but I think that is hardly a fair criticism.

18513. Does that include the guns?—That includes the guns—the whole *materiel*, guns, ammunition, wagons, wheels, metal work, and everything connected with the gun and its equipment.

18514. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) I suppose they meant by saying it was too great that it increased the weight?—That is what they said, but then of course it is very difficult to bring the margin down, and if you bring the margin down to a fine point you must have a larger percentage of breakages.

18515. That is what they meant, however?—Yes.

18516. (*Sir John Edge*.) Did you include harness?—No, I have got a separate note about the harness.

18517. (*Chairman*.) Will you proceed with your statement?—The following are the details of gun ammunition expended by the Royal Artillery in South Africa from October, 1899, to May, 1902.

	Rounds.
12-pounder B.L. (Royal Horse Artillery)	36,161
15-pounder B.L. (Royal Field Artillery)	166,548
5-inch howitzer - - - -	9,790
6-inch howitzer - - - -	55
4·7 Q.F. gun - - - -	3,035
5 B.L. gun - - - -	5,480
6 Q.F. gun - - - -	317
6·3 howitzer - - - -	765
12-pounder Q.F. gun - - -	6,056

What I call the 12-pounder Q.F. gun is the Naval pattern gun which was put on a field carriage and used principally by the Navy.

12½-pounder Vickers-Maxim - - -	765
Pom-Poms - - - -	193,837

The heaviest expenditure per battery in any action was at Magersfontein on the 11th December, 1899: "G" Royal Horse Artillery 1,250 rounds, 18th Royal Field Artillery 1,012 rounds, 62nd Field Artillery 1,003 rounds, 75th Royal Field Artillery 924 rounds, an average of 1,047 a battery. The greatest previous record in any war was made by the Germans at Mars-la-tour, viz., average per battery 51, maximum by one battery 1,164. Although the expenditure was so large throughout the War our demands on the War Office were at once complied with, and every assistance given by the Director-General of Ordnance for prompt replacement of ammunition and equipment.

1-pounder Maxims (pom-poms).—Previous to the War Messrs. Vickers had sold these only to the Boers and Chinese. Owing to its small calibre and bursting charge the pom-pom cannot compare with the Horse Artillery gun, either in range or man-killing power, and is admittedly not an Artillery weapon. Its effect was chiefly moral. It will probably be found useful in future by mounted troops on reconnaissance.

18518. (*Sir John Edge*.) Would the pom-pom be of any use in clearing a barricade, for instance, if you were following up a rear guard and the street was barricaded?—No, it would have no effect whatever.

18519. And the Horse Artillery gun would?—The Horse Artillery might not either.

18520. But it would be much more effective?—Yes, much more effective. The pom-pom would be absolutely useless, and you might as well fire with a pea-shooter against any sort of barricade. Its great use out there was that it was a very good weapon for clearing sniping parties, and the Artillery liked it very much for that reason.

18521. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) What space does the bursting charge of a pom-pom cover?—The bursting effect of a pom-pom is extremely local; for instance, Captain De Horsey, R.N., when he was taking the guns into action, had a pom-pom shell burst between his two feet, and only one piece went into him, and that was the brass fuse that went into his ankle. The burst is very slight. Of course, if the pom-pom itself hits you it is a big bullet of a pound weight, but its bursting charge is trivial, and it cannot be otherwise with only a pound shell.

18522. (*Chairman*.) How was it that it had so much effect?—At the ranges it is used at you can see the shell striking the ground and making a slight puff of smoke, and therefore it is more effective than a small machine gun which fires only a small bullet, because that does not burst at all; the pom-pom has a bursting charge and makes a little puff, and therefore if you make a bad shot the first time you see the puff, and the elevator can be corrected according to the fall of the shell. There is the great moral effect of seeing the shell bursting nearer and nearer to one as corrections are made.

With regard to the Boer Artillery.—The Boer Artillery consisted of:—

Transvaal:

Four Creusot 155 mm. size guns (Long Toms) 6in.
Six Creusot field guns 75 mm., 3in.
Eight Krupp field guns, 75 mm., 3in.
Four Krupp howitzers, 120 mm., 4·7in.
Two Maxim-Nordenfeldt field guns, 3in.
Twenty-two Maxim-Nordenfeldt field guns, 1½in.
One Skoda field gun, 75 mm. (3in.), and about 15 others practically obsolete and never used.

Orange Free State:

Fourteen Krupp field guns, 75 mm. (3in.), of same pattern as those of the Transvaal, besides a few odd guns of no practical value.

Although these guns have relatively a longer range than ours their effect was much minimised by their faulty ammunition, which probably had been hurriedly bought and never tested. For instance, many thousands of fuses were fired in the Long Tom shells before the Boers discovered that, owing to an inherent defect in the fuse, the ammunition was quite useless.

18523. Did they rectify it afterwards?—They rectified it afterwards; they got these fuses back and filed off the thread; they found that the thread by which you screwed in the fuse into the bush of the shell was too deep a thread, and the shank of the fuse was too small compared with the head, and, therefore, on the shock of discharge this used to shear off and the fuse used to drop out of the shell, so that when the shell arrived at its destination it had no fuse, and naturally did not burst. The extreme ranges employed also rendered their fire ineffective owing to the high angle of descent of their common shell and the small remaining velocity of the shrapnel bullets. It was not uncommon for our men to be shelled by the Boers and for the shrapnel bullets to fall off their clothing like hailstones, not penetrating. The Boers were very fond of firing at extremely long ranges, at such ranges that there was practically no effective velocity left in the shrapnel bullet. Their dispersion by single guns, though a necessity, was carried out without any arrangement for concerted action, and often failed to have any effect. They had very few guns, and I think it was a wise proceeding on their part to divide their guns; they placed their guns everywhere, but they never had any system of signalling so as to bring a fire to bear on any point, and therefore they never really stopped us or had any concentrated effect. Their whole system consisted in saving detachments; they used to dig a hole near the gun, one man used to pull the lanyard and run into the hole where all the others were, and they used to lie there

Major-General Sir G. H. Marshall, K.C.B., R.A.
13 Mar. 1903.

Major-General Sir G. H. Marshall,
K.C.B., R.A.
13 Mar. 1903.

until one fire had ceased; firing the gun attracted our fire, and they used all to lie in this trench they had dug perhaps 20 or 30 yards away until our fire slackened, and then they used to come out and fire another round, and that system is very much admired by some of our people, but I do not see that it had any effect. It certainly saved the detachment, but we try to teach our men that that is not the only thing to be done.

18524. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are you still in favour of massing guns?—Under certain circumstances, but I am going to speak about that presently; I am going to give my views upon that. At the same time it should be borne in mind that though the actual physical effect of the Boer artillery fire was small, it frequently caused annoyance and delay. Also, if the enemy use long range fire the moral effect on our troops is bad if our Artillery has not an equal range, even if neither fire have much real effect. The important lesson as regards *materiel*, demonstrated by the late war was the utter inefficiency as man-killers of common shell (even of 100 lb. weight) fired from guns even against defined and located targets, and the efficiency of good time shrapnel under similar circumstances.

18525. (*Chairman.*) We have had some evidence that there is an advantage in common shell, as I understand it, because it has more effect upon the enemy in their trenches, it makes them show themselves, whereas with the shrapnel they simply keep hidden, and therefore some common shell carried with a gun is an advantage?—With the field gun experiments for years were carried out on this subject, and there is abundant evidence, I think, that with the modern field gun the common shell has no more advantage than your shrapnel shell used with a percussion fuse. You can always use your shrapnel as a percussion shell, and it bursts when it hits the ground, and it has been proved by experiment for many years that that is quite as effective as, and more so, than the common shell, and therefore it is no use carrying about a separate ammunition which is not a man-killer, and which you cannot use as time shrapnel. The advantage of the time shrapnel is that you carry only one ammunition, which you can use as a percussion shell or as a time shell.

18526. (*Sir John Edge.*) Would the percussion shrapnel shell be as useful against stone sangars, for instance, as the common shell?—Quite.

18527. You mean that anything that common shell could do the percussion shrapnel would do?—Yes, that is the great point, and it is not known by officers who talk about common shell; naturally, a great many of the officers out there who talked about common shell really did not know that all these experiments had been carried out, and that the whole thing had been threshed out over and over again; for instance, they wanted some years ago to destroy a coastguard quarter at Lydd which was no longer used, and they very wisely, instead of pulling it down fired at it, and had experiments as to the efficacy of common shell and shrapnel against the building, and it was found that practically the percussion shrapnel was just as good, that is to say that of two walls in a room one wall will keep out neither; they will both go through one wall, and the second wall will stop both. That was a very important experiment.

18528. (*Chairman.*) Did they use the percussion shrapnel in the war?—Yes, we always do; at ranges beyond the setting of the time fuse—beyond the extreme limit of the time fuse—you are obliged to use it as a percussion shell.

18529. I am only giving you the opinions that have been expressed to us by several commanders of columns; do you think that is under a misapprehension?—I think that is entirely under a misapprehension; I think it all comes from officers judging of these things only from the gun end of the range. The officers mostly who talk about these things have never seen the effect of projectiles at the target end of the range. I may say that the object of all Field Artillery ammunition is man-killing and not the damage of material. We have for many years acknowledged that it is impossible to do any damage to material with either common or time shrapnel. We do not attempt it, and not only that, but we do not profess in the Artillery to kill, people who get underground, with time shrapnel.

18530. (*Sir John Edge.*) Assuming, for the purpose of the question, that it was found that shrapnel only made the Boers lie close in their trench, and that common shell turned them out of their trench, can you account for the difference in effect?—Yes, I can; I think it is very likely that that might have happened in that particular case, because the reason for that, I should say, would be that the flight of the bullets of the shrapnel over the trench always has the effect of keeping the men down in the trench, and that is generally our only object in firing at trenches, to keep the men down in the trench and prevent them firing on our Infantry who are advancing. In the case you mention I should think it very probable that the common shell naturally did not burst in the air, and by very good luck fell in the trench, and, naturally, if a shell falls right into a trench among the men they will clear out.

18531. (*Chairman.*) I think that the point of view from which it was put was the difficulty of seeing the Boers at all, they were always so much hidden, and if they had a common shell thrown in amongst them under those circumstances they showed themselves, and enabled our men to get the range?—I never saw that sort of case happen myself. At Paardeberg we had common shell of quite a different nature; we had the 4.7 firing at the Boers in their trenches, and we also had the howitzers firing at the Boers in their trenches, and we never made them move. Their trenches were exceedingly hard to locate at Paardeberg; the river bed was very deep, and our 4.7 guns and our howitzers never made them leave their trenches, although they were firing nothing but common shell, and common shell of a large nature.

18532. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) I think the strong point made by those in favour of carrying more common shell was the larger bursting charge that the common shell carried; the difference between the bursting charge of the shrapnel and the common shell is very great I take it, as the one is simply to break the wall of the shell containing the bullets, and the other is for explosive effect?—Yes.

18533. And in the evidence before us we have had it very strongly from many officers that they prefer a larger quantity of common shell to be carried?—May I go into that a little fully, because it is an interesting point, and if you will allow me I will go into the history of the abolition of common shell. What you are stating as having been told you I think might have applied to a common shell of a past period; when we used iron common shells with a bursting charge, the effect of that explosion on the shell was that the iron shell broke up into several pieces. That was when guns were fired with a small initial velocity, and you were able to use iron common shell with great advantage, because the cast iron broke up so on the ignition of the bursting charge, but presently we had to introduce guns of a much higher muzzle velocity, and the moment those guns were introduced we were obliged to do away with cast iron as the material for common shell, because the cast iron shell could not stand the shock of discharge of the gun, and used to break up at the muzzle. That was the reason why cast iron had to be given up. The material would not stand the shock of these heavier discharges owing to the necessity for higher muzzle velocity. We then had to introduce steel common shell, and they had to be made of tough steel to stand the discharge. Then what happened to our common shell, and would happen if we were to introduce common shell, was that every shell, when it exploded, did not burst at all; it simply ripped and let the gas out. You could get specimens of that from our Arsenals; they must have kept many of them. That went on for some years, and it became perfectly apparent that it was no use at all as a man-killer. Of course, if one of these shells exploded on a man it killed that one man, but it had no explosive effect; although there was a much larger charge of powder inside the shell than in the shrapnel, the only effect was to make a rent in the shell; the shell very rarely went into even two pieces, and it just made a rip.

18534. (*Sir John Edge.*) It did not break up?—Not at all, and if you were to introduce common shell into our guns now, especially with the velocities we have, you would have exactly the same result. The people who ask, "Why not have common shell with its large

bursting charge?" are thinking of the old common shell, and they do not know what has been going on.

18535. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) In connection with field operations a great many witnesses are unanimous as to the effect of common shell in the field as against shrapnel?—Did the witnesses see the shells after they burst?

18536. They judged by the effect on the enemy, I fancy—witness after witness?—The evidence that I have seen, and I think you will find it all recorded in the office of the Director-General of Ordnance—the evidence of all the people in South Africa which I took before I came away from Pretoria—from our Artillerymen in the field, was unanimous about the inefficiency of common shell. The evidence that I have got is overwhelming.

18537. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Has there been any official enquiry on the question?—Certainly.

18538. Is there any document issued on the matter?—The Commander-in-Chief would be able to give you the reports of all the Artillery officers on the spot, because I took them all before I left Pretoria, and handed in a report about it.

18539. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Was there any segment shell used?—Not by us, not by our Regular Artillery; they may have been used by one or two private batteries that came out, but not Service Batteries.

18540. Are you using segment shell now?—No.

18541. You have given it up?—Yes. It would be worth while getting the evidence if you wish it, and I could arrange to get it for you.

18542. (*Chairman.*) It is rather a technical point?—I can say generally that the evidence on the part of Artillery officers who were shelled by the Boers throughout the campaign is overwhelming against the efficacy of common shell. I think it is unanimous.

18543. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Did you take the evidence of any Generals of Divisions?—No, I took the evidence of all the Artillery officers. I had a Committee in Pretoria while they were all red-hot about it. I thought it useful to get it then, and it has been all recorded and officially filed.

18544. (*Chairman.*) I think we should see your Report?—If you wish, I can get it for you; you would like to get all the evidence bearing on the subject of common shell? *

18545. Yes?—I will get it.* I still adhere to this, that the evidence of people about Artillery fire must be discounted unless they actually have seen the effect of the shell. I can state one of the reasons why common shell was abolished. While the discussion was going on at home about its abolition the one thing that impelled the Government at home to abolish it, was a strong letter that came in from Lord Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief in India, and he urged that it should be removed at once as being most useless. I could get you that letter as I have a copy of it at home. That was some 13 years ago when this was discovered about the uselessness of this shell that only gaped and did not burst.

18546. I think we should like to see that, too?—I will have that put in with this other evidence, if you wish it. †

18547. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Can you make a segment shell also a shrapnel shell?—No, it is quite a different effect; with the segment shell it depends on the segments being dispersed by centrifugal force.

18548. It is cut up into pieces?—Yes, and when the shell opens the centrifugal force spreads the different segments and you have a large bursting charge.

18549. I see that this evidence was given at question 17047; the Chairman put the question: "The effect of the long range guns of the Boers was moral rather than actual?" (A.) Yes. (Q.) How is it that if a shell dropped among you it did no harm? (A.) I cannot explain it. There was the case at Poplar Grove, where the Boers got the range of my Naval battery exactly, and they dropped shells into the battery for a good hour. I asked the officer commanding if he thought he ought to change his position, and he said he did not mind in the least, and he stayed there, and they dropped shells among that battery and never even touched a man, a mule or wagon, or anything else. It was not that they were firing badly, they were firing very well, and they probably thought they were doing tremendous execution, dropping

shells into the middle of us. (Q.) Was that shrapnel? (A.) That was segment shell. (Q.) Did the shells burst? (A.) Yes, they burst. (Q.) And still did no damage? (A.) No, it so happened that for a whole hour making good practice they never hit a thing?—I can explain that from my own observation of their fire. I have seen the same sort of thing, and there was no doubt in my mind what happened, because I have seen the shells fall. It was due to firing at an extreme range; if you fire at an extreme range you have an extreme angle of descent, and when your shell goes into the ground at that angle, the effect is only upwards. I have known cases of men going to a 100 lb. shell dropped near them like that and picking every piece of the shell out of the hole; it buries itself before it explodes, and it goes in so vertically that there is no lateral effect. That sort of thing continually happened during the War, and that is why I mentioned it in my statement.

18550. That is why I asked you as to whether a shrapnel shell could be combined with a segment; you say you cannot do it?—No, if you have these segments you have very little space inside for the powder. You have a long narrow cylindrical space inside for the powder, and you could not put bullets into that, and yet keep up a powder charge sufficient to throw your fragments apart.

18551. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And does your objection to the somewhat vertical fall of a shell apply in a lesser degree to howitzer fire? We have had a good deal of evidence in favour of howitzers as against guns of lower trajectory?—Yes, it does apply a good deal to howitzers, but the point about a howitzer is that you really must have it at a high angle because you want to search out cover, and you want it to drop into trenches and sheltered places. What I object to is an excessive high angle fire for field guns, because you lose the effect in that way; with field guns you want a danger zone in depth as well.

18552. In fact you do not look upon field guns as things that can clear trenches at all?—No, you cannot clear trenches with field guns, and nobody would attempt it. All that you can do with trenches with field guns is to make the people keep their heads down and save your own men from being fired at when they attack.

18553. I think that accounts for a good deal of the difference of opinion between you and the generals, and others who have given their evidence here?—I think a good many people do not know that; for instance, I have read about the enormous amount of ammunition we fired, and a great many people demand a return of how many people we killed with all that, but that is not the point; Artillery fire sometimes is not meant to kill—it is meant to save your own people. If you get a rabbit into a hole and you go on firing you keep it in there, but you will not kill it.

18554. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) It is not so much to kill the enemy as to provide a zone of safety for your own people?—Very often; in fact, in all future wars it is recognised that an Infantry attack will only be possible when the Artillery are firing along the whole front of the enemy, and making them keep down, and that will be the only way in which a frontal attack will be possible in future in consequence of smokeless powder and the magazine rifle.

18555. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And for that sort of fire shrapnel will be much more valuable than common shell?—Much more.

18556. (*Chairman.*) Your next head is future armament?—Immediately after the return of Lord Roberts in January, 1901, a committee of officers of Horse and Field Artillery, who had served in the War, was appointed for the purpose of introducing a new armament of the Horse and Field Artillery. The Committee have recommended the introduction of a quick-firing field gun, firing a shell of 18½ lbs., with every modern improvement, including shields, with such range and power that it has a shrapnel man-killing effect at 6,000 yards, and of no greater weight behind teams than at present.

18557. That is to take the place of the field guns?—That is in place of our present 15-pounder; we propose to have an 18½-pounder. A similar Horse Artillery gun of same range and shrapnel effect, but with a 12½ lb. shell; weight behind teams 28 cwt., or 2 cwt. less than the present Service gun.

Major-General Sir
G. H.
Marshall,
K.C.B., R.A.

13 Mar. 1903.

* The Report was subsequently sent to the Commission. (See *Appendix Vol.*, page 195.)

† Lord Roberts' letter is referred to in the Report which was subsequently sent to the Commission. (See *Appendix Vol.*, page 195.)

Major-General Sir
G. H.
Marshall,
K.C.B., R.A.

13 Mar. 1903.

18558. Less than the present Horse Artillery gun?—Two cwt. less than our present Horse Artillery gun: a field howitzer of the same weight behind teams as the field gun, firing a 40 lbs. shell, and with greatly increased range. Two batteries each of the 18½-pounder and 12½-pounder will be issued this year for final trial at practice. We have been trying these guns all last year at Shoeburyness and at Okehampton, and they are being made by the Elswick firm and Vickers Maxim. We have been able to get this increased power owing to the great improvement that has taken place of late years in the manufacture of steel. That is all I put down about our new equipment, but if there is any other point I will be glad to explain. The French quick-firing gun, which, up to now, is the best of that type, is a 14 or 15-pounder, so that we have gone considerably ahead with our 18½-pounder.

18559. What about the heavy guns?—That does not come under my Committee; we are only concerned with the Field and Horse Artillery.

18560. Would it not be intended to have heavy guns in the field in future?—Yes, it is intended to have them; amongst the different types I mentioned as accompanying the Army in the field, I think you will find I said a Field Artillery gun, a Horse Artillery gun, a Field Artillery howitzer, and a heavy battery gun (such as a 4·7 or 5-inch).

18561. And it would be intended that a heavy gun of that description would accompany a column in the field?—Yes, but it does not come under the province of my Committee that I am President of; we have only to deal with the Field and Horse Artillery gun, and therefore any information that I gave you about that gun would be hearsay. I would be glad to tell you what I have heard, but it would not be direct evidence.

18562. You can say what your evidence is as to the work of these guns in the field?—I think they were extremely useful, and as I have said, as long as the Boers or anybody else have a long range gun against us we are bound, even if only for the moral effect, to have a gun of equal range.

18563. And they can be made sufficiently mobile?—They can be for their own particular rôle; we are going to have three batteries of them. I know that three batteries of 4·7 guns of four guns each are coming to Aldershot this summer. They are going to form part of the corps Artillery at Aldershot, and they are to be manned by companies of Garrison Artillery, and they are to have horses to drag them, but it is contemplated, I believe, to have traction engines. They are experimenting with traction engines, but I am only telling you what I hear.

18564. It was the experience in the War that it was possible to take them about even with columns which were continually on the march?—Perfectly; they accompanied Infantry the whole time; of course, one had to arrange, and if you wanted to use your 4·7 early in the day you took care to put it well at the head of the column, but the team of oxen was quite capable of keeping up with the Infantry.

18565. (Sir Frederick Darley.) How many horses would it take to draw a 4·7 gun?—I think the weight is going to be 4 tons, and they are going to have eight horses. I do not know whether that will be sufficient, but that is what they are going to try. Eventually the idea is to have traction engines.

18566. (Chairman.) You think there was an advantage in these heavy guns, the 4·7 guns?—Undoubtedly, I think they were very effective.

18567. It had not been recognised before the War?—No. It had in India; we had in India the heavy battery—the 40-pounder—for many years.

18568. But in equipping the expedition for South Africa it was not supplied?—No.

18569. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What is the weight of the projectile of the 4·7 gun?—A 50 lb. shell.

18570. So that it is a more powerful gun than the 40-pounder?—Yes; you will find that all the guns of the present day are much more powerful in comparison with their weight owing to the improvements in manufacture and material.

18571. (Chairman) Will you proceed with your statement?—The saddlery and harness were found to be too heavy. A much lighter pattern is now being tried in

which the great feature is the substitution of breast harness for the neck collar. That has been sanctioned; we have that now at Aldershot with the breast harness and with the harness considerably lightened, wire traces, and, in fact, the horses are in a sort of skeleton harness.

Personnel.

Now as to personnel. The following is a statement of the Artillery employed in South Africa from 1899 to 1902:—Royal Horse Artillery, 10 batteries and three ammunition columns; Royal Field Artillery, 15 brigade divisions, 45 batteries, and nine ammunition columns; Royal Garrison Artillery, 14 companies, two mountain batteries, pom-poms, 22 sections; Canadian Artillery, three field batteries; City Imperial Volunteers, one field battery; Elswick, one field battery; Australian, one field battery; New Zealand, one field battery.

SUMMARY.

Officers and men	-	-	-	-	-	12,000
Guns { Field	-	-	-	-	-	372
Guns { Garrison and Heavy	-	-	-	-	-	79
Guns { Mountain	-	-	-	-	-	8
Guns { Pom-poms	-	-	-	-	-	44

The capacity of the Royal Artillery officer in every respect was universally acknowledged. Every general and column commander bore testimony to his efficiency, I attribute this result to his early training at the Royal Military Academy, and to the excellent system in a battery by which he at once as a young officer obtains responsibility and command of a section. He comes into the Artillery to make it a profession, and he is in every way encouraged to do so. It is not true of the Artillery officer that keenness in his work is unfashionable. The physical and intellectual capacity of the men was also very good—naturally there was a falling off in training of the men sent out late in the War. The standard of physique of the gunner in the Royal Field Artillery was too low. This has just been raised (A.O. 51, March, 1903). As regards both officers and men their devotion and discipline under fire were the admiration of the whole Army. For many years our Artillery had been striving to train for war—great efforts had been made in this direction in practical gunnery, and especially in a rigid system of fire discipline, and in practising replacement of casualties. Then the guerilla stage of the war was entered on, and the work of the artillery as gunners was over; they were largely employed as Mounted Rifles and acquitted themselves equally creditably in this rôle. As an instance of the keen spirit amongst the men and their previous good training—210 Non-Commissioned Officers and gunners were called for from Aldershot last year for mounted rifle work. These men had never used a rifle, but in a few weeks' training before embarkation 208 became "marksmen."

18572. Were those men got from the same class as the Infantry soldier?—Entirely. There is no difference; there is no selection for the Artillery.

18573. How is it that they develop into such intelligent men?—I attribute it very much to the system I have spoken of—the good system of the young officer being at once put in command of an organisation, and also to the continual training for gunnery that our men have been getting for many years—the systematic continual training of their eyesight to practise them in laying the gun.

18574. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You think highly of the training of the cadets at Woolwich?—Speaking generally, yes.

18575. Do you see any reason why an equally good training should not be introduced into Sandhurst?—No, but I should not like to say anything about it because I do not know what the training there is.

18576. But you do not see any reason why it should not be equal to Woolwich?—No.

18577. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Do you know anything of the officers who were trained in the Royal Military College at Canada? Have you seen any of them?—I have; I know a Royal Engineer officer who was trained there.

18578. But there are a good many of them in the Army?—Yes, they have a very good reputation in the Service, and particularly the one I have met—and of course we all know about him—Colonel Girouard. He was an excellent man in the Royal Engineers in South Africa, and he was chief of the railway system.

18579. He proved himself a very able man, but I think there are many other capable officers from the Royal Military College in Canada. According to the system in force there are four commissions given to successful cadets each year—the highest in the examination has the option of entering the Engineers, while the others go to the Artillery, Cavalry and Infantry. In some years the number of commissions is increased?—I have two at Aldershot now, I remember, and they are very good officers indeed.

18580. So that in a sense there is a selection for the Engineers and Artillery from this College?—From Canada, yes.

18581. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Had you an opportunity of seeing the Australian battery of Artillery?—Not personally.

18582. It was from New South Wales?—I had very good reports of it always.

18583. They were commanded by a Regular Artillery officer?—I had very good reports of them always.

18584. Colonel Smith is an Artillery officer?—Yes, S. C. U. Smith, I know the officer you mean—a very efficient officer.

18585. I believe he got them into a very high state of efficiency—

18586. (*Chairman.*) What is your next point?—The supply and quality of drafts was satisfactory. Between October, 1899, and May, 1902, 4,870 men were sent out. In every way our demands for officers and men were promptly met by the Adjutant-General. It is impossible to give enough credit for this, considering that in addition to replacing our large casualties, 59 new batteries of Horse and Field Artillery were raised at home during the war.

As regards training the Artillery soldier for efficiency in the future, sufficient inducements should be offered to the non-commissioned officers and artificers in the way of promotion and prospects. The Artillery man is at a disadvantage in these respects compared with men of other arms. In the Infantry and Cavalry every man has a chance of rising to be a regular regimental officer; this cannot be so in the Artillery, owing to the necessity of a higher technical education. This makes it all the more necessary that our men should at least have the same chance as others in the matter of commissions as riding-masters, quartermasters, and in warrant and regimental ranks. For instance, there are 61 riding-masters and quartermasters in the Cavalry for 17,873 non-commissioned officers and men; 41 in the Horse and Field Artillery for 30,718 non-commissioned officers and men.

18587. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How long do you think it takes to make a good gunner of Field Artillery?—About two years.

18588. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are the terms of enlistment the same in the Artillery as in the Line?—Yes, it is three years with the colours and nine in the reserve; but after six months a man can extend his service with the colours to eight years.

18589. (*Chairman.*) What is your next point?—The rôle of Artillery in future war will be greatly increased in importance. This, in addition to all the modern developments of fire tactics and quick-firing equipments, will make it necessary to have the officers of Artillery highly educated in their profession. The requisite standard cannot be maintained if the officer has no prospect of a career in the higher ranks of the regiment, and if, at the same time, all high commands in the Army are closed against him. As regards a prospect in the regiment, it is becoming a proverb that the Artillery officer's career is over after he has done his time as Major Commanding a battery. To-day the position of the Lieutenant-Colonels and Colonels as regards chance of employment is deplorable, and they are in despair as regards future employment. There are sixty Lieutenant-Colonels and there are six Colonels regimentally employed in the Horse and Field Artillery; whereas in the Infantry there is a Colonel Commanding a Regimental District for about every two Lieutenant-Colonels. In the late War there was only one instance of an Artillery officer commanding a Division, and there is a general feeling amongst Artillery officers that they are practically debarred in peace time from obtaining any higher Army commands. As regards the want of regimental prospects this can be remedied

by the appointment of colonels in each Army Corps to command the divisional and Corps Artillery respectively. I will show presently how this can be done under the new organisation of Army Corps. As regards Army commands, there does not appear any reason why Artillery officers, if qualified, should not be allowed a fair share. Their efficiency in war is universally recognised, and it seems contrary to justice and to the interests of the public service not to employ them.

The want of a reserve of officers was much felt. Practically, we have no reserve of officers, for no young officers exist in the reserve, and the older officers are so out of date as to make them of value only for dépôts, etc., during war. Officers, therefore, were taken from batteries lower down on the roster than those that were being mobilised and appointed to ammunition columns; the result was that when those batteries were required to be mobilised trained officers were not available.

18590. That was a difficulty that was felt throughout the Army?—Yes, right through, I believe.

18591. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Have you any remedy to suggest?—I think it would be possible to have a sort of Militia reserve, officers who had left the Army early in life, as they often do, and if they were induced by being allowed to wear their uniform and keep their rank, and to come out say with the Militia once a year, so as to just keep them in touch, one might do something in that way.

18592. Would you bring them back as subalterns in time of war?—They would come back with the same rank as they left with; majors came back during the War, and were commanded by people who had been their own subalterns in some cases, but they did not mind.

18593. And it worked?—Yes. I think in war time that makes no difficulty.

Horses, Mules, etc.

18594. (*Chairman.*) What is your next point?—The supply of horses was adequate, and the quality satisfactory, until perhaps quite the later stages. The English "bus" horse was the best for Artillery purposes, and hardiest. The mules were good, and easily kept in condition—they were found most useful in the ammunition columns. It is very important that all remounts should be landed in anticipation of requirements, so that they may be got into condition before being put to hard work.

18595. You say something in your précis about expenditure; have you anything to say about the expenditure on horses and mules?—Of course, the expenditure, or wastage, was very great, and I think in the Artillery that was not due to want of horse-mastership, because we pay a great deal of attention to that in peace time, and I think if you were to ask generals and commanders—

18596. We have had a great deal of evidence to that effect, that the Artillery horse-mastership was distinctly the best?—It is always acknowledged. I have often heard officers congratulate me on the fine example our officers showed in the care of their horses, and how much they saved their horses. I think the wastage of horses was due to that point I have emphasised there. I am not blaming anybody; it could not be helped at certain stages of the campaign, but horses were taken out of the hot hold of a ship, they were in fairly delicate condition from the voyage, and they were put into open trucks and travelled three or four nights like that. It is impossible to feed and water horses properly under these conditions, and they were taken out of the trucks and immediately went on a long march under service conditions. If you do that, of course, you must lose horses, but sometimes it cannot be avoided.

Tactics, Organisation and General Remarks.

The value of cover and the power of concealed guns, rendered practicable by smokeless powder, has come out strongly. The Boers had few guns and dispersed them over a large extent of front, and this led us in many cases to breaking up batteries into sections, and to the use of the section as a fire unit. The great efficacy of the battery as a fire unit consists of its employing a stream of fire 100 yards wide—and there are other advantages such as the control and supervision of the fire by the Major. Provided, however, control of fire can be kept, every latitude should be allowed a commander to disperse, when he thinks it advantageous to do so in accordance with the tactical situation and ground. Experiments

Major-General Sir G. H. Marshall, K.C.B., R.A.

13 Mar. 1903.

Major-General Sir
G. H.
Marshall,
K. C. B., R. A.
13 Mar. 1903.

have been carried out during the past year in these subjects. The necessary instruments have been provided for firing with accuracy from hidden positions. The necessity for the provision of heavy guns with the field Army was one of the most striking lessons of the War, and this will lead to the introduction of a five-inch gun, three batteries of which will form part of the corps artillery of each Army Corps.

18597. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are any foreign nations adopting the heavy gun now?—Not that I have heard.

18598. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) What is the size of your batteries now? Is the number of guns still six?—The field battery and the horse Artillery six.

18599. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is it six in time of peace?—Yes; we have varied sometimes in the lower establishments and have had four gun batteries, but six is the normal condition in peace time, but batteries on the lower establishment do not have horses for all six guns.

18600. (*Chairman.*) What is your next point?—Hitherto Artillery has been organised in peace time on a system quite different to that in war. Thus a general commanding a Division in war found himself for the first time with Artillery forming part of his command. Since January 1st, each Division has two Brigade Divisions of Artillery, each consisting of three batteries—these form part of the Divisional General's command, and he is responsible for their discipline, training, and efficiency for service. This is a great advance not only in the training of Artillery, but also in the training of our generals commanding Divisions. In the past it has been quite common for a general to be ignorant of the elementary principles of Artillery tactics, fire, and effect of projectiles, and supply of ammunition. In order, however, to render this system effective, there should be a colonel appointed to command each divisional Artillery. It will also be impossible to get efficient officers if no opportunity be given in peace time for training in the higher commands. As our new system is copied from the Germans it is interesting to compare it with the German arrangement in peace:—Each Division has four Brigade Divisions of Artillery—that is double what we have. For every two Brigade Divisions there is a colonel in command, and a general commands the four Brigade Divisions. Thus with a German Division there are 72 guns, and the higher Artillery commanders are one general and two colonels. In their Army Corps, which consists of two Divisions, there are, therefore, 144 guns under the command of two Artillery generals and four colonels. Compare this with our method. Our Army Corps consists of three Divisions; each Division has two Brigade Divisions of Artillery, or 36 guns. Total divisional Artillery, 108 guns. In addition we have a Corps Artillery, viz.:—One Brigade Division (two batteries) Royal Horse Artillery—12 guns; one Brigade Division of howitzers (three batteries), 18 guns; and one Brigade Division of three heavy batteries, 12 guns. Total Corps Artillery, 42 guns. The total, therefore, of our Army Corps Artillery is 150 guns. For these one general commanding is considered necessary, and no colonels. This seems an unsound system, as on mobilisation for war four colonels would have to be appointed, three for divisional and one for Corps Artillery, who would have had no previous training in command.

Then as to efficiency in gunnery. The training in gunnery for efficiency in fire effect in war should, of course, be of paramount importance. This cannot be attained without annual practice under service conditions as far as possible, and this again cannot be done without good ranges. This does not seem to have been thoroughly appreciated. It is no doubt difficult to obtain convenient artillery ranges, but those we have should be utilised to the fullest extent and nothing allowed to interfere with the firing rights when acquired. I would like to give you an instance of what I mean in that respect; it appears rather vague, but I will give you a concrete instance. Some six or seven years ago I was commandant at Okehampton at a practice camp there for the Field Artillery. It was practically our only training ground for Field Artillery, and we had about 30 square miles of ground there on Dartmoor, which we leased from the Duchy of Cornwall, and we had firing rights over the whole of that. I was extremely anxious to get a range

of over 4,000 yards; we had no range of over 4,000 yards, and there was one point from which I could get a fine range of over 6,000 yards, if necessary, called Watchit Hill. I was unable to fire from Watchit Hill, because there was a farm in the way, and I made every exertion to get that farm bought by Government, and at last I succeeded in getting that farm bought right out, and therefore I was able to fire from Watchit Hill over this farm right away for any distance, and we were all overjoyed at having got such a fine range. We had no sooner done that, however, than the War Office made an agreement with a village behind the range altogether, not to fire from this Watchit Hill, and that agreement exists to-day. We had bought the farm, and we might have been practising these long ranges before the War. I represented it over and over, and over again, but there it is; there is Watchit Hill, and we have the right to fire from it, but the War Office have chosen to make an arrangement in spite of my protests with these Belstone parishioners.

18601. (*Sir John Edge.*) In rear of the firing line?—Yes.

18602. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) On account of the concussion?—I do not know on what ground.

18603. They must have put forward some ground?—I presume so, but I am not aware of the reason.

18604. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) How far was the hill from the town?—It is a little village called Belstone, and I should say it is about a mile.

18605. So that the concussion could not affect it?—It cannot affect them; it is about the same distance as our ranges are to the large town of Okehampton, and there is no reason whatever for their objection.

18606. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Did you never hear on what ground it was done? There must have been something put forward?—No, I was shown the draft of the agreement which they were making, and against which I protested strongly.

18607. (*Sir John Edge.*) Had the War Office forgotten you had got the range when they made the agreement with the village?—No, because the agreement was sent to me for my remarks.

18608. (*Chairman.*) Is it a lasting agreement?—It is an agreement that can be terminated; it was to be terminable at six months notice on either side.

18609. So that it is in the hands of the War Office now?—Yes, and we have been going on for six or seven years trying to induce them to give us that.

18610. (*Sir John Edge.*) Possibly the War Office may not think a 6,000 yards range is required in the country?—But they had bought the farm for the express purpose of giving us this extra range.

18611. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Did the village claim Common Rights?—The parishioners all round claimed Common Rights.

18612. (*Sir John Edge.*) Had we any guns in South Africa with a range of over 6,000 yards?—Our field guns would carry to over 5,000, but we had no fuses that we could set over 4,000 when we first started. Afterwards we got fuses that were available for 5,000. The Boers got an extraordinary range from our guns when they captured them by putting two cartridges in.

18613. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) You say you have got the fuses now to burn for 5,000 yards; are you contemplating a further range of fuse?—Yes, we are contemplating a range of 6,000 yards. In my description of our new 18-pounder, that is to have a man killing shrapnel—that is to say with a time fuse to burst at 6,000 yards.

18614. Had you any complaints about the erosion of the field guns?—No, nothing important except in a few cases; the inspector I sent round—Major Bushe, whom I mentioned just now—was continually travelling around. He came out as an expert from the Arsenal, and he reported very well upon them, saying that only 10 per cent. wanted anything. I think the guns by this time have considerably worn down, naturally.

18615. But, of course, you wear them out quicker now, because you have heavier charges?—Yes.

18616. With regard to the cordite, was that generally satisfactory?—Yes, we had no complaints from our gunners.

18617. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) A good deal was

said in this country at the commencement of the war about the Artillery being sent out late, so that the horses had not time to recuperate after the voyage; is that your opinion?—I think so; I think it would have been better, in the light of what we know now, to have sent them earlier

18618. As a general rule, you think the Field Artillery and Horse Artillery should be sent out early, so as to allow the horses to recuperate after a long voyage?—I think so. I think it is always an advantage to be able to give

them a rest after landing, and at one time we did do that; some of those that were not wanted at once we sent to Maitland Camp for a week before sending them up country, and there is no doubt that had a great effect; but in the case of those that first arrived, owing to the strain, artillery were wanted without a minute's delay everywhere

18619. (Chairman.) Have you anything to add?—Nothing.

Major-General Sir G. H. Marshall,
K.C.B., R.A.
13 Mar. 1903

Colonel W. L. DAVIDSON, C.B., called and examined.

18620. (Chairman.) At what time did you go out to South Africa?—In October, 1899.

18621. With Sir Redvers Buller?—No, I went out with two batteries of Horse Artillery.

18622. Before the Army Corps?—On the 31st October, 1899. I left Birkenhead as part of the Army Corps.

18623. Where did you land?—At Cape Town, and we were sent up to De Aar and Orange River.

18624. What was your capacity?—I was commanding two batteries of Horse Artillery—a brigade division of Horse Artillery.

18625. What was your service after that?—The first thing that happened was that both batteries were taken away from me, and I was left alone, and after that I remained at Orange River Station doing nothing for a month. Then I was given a mixed force at Zoutpans Drift, to the west of Orange River Station, where we took the drift and the first part of the enemy's country—I believe it was the first occupation of the enemy's country—on the 6th January, 1900. I was kept there till February, when I went up to Modder River, and went with General Babington to Koodoe's Berg, and then I came back to Modder River and joined the Cavalry Division, which was formed, and went to Paar-deberg, Poplar Grove, Driefontein, and Bloemfontein. I was with the Horse Artillery along with General French's column.

18626. What were you in command of during that time?—For the first three days I was in command of the Horse Artillery on General French's Staff, but after that General French decided that he would have a staff officer for Horse Artillery, Colonel Eustace, who was eventually made Assistant Adjutant-General. I went back to General Broadwood's Brigade, and only commanded two batteries with him, but whenever the Horse Artillery were concentrated, as they were on two occasions, I, as the senior officer, took command of all the guns in action.

18627. And after Bloemfontein?—I was given command of "The Corps Troops" at Bloemfontein—a magnificent list of every arm and every sort of troop; but one thing after another was taken away from me, and I was eventually left at Bloemfontein with General Kelly-Kenny, and took over the command of the whole of the Artillery in the Orange River Colony, and remained under General Kelly-Kenny at Bloemfontein. After that I was sent up to command the line of communications at Krugersdorp, west of Johannesburg, but when I got there I found there were only two little bits of lines of communication left, and there were eight generals on and about them, and I had nothing to do there.

18628. You have been good enough to give us a précis of the evidence you are willing to give: will you put that in?—I will put it in.

Efficiency of Different Classes of Guns.

12 lbs. Royal Horse Artillery, good up to 2,500 yards, entirely dependent upon mobility, which they never possessed in South Africa, owing to being under-horsed, and bad horse and remount management.

12½ lbs. Vickers-Maxim, very good gun, but difficulty of ammunition supply, not being a service gun.

4·7-inch, 5-inch, 6-inch howitzers—all good, but require practical exercises to enable officers and men to use them to best advantage.

5-inch gun on railway truck—a valuable weapon.

The Adequacy of the Supply of Horses, Mules, and Ammunition.

No sort of system—advice of Commanding Officers, if consulted, seldom taken. No continuous work by the Department. At commencement of campaign constant changes in the personnel, hence "Stellenbosched." The

absolute dependence on an efficient Department for success in campaign not realised until best horses all dead.

Overcrowding on board ship, and no time given after landing to get horses' feet looked to, destroyed thousands. On the 15th February, 32 good horses in G. Battery alone unable to march on account of laminitis.

Horse Artillery and Cavalry not allowed sufficient halts. One sick horse in gun team kills the other five fit ones.

Ammunition supply good, in spite of the system never having been properly practised in peace time.

The Capacity, both Physical and Intellectual, of Officers and Men on Arrival.

All that could possibly be desired, but the services of the splendid body of Artillery officers not nearly sufficiently utilised for general Army purposes, Horse Artillery officers especially being not allowed to go on the Staff. Until very late in the campaign, no Artillery officer, except General Sir W. G. Knox, was used as a commander of other arms.

This is, in my opinion, a great loss to the efficiency of the Army, and most unfair on the officers of the Royal Artillery.

The effect on them of the campaign was to increase their fighting efficiency in every way.

Training of Officers and Men.

Nothing could be better than the past system of training. All that is wanted is a good class recruit, and, what is essential, large tracts of land where they can manoeuvre and shoot live shell.

Modifications in Tactics.

Horse Artillery, in order to be handled tactically to the best advantage, must have a commanding officer with a proper staff on the Headquarter Staff of a Cavalry Division.

In the Cavalry Division leaving Modder River on the 11th February, 1900, no such provision was made. All questions of concentration of fire, ammunition and remount supply were, therefore, never properly tackled.

Forty-two guns and three ammunition columns being a much larger and more important command than a Brigade of Cavalry should in such a case be commanded by a brigadier, at least, with a proper Staff.

Instances—March to Ramdam, Poplar Grove.

Bombardments:—Brigade Divisions should have orders to find their range on the objective, and then to fire for a few minutes at a time (given by the Commanding Royal Artillery) at uncertain hours, with occasional general fire. This would harass an enemy (especially one without guns) much more than a solemn general bombardment (with great waste of valuable ammunition) lasting for two or three hours at a time.

Instance—Paardeberg.

The Brigade Division system not adapted for war. Lieutenant-Colonels should be numbered, not the Brigade Divisions. Batteries should be self-contained units, but if necessary grouped under a Lieutenant-Colonel. Batteries proved themselves wonderfully uniform as regards efficiency.

Mobility the first thing. Guns are useless unless they can be brought to the tactical spot at the tactical moment.

Instances—Poplar Grove, Bloemfontein.

But the greatest tactical requirement of the Artillery is that the C.R.A. may have the means of concentrating the fire of as many guns as possible on the key to the enemy's position, at the psychological moment. It is impossible to do this by mounted orderlies, it must

Colonel W. L. Davidson,
C.B.

Colonel
W. L.
Davidson,
C.B.

13 Mar. 1903.

either be by telephonic communication with subordinate commanders, or by some unmistakable signal given from a central position, such as salvo of shell with coloured bursts, or signal rockets to attract attention, followed by salvos from a central battery, indicating the area of the enemy's position to be engaged.

18629. The first head is the efficiency of different classes of guns?—Yes.

18630. Have you anything to add to these notes with regard to the guns?—No; except that the Horse Artillery gun depends entirely on mobility which we never possessed in South Africa; the horses were never fit.

18631. Do you mean all the horses of the Horse Artillery?—They were never fit, because they were taken too soon off board ship to do hard work, and their feet never got the chance of being looked to.

18632. Does that apply to the earlier stages of the war, too?—More especially to the early stage—the very beginning.

18633. We have had opinions that some of the Artillery horses, especially those from the omnibus companies, were very good?—They were excellent if they had been given a fortnight or 10 days before they were started, but they did not get that, in my experience; they were landed at Cape Town, and two days afterwards they were sent straight into work.

18634. Was that the case with all the Horse Artillery that went up to the Modder River?—I think so.

18635. Some of them had been some time in the country, had they not?—The ones at Colesberg had had a good time; they had had time—those that were with General French.

18636. The two batteries you mentioned that went out with you must have had time, too?—No; those batteries, which were G and P, had very little chance. On the 11th December G was at Magersfontein, and P was split up into three sections on the line of communications between Orange River and Modder River, and they had no chance of getting their horses' feet really looked to. They were into hard work at once on hot sand, after standing on board ship for a month, overcrowded, and without having a chance of having their feet looked to.

18637. And that you consider affected the value of the Horse Artillery?—I consider that 10 days' cherishing of the horses on landing would have made us fit to do a year's campaign. I may say I expressed that opinion on landing.

18638. There has been some evidence that the range of the Horse Artillery gun was not sufficient for the purposes of the war?—Not for that particular country; of course, an unrestricted view and a clear atmosphere make all the difference, and they are quite sufficient for this country.

18639. You think the existing Horse Artillery gun is a sufficient gun?—The range is sufficient for this country; but, of course, a quicker firing gun would be better for this country. As regards range, it is quite sufficient for this and most European countries.

18640. Would a longer range not be better?—I think not, the view being so restricted. There are very few places in England that you can see 3,000 yards, while in South Africa you could see 8,000 to 10,000.

18641. We have been told that they intend to increase the range of the Horse Artillery gun. Will that not be an improvement?—Any increase of range that gives an efficient shell at the end of it will be an improvement, supposing the gun is sufficiently light to be mobile.

18642. Do you consider it light enough at present?—Yes.

18643. Do you consider the field gun could be so lightened as to make it mobile?—No; I do not think it necessary.

18644. We had one opinion, with which I suppose you do not agree, that the Horse Artillery gun ought to be discontinued and the field gun lightened sufficiently to be a mobile gun?—No; I think a light gun that can be brought to the tactical spot at the tactical moment is absolutely essential, and that can only be done by a very quickly-moving gun.

18645. And the field gun could never be made light enough to do that?—No.

18646. Did you see much of the heavier guns?—

Not in action; I had every sort of gun under my immediate command at Bloemfontein, but never in action.

18647. Have you formed an opinion as to their use?—Yes; I think they are all most useful under certain circumstances, properly used, especially the 5-inch gun on a railway truck; but what is required is what we never get, and that is the opportunity for practising with them in time of peace over a land range.

18648. It must be over a land range?—Yes; that is what we never can get in this country.

18649. Of course, the use of them at all with an army was a new thing in South Africa?—Yes; owing chiefly to the conditions of that country, which are unrestricted view, clear atmosphere, and hard ground, and which are not reproduced in Europe.

18650. You think the same conditions would not apply in Europe?—No.

18651. Would you not think that these heavy guns would be required in a European war?—Yes, but under totally different circumstances. They could not be taken along with bodies of troops, as in South Africa, and they could not be brought into action from any position against another position. They would have to be brought up for special purposes to special places under special conditions.

18652. I do not quite follow why?—On account of the softer ground and the restricted view. In South Africa you can get a range of fire almost in any direction, whereas in this country you hardly ever get an unrestricted view, and in the greater part of Europe you do not get an unrestricted view, as in South Africa, or a clear atmosphere always.

18653. But you could get them across the country?—I have doubts. For instance, the 4.7 gun, which I have a good deal to do with in this country, is perfectly hopeless, and even at the top of hills you very often cannot get it along on account of the softness of the ground.

18654. As to the supply of horses, the point you have already mentioned about working them too soon is the chief point?—That is the chief point.

18655. There was a sufficient supply of horses?—Yes; I think we should have had sufficient horses.

18656. What do you mean by "Advice of Commanding Officers, if consulted, seldom taken"?—I there refer to the advice of Commanding Officers, both with regard to what was required to get their horses fit for a campaign and what they would probably require in the way of remounts.

18657. Do you mean the Commanding Officers in South Africa?—Yes, the Commanding Officers of units.

18658. How would you have consulted them with regard to a question of that kind?—Whether their horses were fit to take the field, and whether they were fit to do a long march the first day; two short marches are easy, but one long march would kill all your horses the first day.

18659. I suppose the position was that the troops were wanted, and they had to be moved?—Oh, yes. I do not know anything about the strategical considerations. I am speaking purely from the point of view of Commanding Officers of units, as to what was required to make their horses fit for a campaign on landing.

18660. And you did not have sufficient halts?—No. Of course, the cavalry man, if anything is wrong with his horse, can stop and put it right, and get on again and canter up to his squadron, but if a horse in a gun is beginning to get wrong, unless you have a halt and you can take him out and put another one in, or readjust his harness, that horse will begin to hang back, and he will kill the other five horses in the team. I do not know that I am allowed to say exactly what I think, but I think that killed a great many splendid horses which with the best of horse-management would have done the whole campaign. We sometimes went for 25 miles with only two halts, whereas by trying more to halt where there was grass, and letting the horses get their heads down, we should have done the whole of that march without losing any horses. I had a year's experience of South Africa before this, and I am certain that we could have done that Kimberley march with the horses we had, if they had had five days' care to start with and if they had been halted where there was grass, and trotted down hill.

18661. Was that practicable under the conditions of the march?—I should think so.

18662. Do you mean you could have got to your destination as quickly under those circumstances?—Equally quickly.

18663. It was a mere question of arranging the day's march?—A question of management and proper use of the horses. If you trot through heavy sand you knock your horses up; if you trot up a steep hill you knock your horses up, but if you walk up a steep hill, and take advantage of the ground being with the collar—I am only talking of wheels, and not of cavalry horses—in that way you can save your horses so that you can do your work, and especially halting where there is grass instead of halting where there is no grass. The cavalry can crown the ridges, and the artillery might safely stop where there is grass, and walk up and rejoin them later, and trot down the hill to catch them up.

18664. Was that not allowable on a march?—I should say perfectly. When we were in South Africa before, in the Zulu war, we always halted where there was grass to get the horses' heads down, and the consequence was that the horses got fit.

18665. Was it not allowed on this occasion?—We marched with the cavalry and halted with the cavalry.

18666. If this happened, could the officer in charge of the artillery not have brought the fact to the knowledge of the General?—Well, of course, it was brought to the knowledge of the General, but they said the Horse Artillery must keep up with the cavalry, and so they can, but it depends on how you use them.

18667. As to this particular argument you have been putting before us, do you think that was not brought before the notice of the General?—It was.

18668. And he overruled it?—Practically, yes.

18669. Of course, he may have had reasons?—Of course.

18670. But the artillery position was stated to the General?—Yes.

18671. And there was an opportunity for the Commanding Officer of the artillery to make his representation to the General?—Yes, except that there was no Commanding Officer of Royal Horse Artillery on the Staff of the Cavalry Division, which, I think, there should have been.

18672. What was the position of the Officer Commanding the artillery? You are speaking of General French's march?—Yes. You understand I am not speaking personally in any way—I happened to be the senior officer of Horse Artillery there, but I am not speaking personally, and I only say that in order to give the Horse Artillery proper weight with the Cavalry Division. There never has been in the history of the British Army such a situation as having seven batteries of Horse Artillery with three ammunition columns attached to a Cavalry Division, but there was no provision whatever made on starting from Modder River for the Commanding Officer and Staff of the Horse Artillery as an integral part of that Cavalry Division.

18673. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Your opinion is that in marching with cavalry the artillery should give the pace?—Oh, no, not quite; they must keep up, at all risks, if necessary, for strategical purposes, but we can keep up. The cavalry must give the pace, but cavalry can often crown hills first, and they might let the artillery come up slowly, whereas we marched absolutely dressing with the cavalry all the way. It is a question of treating the wheels on the march according to the nature of the ground.

18674. (*Chairman.*) It is the position of the artillery with regard to the Divisional Staff that you want to call attention to?—Yes. I think, for the good of the Army, whenever a large Cavalry Division of that sort is formed, the Horse Artillery should have a definite position on that staff. It is laid down for a brigade, but there never has been a Division like the one that marched from Modder River to Kimberley, and there were no headquarter provisions made at all for a proper Commanding Officer and Staff for the Horse Artillery with the Cavalry Division.

18675. What is the position with regard to a brigade?—With a brigade there are only two batteries or one, and the Commanding Officer of Horse Artillery always rides with the Commanding Officer of the Cavalry, as commanding the Horse Artillery.

18676. And is on the staff?—And is on the staff, but in this case, on this Cavalry Division being formed, the Horse Artillery were passed over, I think, not quite

justly, because the Horse Artillery study cavalry quite as much as the cavalry study Horse Artillery, and there were Brigadiers of cavalry made; while officers far senior to them in the Horse Artillery, some of them with previous South African experience, were passed over. Lieutenant-Colonels of cavalry became Brigadier-Generals, while Horse Artillery officers were ignored altogether, and, in my opinion, the Horse Artillery are quite as able to command cavalry brigades as cavalry officers.

18677. You think that is a loss to the efficiency of the Army?—I think most distinctly so.

18678. You think very highly of both the men and the officers of the Royal Artillery?—As far as my experience of the war goes I cannot imagine anything finer than the men on landing. G Battery landed on 30th October, and at Magersfontein was 14½ hours under fire, the first time they were in action, and I think, if you read the account of it, you will see that no men could have behaved better.

18679. But you say the effect of the campaign was to improve them?—It made them much more handy, and taught them to cook, which is a most important thing for a soldier on service.

18680. To look after themselves?—Yes, to cook their own meals.

18681. Is that a thing they ought to be taught beforehand?—To a certain extent, if possible, but more by taking them out than by actually teaching them; you should take them out, and only let them have their food if they can cook it. The man on service who can cook is perfectly happy from morning to night, while the man who cannot is not.

18682. Otherwise you are satisfied with the system of training?—I think it is as good as it could be. I may venture to say that the battery system stood the strain of the war throughout from the beginning.

18683. And you are satisfied with the class of recruits you get?—No.

18684. The class of recruits you get develop into the men you say were so good?—Yes, through the training of their officers in time.

18685. Then it is a question of the time you can give for training?—Yes.

18686. With sufficient time you can make a good man out of the class of recruits you get now?—Yes, the class of men you get for the Horse Artillery.

18687. Is that a different class?—Yes, selected men on rather increased pay.

18688. You are speaking of the Horse Artillery?—Yes, with regard to being satisfied with the training. I am not satisfied with the class of men you get for the Field Artillery.

18689. But the Field Artillery also did very well?—Yes, at that time; they had had a long previous training, and they had a great many very fine Reservists to begin with.

18690. How long do you think it requires to make a good artilleryman?—It depends entirely upon the man.

18691. Taking the average?—With the class of recruit we get, as a general rule, it takes three years.

18692. For the Field Artillery?—Yes.

18693. And the Horse Artillery?—The same, or rather less, because you get a better class of man. That, of course, depends upon the facilities he has for being taught. At present he has hardly any in this country, only at Salisbury and at Okehampton. There would be no greater economy in teaching men for a war like this than having more land ranges, where they could fire with live shell. The climatic conditions of Okehampton are very bad, and Salisbury, of course, is not an ideal training ground either.

18694. In what respect are the climatic conditions of Okehampton bad?—It is nearly always misty and rainy; the rainfall is enormous.

18695. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) And you can see a short distance only?—Many days you cannot work at all; many days in the year are lost entirely, owing to the weather.

18696. Do you pick your men for the Horse Artillery?—Yes.

18697. (*Chairman.*) You think there ought to be a discretion to brigade divisions about the mode of firing?—I do not think I have said that.

18698. Will you explain what those words mean after

Colonel
W. L.
Davidson
C.B.

13 Mar. 1908.

Colonel
W. L.
Davidson,
C.B.

13 Mar. 1902.

"Instances—march to Ramdam—Poplar Grove—bombardments"?—The instances there mentioned refer to the previous paragraph; with an enormous command like 42 guns and three ammunition columns there was no Commanding Officer on the Headquarters Staff, and it was a question of concentrating the guns at one time. The march to Ramdam was a question of trotting them through certain ground. I think, if the Commanding Officer of Horse Artillery had had his proper place on the cavalry staff, one could have said, "It is impossible for wheels to be trotted through the particular piece of ground they are on now, let them walk through that and trot afterwards."

18699. It is part of the same question you have referred to already?—Yes, when we are marching in column with them the head of the cavalry column gets the word to trot, and the ground where they are may be excellent, but the ground where the whole of the seven batteries of horse artillery with all their wagons and ammunition columns are may be heavy sand; that is what kills horses, and all that requires judgment. For instance, if those guns and wheels had been allowed to march for another half mile, and then to trot up and rejoin the cavalry, the horses would not have been nearly so exhausted. I am only pointing out the advantage of having a man on the cavalry division staff who can speak with authority—a man with a definite position.

18700. That was the point you made before?—Yes, it is under the heading of "Modifications in Tactics"; you will never get the best tactical work out of horse artillery until you have a man on the headquarters staff of the Cavalry Division who can speak with authority.

18701. But, surely, if the column was ordered to trot and the Artillery at the time were in sand, they would not trot, would they?—They were bound to at that time; you march as a column, and you are bound to keep up.

18702. If you look at "Bombardments," do you not suggest that the Artillery should select the manner in which they were to use their guns there?—No; with regard to bombardments, my instance was Paardeberg. What I mean is that, instead of the whole of the guns bombarding steadily for two solid hours at a time, it would be a great economy of ammunition and much more harassing to the enemy, if they got orders from the Headquarters Staff (Commanding Royal Artillery) to bombard a place, that they should find their range first of all and then get orders issued to them that such and such a brigade division will fire from 1.32 to 1.35, another will fire from 1.39 to 1.45, and so on, and with an occasional salvo from all the guns. In that way the people who are being bombarded would never know at what time it was going to begin or at what time it was going to cease, and it is much more harassing, and would save an enormous amount of ammunition. That is the only reason why I put that down. Instead of firing all your guns for two hours, which is an enormous waste of ammunition, and makes the enemy take cover until it is finished, it would be much more harassing for the men you are firing against if you fired for two or three minutes at unknown times ordered by the Headquarters Staff, day and night.

18703. But the practice was to fire all together?—I think so.

18704. You desire that they should concentrate the fire at the proper time?—By definite orders of the Headquarters Staff, at uncertain intervals.

18705. Is there any other point you wish to call attention to?—There is only that last thing—which I think is the most important thing of all—as regards the tactical requirements of artillery in future; that is, that the Commanding Royal Artillery may have the means of concentrating the fire of as many guns as possible on the key to the enemy's position at the psychological moment. That is what we wanted all through South Africa. In these big extended fights we want that the Commanding Royal Artillery may be able to indicate the actual point of attack, and that every gun that is not engaged on private business, so to speak, may be turned on to that point at that moment. If you trust to gallopers for carrying orders, they may get lost, and the moment is lost; it is a question of a moment, after three or four hours' extreme strain, and with a little ingenuity we could get some way of arranging to call attention to certain salvos, which would indicate the position the infantry are about to attack, and you could concentrate every gun on that point at the moment

simultaneously. These are things that only happen at the moment; you cannot send orders for miles, and I think if there is to be any change in artillery tactics that is all that is wanted—that the Commanding Royal Artillery should be able to indicate the point where the General Officer Commanding the forces is about to push in, and to indicate that in such a way that every gun available may be turned on to that point at that moment.

18706. There is nothing of that kind now?—No.

18707. It is all done by gallopers?—Yes; and, of course, some of them may not get in until evening. It can only be done by telephone or signal.

18708. Is that practicable in the course of an action?—The telephone in a defensive action would be feasible, but do not think that any offensive one, which is the important one for concentrating fire on the point you want to attack.

18709. I think we heard that in Ladysmith there was a great system of telephones?—Yes; that is. on the defensive.

18710. That would be on the lines you mean, probably?—Yes; but I think the signal is better for the offensive; it only wants arranging. I am told there is a difficulty about the coloured shell. The coloured shell is Mr. Winston Churchill's idea; he gave it me at Bloemfontein. I only mention that to show that it is not an original idea. But there is a difficulty about the coloured shell—that they cannot make any explosive that will burst with a definite colour; it always comes white.

18711. (Sir John Hopkins.) That is by daylight?—Yes.

18712. (Chairman.) Is there any other point?—There are one or two points of detail which I think very important, and which are not on this paper. One is that there should be a general army signal for standing at ease or marching easy, and the reason I venture to bring this forward is that I have seen so much of it in war. It arises when men are lying about tired in camps, and so on; but sometimes men are not tired, and they ought to get up and salute an officer as he passes, or stand to attention. At other times men are dog-tired after a march, and it is still their duty to do so; and some good regiments struggle to do it. But what I venture to suggest is that there should be some army signal, so that officers going through the platform of a railway station, or anything of that sort, or a tired camp, could be able to unswitch the men. I have used it myself, unofficially—simply an army signal for stand at ease or march easy, so as to be able to unswitch men whose duty it is to do certain things, because it is impossible to keep up discipline if they are ordered to do a certain thing and they do not do it. Sometimes it is because they are really tired, and at other times it is because they are slack, whereas if an officer had the power of signalling that they were unswitched from attention he could use his own judgment.

18713. Each individual officer might make the signal?—Yes; and the men, instead of struggling to their feet to salute, are unswitched from attention. It is a mere detail, but I am sure it would have a good effect with regard to discipline. The other thing is with regard to discipline. My experience of this war and other wars I have been in is that you cannot have discipline with mixed bodies as we have unless officers have some power of summary punishment on the spot without reference to anyone.

18714. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) What do you mean by summary punishment?—Either shooting or sending out on to the veldt; taking his arms and sending him off.

18715. (Chairman.) Dismissed?—Yes. I remember, in Zululand, an Eton boy who was a trooper being sent off straight away into the country among the Kaffirs, and the army marched on without him.

18716. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Was not that rather a cruel thing to do?—Yes, but war is cruel, and you often save thousands of lives by doing that.

18717. Would it not be better to shoot him than to perpetrate such an act of cruelty?—I think nothing saves lives better than shooting a few.

18718. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Would it not be better to revive flogging in war time than to do that?—It would be better, but you must have some power of summary punishment. There have been so many in-

stances in this war where young officers have been given mixed bodies of troops, sometimes in the dark, at a railway station, and they have been asked to protect a convoy with those troops. They have ordered these men to march half a mile from the edge of the convoy, and they have disobeyed, and gone to sleep on the wagons, and then you read in the newspapers afterwards that a convoy has been attacked, and that it is the officer's fault. The young officers have no power whatever, and they had much better stand or fall on their own responsibility. In a good regiment the moral power keeps the discipline at its very highest possible degree for war; but it is a very different thing when officers—as has happened in thousands of cases in this war—are handed over a body of men they have never seen before

and are ordered to march with a convoy in the dark. Unless such an officer is given a power of summary punishment, I fail to see how he can insure the discipline which would insure the safety of the convoy.

18719. (*Chairman.*) Are you speaking of Regular Troops?—Yes, any sort of troops.

18720. We have had some evidence with regard to irregular troops—that some of them were enlisted with that particular condition—the men enlisted knowing that the commanding officer had the power of dismissal?—A very good thing, too; so do ours, because it says in the Articles of War that if a man sleeps at his post on active service he shall be shot.

18721. But not dismissed?—No.

Colonel
W. L.
Davidson,
C.B.

13 Mar. 1902.

(After a short adjournment.)

Brevet-Colonel R. L. HIPPISELEY, C.B., R.E., called and examined.

18722. (*Chairman.*) When did you go to South Africa?—I arrived in the country on the 10th December, 1899.

18723. Did you go out with Sir Redvers Buller?—I did not. I went out afterwards. The original Director who was appointed for Sir Redvers Buller's Army Corps died on the way out, and I was appointed to replace him.

18724. As Director of Telegraphs?—As Director of Telegraphs.

18725. And you held that position throughout?—Throughout the campaign.

18726. Where were your headquarters?—To begin with, Cape Town, and then afterwards Bloemfontein, and then eventually Pretoria. I remained in Pretoria from the time Lord Roberts arrived there until the end of the campaign—after the conclusion of peace.

18727. You have been good enough to draw up a paper of the heads of the evidence you propose to give. You have no objection to that being put in as your answer to the first question?—No.

I. The Army telegraphs were used for:—

(1) *Lines of Communication Telegraphs*—viz., those connecting Pretoria, Bloemfontein, etc., with Cape Town, Durban, and the various principal centres in the new colonies, etc.

(2) *Temporary Field Lines* connecting the various divisions, columns, etc., with the Commander-in-Chief, and with each other.

(3) *Telephone Exchanges* at various centres for administrative or tactical purposes.

(4) For keeping the *Blockhouses* in communication with one another, and with the commandants of sections.

II. To give an idea of the relative magnitudes of (1), (2), (3), and (4) the following figures are given:—

Miles of wire run under—

- (1) 1,146 + 9,395 taken over.
- (2) 5,940
- (3) 1,789
- (4) 9,361

18,236 + 9,395 existing.

Telegraph offices opened under—

- (1) 252, working 504 instruments.
- (2) 872

1,124

Telephone exchanges, 60, having 1,527 telephones.
+ 23 minor exchanges.

Telephones in blockhouses, 1,945.

Staff on 31st May, 1902:—

Officers	-	-	-	-	21
Non-commissioned Officers and	-	-	-	-	
Men	-	-	-	-	1,094
Civilians	-	-	-	-	392
Natives	-	-	-	-	918

2,425

Messages forwarded	-	-	4,040,723
received	-	-	3,803,034
transmitted	-	-	2,866,011

72c.

This represents 13,575,779 transactions.

The cost of the messages sent for the Army works out at 3d. per word. Usual Colonial rate is 1d. per word.

III. The noticeable and novel feature in the recent war was the extensive use made of field cable lines, of which 3,749 miles were run.

IV. The existing telegraph system of the country was in most places almost completely wrecked by the Boers, and had to be repaired. It suffered from their depredations continually throughout the war, as it was impossible to prevent their raids until the system of blockhouses was completed. After this communication became secure.

A large and important section of the Transvaal telegraphs—namely, that by which all the Transvaal traffic used to circulate before the war—never fell into our hands until the conclusion of peace. Consequently there was always great pressure on the wires that were available, as the Transvaal traffic was very heavy. The same applied, in a modified degree, to the Orange River Colony traffic. These circumstances rendered necessary the running of some of the wires mentioned in (1) along the routes that were protected. The remainder of the wires in (1) were necessitated by the occupation of otherwise unimportant places by columns and troops, which places were either without telegraphs or else inadequately provided for the extra strain.

V. The aim was to provide every moving body of troops with detachments of the Army telegraphs, to enable them to preserve their connection with the Commander-in-Chief by means of light field lines or cables. This was done in most cases, but it was found impossible to do so in all. Firstly, because each division of infantry, or its equivalent, requires a "section" of telegraphs, and there were in 1900 fourteen divisions, including cavalry and mounted infantry, and only eight sections. Secondly, because there was not originally any effective organisation for the lines of communication telegraphs mentioned in (1), and as these were of primary importance, many men, even of those belonging to the eight sections, who ought to have been available for (2) had to be withdrawn for (1). And, thirdly, because in the later stages of the war the columns moved in such tangled tracks that anything like a telegraph following them was an impossibility and unprotectable. In many such cases all that could be done was to provide the columns with a few telegraph men to enable them to communicate whenever they came within reach of some existing line. Generally this was sufficient.

VI. In spite of the above drawbacks, many divisions and columns were kept constantly in communication with the Commander-in-Chief, even when they proceeded to places out of reach of the permanent telegraph system, and in addition a large amount of inter-communication between the component parts of separate commands was afforded.

VII. The telephone exchanges were most useful. They are a most important, if not indispensable, adjunct to war administration. They were used to connect together fortified posts with commandants of places, and also to afford inter-communication between departmental heads. The former needs no justification. The latter, in extended operations like the recent campaign, is also very important, as in such cases not only is the sub-

Brevet.
Colonel R. L.
Hippisley,
C.B., R.E.

Brevet-
Colonel R. L.
Hippisley,
C.B., R.E.

13 Mar. 1903.

division of administrative responsibility necessarily more complete, but also the various departmental heads are more scattered, and telephone exchanges save much valuable time.

VIII. Every second or third blockhouse was provided with a telephone, both for the communication of orders, the dissemination of information, and to ensure co-operation in case of attack.

IX. Organisation.—In 1899 the Telegraph Battalion consisted of two divisions, viz.:—

(a) The 1st Division with a light equipment intended for the construction of the light field lines described in (2).

(b) The 2nd Division, who work on the permanent telegraph system of England under the Post Office.

During the war a 3rd Division (c) was organised at home, also intended for the duties described in (2).

On mobilisation for war two units, which, by a strange confusion of nomenclature, are called "Telegraph Divisions," are formed out of (a) and (b). These units are intended and considered sufficient for two Army Corps for duties described in (2).

In 1899 there was no organisation for the duties contained in (1).

Unit (c) is intended for a third Army Corps for duties (2).

This organisation is faulty, and should cease. The following should be substituted:—

Unit (a), which possesses equipment for two Army Corps, and together with (b) sufficient personnel for two Army Corps, should be divided into two units, one for each of the two Army Corps for duties (2). Unit (c) will then perform these duties for a third Army Corps, while unit (b) should provide the organisation needed for duties (1). This will obviate the confusion described in Paragraph V. of this summary. I consider it most necessary.

Secondly. The Telegraph Battalion has no head or commanding officer, and consequently there are many details of training, and a conflict of interests between the peace divisions which are not satisfactorily dealt with. It requires an officer with a considerable amount of experience and of technical knowledge to keep the organisation on a sound footing. It would, I think, be best that this officer should be on the Headquarter Staff in order that the allocation of units (a) and (c) to the Army Corps to which they belong should be complete. His title might be "Director of Army Telegraphs." His duties would include:—

The co-ordination of peace training.

General supervision of the training for war of unit (b) (now somewhat neglected owing to the stress of the demands made upon it by the Post Office).

Responsibility for reserve stores.

Posting of recruits.

Registration of Reservists.

Arrangements for interchange of personnel between units (a), (b), and (c) (very necessary in order thoroughly to complete their peace training).

Responsibility for improvements in technical stores.

General advice to the War Office on telegraph matters.

Responsibility for the collection of information regarding the existing telegraph systems of countries which might be possible theatres of war.

Etc., etc.

X. During the war the following drafts were sent to South Africa:—

One section for Sir George White's army in Natal.

Four sections with Sir R. Buller's Army Corps.

Three sections as reinforcements soon after Lord Roberts assumed command with an increased army.

Late in 1901 two more sections were sent.

Various drafts arrived at various times.

Many men from other regiments who had a knowledge of telegraphy were attached to the Army telegraphs, and a considerable number of civilians were engaged.

The actual organisation of the work of these sections had to vary according to the changing conditions of the campaign, and in correspondence to the gradual enlargement of the area under administration.

The eventual arrangement was as follows:—Assistant Directors were appointed—one for the Transvaal, one for the Orange River Colony, one for Cape Colony, and one for Natal. They were responsible to the Director for all the telegraphs within their own Colonies, whether

for lines of communication or for mobile columns. For these purposes they each had men engaged in permanent telegraphs and mobile detachments with cable and air line. The financial arrangements were concentrated at Bloemfontein and Pretoria.

XI. Material for telegraph work was obtained both through the Army Ordnance and also by local purchase, in the proportion of £88,851 to £69,359. Local purchases had to be resorted to in many instances when the demands were very pressing, as there was naturally more delay in the other method, and wants could not always be foreseen. A considerable amount of material was found in the country, belonging to the Governments of the Republics, and was utilised.

18728. As Director of Telegraphs what position did you hold; what was the exact definition of your position as Director of Telegraphs?—I had control of all the telegraphs in the theatre of war, including those that we found in the country, many of which were very much destroyed, and had to be repaired; also all telegraphs that were erected for the Army by the Army Telegraph. I was on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief, and I took his instructions as to what telegraphic communication he wanted, and, as well as that, I carried on myself what I thought was right.

18729. You were on the Staff?—I was on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief.

18730. With direct communication with the Commander-in-Chief?—Yes.

18731. And what staff had you?—It varied, of course, at different times of the war, but at the conclusion of the war I had 21 officers, 1,094 non-commissioned officers and men, 392 civilians, and 918 natives, making a total of 2,425.

18732. What part of that was part of the regular organisation before the war for the Telegraph Department?—Only a small proportion of it. I think the strength of the telegraph battalion, out of which the nucleus of this was formed, was not more than about 400 men, I should say, but I could not be perfectly certain—400 or 500 men.

18733. That was the regular organisation, a part of the Army organisation?—Yes.

18734. That was what you went out to direct in the first instance?—Yes.

18735. But it was inadequate for the purposes?—Quite inadequate for the purposes.

18736. And how was it supplemented?—It was supplemented by special enlistments made at home, civilians engaged in South Africa, the loan from other regiments of a considerable number of men who understood telegraphy, and a few transfers from other Royal Engineer companies. The drafts that came from home from time to time were considerably in excess of the original strength that belonged to the peace organisation; they were raised, I think, chiefly by special enlistments, and a great many men were got from the Post Office from time to time. But the exact source of all I cannot tell you for certain.

18737. But, looking at the experiences of the war, do you think that the strength of the organisation of this branch was satisfactory?—I think the organisation was satisfactory, except in regard to a single point, which I have enumerated in this summary. I do not think that it is a good thing for the first division of the telegraph battalion to have to supply the telegraph units for two Army Corps. I think that it ought to be sub-divided into two units in peace time, so that each Army Corps should be provided with its own units. There are three divisions in the peace unit. The second is employed on Post Office telegraphs in the South of England, and it is intended to be amalgamated with the first on mobilisation, and out of the unit so formed two are made, one of which goes to one Army Corps and the other to the other Army Corps. I think that is a mistake. I think there should be three mobile telegraph divisions; that is to say, I think the first division, as it at present exists, ought to be divided into two units, and then the second division, as it now exists, would form the personnel for the lines of communication telegraphs. There would then be three mobile units, one for each of the first three Army Corps, plus the organisation which could undertake in time of war the lines of communication telegraphs. When the war first broke out there was no satisfactory organisation for the lines of communication telegraphs, and one had to be extemporised, and, in doing so, a very large number

of the men who ought to have been doing field telegraphs with the mobile columns had to be taken from their proper work and utilised on the lines of communication telegraphs, because the lines of communication telegraphs were really of far greater importance than the field telegraphs, inasmuch as all the correspondence with England had to go that way; and I think that the Commander-in-Chief was more anxious to preserve an efficient telegraph to Cape Town and to England than he was really to preserve his connections with his various divisions; at all events, only a certain proportion of the mobile units and divisions were able to be supplied with telegraphs connecting them with the Commander-in-Chief, on account of the large withdrawals that had to be made from the mobile units, in order to do the lines of communication telegraphs.

18738. The general line from the front to Cape Town, you mean along the railway?—The general line from Pretoria and Bloemfontein down to Cape Town, and also in connection with the principal military centres. There was a system of what might be described as permanent telegraphs, connecting Bloemfontein and Pretoria with Natal, Durban, Cape Town, and all the principal places intermediate, Naauwpoort, De Aar, and so forth.

18739. Those were all along lines of railway, were they not, almost all of them?—Practically they were; we tried to use some of the cross country lines for the purpose, but, in consequence of the continuation of the guerilla warfare, those lines were never very effective to us.

18740. But had not those places along the lines of railway a service already existing beforehand?—They had a service before the war, but when we arrived there that was entirely disorganised, and the people who worked it were many of them fighting against us; at all events, it was all in a state of confusion, and many of the lines, the majority of the lines I should say, were broken.

18741. Of course, there was a great deal of repairing to do?—Yes.

18742. But I should have thought you would have got a good many of the employees?—We got a certain proportion of them, but most of them we could not take, because we did not consider them reliable.

18743. You carried on the whole of the telegraphic system for Army purposes, railway purposes, and everything, did you?—I did for all, except the railway. The railway had certain wires of their own, which they worked and kept in order, because the Director of Railways considered it was desirable that he should have them working directly under him.

18744. They had separate wires and a separate staff?—They had separate wires and a separate staff, although their wires ran along the same poles as the Army telegraph was using.

18745. Was that through the Free State?—Through the Transvaal and the Free State.

18746. Not the Cape Colony?—No, because the Director of Railways had nothing to do with Cape Colony. That was worked, of course, by the Cape Government Railways; they had their own system.

18747. But had you a separate system right through Cape Colony for Army purposes?—No. We practically handed over all our telegrams to the Cape Colony service at De Aar at first, and afterwards at Kimberley, and they took them on. But towards the end of the war, for the last year of the war, I think, we had a direct line to Cape Town, of which the southern portion was kept in order and maintained by the Postmaster-General of Cape Colony; that is to say, we did not hand over at the end of the war all our messages at Kimberley or De Aar, we sent some of them straight through to Cape Town.

18748. Through your own wires?—Through a wire that was partly ours and partly the Cape Colony's; that was the arrangement with the Postmaster-General.

18749. But over which you had control?—I had only control over the northern half of it.

18750. In addition to these lines of communication telegraphs, you had the temporary field lines?—Yes.

18751. You say that was not kept up with all the columns?—Not with all the columns, but a great many of them. It was not kept up, in the first instance, in consequence of there being so many men required to be withdrawn from the field units for the purposes of the lines of communication, and at the last part of the war it was practically impossible to follow up all the

columns with telegraphs, because they did not keep connection with their base, I mean with the point of starting. They went with so many days or weeks' supply, and moved about in the area in a tangled sort of way, so that it was impossible to run the telegraph to them, or to keep it going, and in that case what was done was to provide them with a certain number of telegraph men, telegraph operators, who connected them with any existing telegraph line that they came near. And really, for the most part, that sufficed; at any rate, the Commander-in-Chief saw that it was impossible to do anything else, and I think he was content with that.

18752. Was there a temporary line following up all the advance on Bloemfontein?—There was a temporary line run from Enslin to Bloemfontein, following up Lord Roberts' march, and, in addition to that, there were certain temporary lines laid out, which followed the march of flanking divisions, one on each side of Lord Roberts; and there was a line run to connect up the Cavalry Division from a place called Osfontein, which went out to the left of the general advance, and kept the communication for some distance, I think, about 30 or 40 miles. But there was one line right from Enslin to Bloemfontein for Lord Roberts, and, in addition, there were certain branches going out to the divisions, and so on, on the flanks.

18753. And in the same way on the advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria?—Yes.

18754. With columns like General Ian Hamilton's column?—General Ian Hamilton's column was kept in communication from the time he left Thabanchu until he arrived at Kroonstad, during which time he was making a parallel march with Lord Roberts on the right. He was kept in communication the whole way. Thabanchu was also in communication with Bloemfontein by the permanent wires which already existed, so that General Ian Hamilton was in communication with Lord Roberts the whole time, I may say, during that march.

18755. What happened to that temporary line afterwards, because that country was subject to raids by the Boers, was it not; was it abandoned?—Yes, it was abandoned. It served its purpose for a time, and then, when General Ian Hamilton came to Kroonstad, there was no further need for it.

18756. It was simply abandoned?—Yes.

18757. And how about telephones?—We had a very extended telephone system. We had 60 telephone exchanges, having 1,527 telephones, and 23 smaller exchanges with about only two or three branches each. I consider that those telephone exchanges were extremely important in affording great facility for intercommunication between members of the Staff, heads of departments, and so on, during the time when they were more or less stationary at Pretoria and Johannesburg, and also they were of great use in connecting military posts with the commandant of the place.

18758. They were only in individual stations, was that it?—Yes, they were local telephone exchanges in many cases, connecting the commandant of the place with all his outposts and various forts and things. That was very noticeable in Ladysmith, where they had a very extensive system of telephones to all sorts of places round about Ladysmith, and I believe Sir George White was quite of opinion that it was of immense importance to the defence of Ladysmith.

18759. Yes; we had some evidence about the existence of that system there?—Then, of course, there was a very large exchange in Johannesburg, which we found in existence, and which we took over and worked so far as it was of use to us, and we added to it; and also there was a large telephone exchange in Pretoria, which we also took over and added to; in fact, there were two exchanges in Pretoria.

18760. That system would only be of use either for a defensive position or for a large station?—Yes, that would be so.

18761. With regard to the block-houses, what was the communication between the block-houses; was it telegraphic or telephonic?—It was telephonic; about every second or third block-house had a telephone, and the block-houses were all connected together by a telephone wire, so that a certain block-house could communicate with the Commanding Officer of the section what was going on there; they could also telephone for assistance if it was necessary. I believe the system worked extremely well; at all events, I never had a single com-

Brevet-
Colonel R. L.
Hippisley,
C.B., R.E.

13 Mar. 1903.

Brevet-
Colonel R. L.
Hippisley
C.B., R.E.

13 Mar. 1903.

plaint; it was just worked by the men who garrisoned the block-houses.

18762. You give in your summary statistics about wires used for messages, and so on; you bring out the cost to $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a word?—The cost of the messages sent for the Army comes out to $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a word, which is extraordinarily cheap.

18763. How was that brought out?—By striking a balance between all the expenses and all the receipts.

18764. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Soldier labour; do you include that?—Yes, I include everything. I include pay and engineer pay and the pay of natives, rations, forage, casualties amongst horses, everything I could think of; and on the other side all the receipts. It is a little astonishing, but you must remember that there was a considerable amount of material that we found in the country. I should not like to say exactly how much, but I should think very nearly £80,000 or £90,000 worth, a good deal of which we used.

18765. What kind of material was it?—Telegraph material, wires, poles, instruments, batteries, and every conceivable thing, chiefly in the Transvaal, and a certain amount in the Orange River Colony, so that really is one reason why the expenses were so small.

18766. (*Chairman.*) What do you mean by receipts?—We accepted money for certain messages—from anybody who sent a private message—provided it was passed by the censor.

18767. And deducting that from the expenses brings out $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ?—Yes; and then, also, we received a considerable amount of money on the conclusion of hostilities by the sale of stuff that we had erected. We handed over to the Colonial Governments a very large amount of stuff, amounting to—I could not say for certain, I have not the figures here—but I should think nearly £70,000 of stuff. We handed over to them the lines which we had erected, for which the War Office had provided the material, either in the shape of stores from England or stores elsewhere obtained by local purchases.

18768. I think you have dealt mostly with page 1, have you not, of your statement?—I think so.

18769. Page 2 begins with, "IX.—Organisation," and the first paragraph of that you have also dealt with?—Yes.

18770. With regard to the second paragraph, you think there ought to be some head or Commanding Officer of the telegraph battalion?—I think it is a great defect in the present organisation that there is no responsible officer at the head of the telegraph battalion in peace. There is an officer commanding each division of it, but at the same time there are certain conflicting interests between the divisions, notably between the first division and the second division in regard to the supply of men and the training of men for war, which an officer at the head of all the three divisions would be able to deal with. I think also that he should be responsible for the reserve stores, of which there are a very large quantity kept in peace at Woolwich.

18771. You want somebody on the Headquarters Staff?—I think it would be better, because the First Division and the Third Division are intended to provide the telegraphs for three Army Corps, and in order that those Army Corps should be complete, these divisions ought to go to them, not to be kept together.

18772. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Is there not a division attached to each Army Corps at present?—No, there is not; they are all at Aldershot. There is the First Division there and the Third Division.

18773. Is there no division at Salisbury Plain at all?—Not at present; and there are a lot of things for which an officer at the head of the whole is wanted. Amongst other things, I think I mentioned the interchange of personnel between the divisions. It is very desirable that all the men in the Telegraph Battalion should have a chance of serving in each of the three divisions; at all events, in the first and second or in the third and second, in order to complete their training, because the training they get in those units is different.

18774. (*Chairman.*) How is each division commanded now?—There is a Major in command of each division; at least, there is a Major in command of the First Division, and there is a Major in command of the Second Division, and there is a Captain and Brevet-Major in command of the Third Division. My opinion is that the First Division should be divided into two, and there

should be a Commanding Officer for each of the divisions of the first and third, and also the Second Division, and that the whole thing should be for the purposes of co-ordination under a Director.

18775. Have you no command at present in the Telegraph Division?—At this moment I have none. I am simply attached to the Home District.

18776. For telegraphic purposes?—For the purpose of attending committees, chiefly on telegraphs. I am a member of the Committee on the Telegraphic Organisation.

18777. In this organisation of the Telegraphic Department there is no place for you at present?—No.

18778. You mention at the end of that paragraph the responsibility for the collection of information regarding the existing telegraph systems of countries which might be possible theatres of war. Is anything of that kind being done at present?—I am not aware of it. I suppose the Intelligence Department do that; but my contention is that they are not the right people to do it. I think the head of the telegraphs ought to do it.

18779. At present there is no organisation in the Telegraph Department to do it?—No.

18780. Obviously, it would be a great advantage in regard to many countries if you had information beforehand?—We ought to have charts of every telegraph in every country that is a possible theatre of war. We ought to have the charts all ready to hand, and also we ought to have information regarding the resources of the country from the point of view of material.

18781. You had not any information of that sort regarding South Africa when you went out?—The Postmaster-General of Cape Colony did forward some charts. Personally, I do not think I got them until I got out to South Africa; I will not be perfectly sure of that.

18782. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Charts of the Republics, do you mean?—Charts of the telegraphs in South Africa, including the two Republics. They were very incorrect as regards the two Republics. They were all right as regards Cape Colony.

18783. (*Chairman.*) Did you have any information about material?—None.

18784. That you gathered for yourself afterwards?—Yes; and I am not sure whether the information was forthcoming in England. I mean to say it was quite possible, that if I had applied to the right man in the War Office, I might have got some information; but I certainly did not know who he was. I daresay somebody had the information; but it was not forthcoming.

18785. With regard to the different sections, in the next paragraph I think you have spoken as to the details?—Yes. I may say, in regard to sending out one section for Sir George White's army in Natal, that I consider it very absurd to send out a small detachment of telegraphs like that (I think there were only 55 men all told), considering the force that Sir George White had.

18786. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How many officers were there?—There was a major, a captain, and a subaltern. There were four sections with Sir Redvers Buller's Army Corps. Four sections were considered to be sufficient for an Army Corps. So they are. But then almost immediately after that the Army increased enormously until it practically comprised the same numbers as five Army Corps, I think, pretty nearly, and all told we had only then got eight sections, which were absolutely insufficient, because the two sections alluded to in the last part of this paragraph did not arrive until just before the conclusion of the war. If one had known that the war was going to end, of course, one would not have asked for them.

18787. (*Chairman.*) That was why you had to supplement them in the way you described at the beginning?—Yes. The actual organisation of the work out there varied very much from time to time, as can be easily understood, because the circumstances changed so completely. In the first place, at the beginning there was a very small field, from the telegraphs point of view—we had very little to do. Then it gradually increased, until it comprised the whole of the two new colonies, and the area under administration was very big; so that the organisation had to be varied from time to time in order to fit these

different conditions; but eventually the organisation arrived at was that each colony had its own assistant-director, who was working under the director, because the country was really too big to be administered centrally, and it was much better to make these assistant-directors responsible to the director, and let them administer all the telegraphs within their own colony. These assistant-directors had entire control of the telegraphs, whether they were wanted for mobile purposes or for the lines of communication.

18788. And all the financial arrangements were at Bloemfontein and Pretoria?—All the financial arrangements were at Bloemfontein and Pretoria. The financial arrangements were really very simple; but, of course, they involved very considerable sums of money. Originally the financial arrangements were all concentrated at De Aar, at the beginning of the campaign. Then after the Orange Colony was occupied more or less completely, the whole of the financial arrangements, and what is called the clearing house, was moved from De Aar to Bloemfontein; and then, after the Transvaal was occupied, it became necessary to organise another financial branch in Pretoria, and the branch at Bloemfontein was left there, so that there became two.

18789. Were all those under your direction?—Yes.

18790. Do you think they worked well, financially?—Yes, I think so. I think the financial arrangements were very good.

18791. Your material you obtained partly locally and partly from home?—Partly locally and partly from England, through the Army Ordnance.

18792. Did you experience any difficulty in getting the material you wanted?—I cannot say that we had really very much difficulty. Of course, the local purchases were more expensive than those got through the Army Ordnance, at least so far as I know. I do not know, of course, what the transport cost out to South Africa; but I gather that they were rather more expensive, I should think about 5 per cent. or 3 per cent. more expensive purchased locally; but there was no doubt that we got them quicker by getting them through local agents.

18793. What sort of material had you to purchase locally?—Wire, to a large extent copper wire, and telephones chiefly.

18794. You could get those locally?—We could get copper wire locally; the merchants were importing it in large quantities to meet our demands; they foresaw what we should want, more or less, I think, and, towards the latter part of the war, they used to import large quantities of this stuff and sell it to us.

18795. Might that not have been foreseen from the Department here?—No, we could not foresee much. We did not know which way the thing was going to work, and the blockhouse system, which caused an enormous drain on material, was absolutely unforeseen, so far as I know. I had no idea that they were going to have this enormous system of blockhouses.

18796. And how did you purchase—by contract?—We purchased through an agent at Durban chiefly. We purchased a large quantity of telephones through a Durban agent, and also a considerable quantity of copper wire.

18797. And you think, though they were more expensive, that the rates were not unfair?—No, I think they were not unfair, considering the cost of getting them out.

18798. You do not think the difference was more than about 5 per cent.?—I cannot say how much the War Office had to spend in the transport of stuff.

18799. That would only have diminished the difference. It would not be more than 5 per cent., you think?—Quite so; including the cost of transport out from England, I do not think it was more than 5 to 8 per cent. more expensive. The usual charge they calculate in the Transvaal for the importation of English goods is 33½ per cent. It sounds enormous. And in the Orange River Colony, up to Bloemfontein, I think it costs up to 25 per cent. So that if you add that on to the cost of the thing in England, it would be what the local prices would be, and I do not think we paid much more than that difference.

18800. Is there any other point that you would wish to speak to?—No. I wish to emphasise all that I said in Paragraph IX., as regards the proper division of the units to be divided into three Army Corps, and also

the appointment of a head; I think that is very necessary.

18801. But, taking it as a whole, you were satisfied with the work of the Department generally?—Yes, I think it worked very well.

18802. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I do not quite understand the figures on the first page. You say messages forwarded, messages received, and messages transmitted. What is the difference between a message forwarded and a message transmitted?—A forwarded message is a message handed in by the public to be sent; a received message is one that is received and sent out, and a transmitted message is one that changes lines half-way; that is to say, it goes along one line from A to B, and at B it is transmitted along another line.

18803. Then those, taken together, work up to 10,709,768. Those, you say, represent 13,000,000 transactions?—Yes, because you have to multiply the transmitted number by two to find the number of transactions. The man at the original station has to work his instrument, and the transmitter man has to receive it, and another man has to send it on, and a fourth man has to receive it, so that if you multiply 2,800,000 by two, and add it up, you find the total comes to 13,000,000.

18804. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to say?—It is noticeable what an extensive use was made of field cable lines. I have put it down that there were 3,749 miles laid, which clearly establishes the value of cable lines. I think they had never been used in war before, except to a very small extent. They were actually used at Tel el Kebir, but never to anything like that extent; therefore, I should like to emphasise the importance of getting out an efficient organisation for running cables; it should not be skimmed at all.

18805. Were all the temporary field lines cable lines?—No, partly cable, partly aerial lines on very light poles—poles of about an inch and a half or an inch and three-quarters thick.

18806. What was the distinction between the two?—A cable goes along the ground.

18807. I understand that; but in the use of them, I mean?—They were used indiscriminately. The cables were used when the columns were moving quickly, and if they moved very slowly, and you had time, you would naturally replace them by an aerial line, because the cable line is much more liable to interruption; in many cases it was all one could do to run a cable along the ground.

18808. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) The cable is much more expensive, too, is it not?—Yes, very much more expensive. It is about £200 a mile, I think. I will not be quite certain about it.

18809. (*Chairman.*) I suppose, when it was practicable, you would take it up again?—Yes.

18810. Would it be worth while taking down the aerial line, too?—Yes, that was done, except in cases where it was impossible, on account of the country being occupied.

18811. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Of what substance were the poles?—About 1½ in. at the bottom, and 1½ in. at the top, and about 13 ft. long.

18812. Were they made of steel?—They were made of pine, Oregon pine.

18813. Would they stand the stress of the weight of the wire?—Yes, they stand it very well, unless they are actually run into by transport. They were blown down occasionally by the frightful storms we had; but the chief damage done to them was by the transport.

18814. What interval was there between the poles?—80 yards.

18815. Did they stand the weight of the wire?—Yes, the wire is very light; the wire is of three strand steel, each strand 18 gauge; it is very light and very strong.

18816. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Have you served in Natal at all?—No, I never went to Natal.

18817. Have you studied the ground of Spion Kop on the maps?—No.

18818. Could you say whether a cable might have been advantageously run up if a column went up there?—I could not say. I was never there, and I have not the faintest idea what it was like.

18819. (*Chairman.*) It could be used, I suppose, for positions?—Yes, it was used constantly for that very thing.

Brevet-
Colonel R. L.
Hippisley,
C. B., R. E.

13 Mar. 1903.

Brevet-Colonel R. J. Hippisley, C.B., R.E.
 18820. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) It can be laid quite rapidly?—Yes, you can lay it as fast as a horse can trot if you have fair going.
 18821. You see my point—if we could have had telegraphic communication at Spion Kop?—I doubt, even if it were possible, whether they had the stuff.

18822. That I rather wanted to ask you. Had they sufficient material?—I should think not.

18823. You think it would be advisable that a field army should be accompanied, as far as possible, with cable material?—Yes, certainly.

18824. That was very likely the reason why it was not laid at Spion Kop?—I think it is very probable that they had neither the stuff nor the men to do it.

18825. (Chairman.) Did the cable lines come out later in the war?—They came out continuously during the war.

18826. How was it it was not in Natal?—The reserves were so very small; the original reserves sent out did not admit of running many lines. We kept asking for more and more, and eventually it came rolling out.

18827. You draw attention to 3,749 miles being run. That is a large quantity?—Yes; but that does not mean that there were 3,749 miles used. It might have been the same cable over again.

Colonel W. H. MORTIMER, C.B., called and examined.

Colonel W. H. Mortimer, C.B.

18834. (Chairman.) When did you go out to South Africa?—I went out in September, 1899.

18835. And in what capacity?—I went out as Chief Paymaster to the forces under General Buller in Natal; at least, he was not commander then; he was Commander-in-Chief practically, but I went out to be Chief Paymaster to the forces in Natal, and, later on, when Colonel Wade, the Chief Paymaster in Cape Town, was invalided (that was from the 1st April, 1901), I became Chief Paymaster for the whole of South Africa.

18836. You have been good enough to prepare a few statements, I think, with regard to these matters?—Yes; I was asked to prepare a précis, and so I wrote out a statement which I thought, perhaps, it would be best to read to you.

18837. If you please?—And then you can ask me any questions in regard to it or any further matter you might wish. Prior to the late war in South Africa, the Army Pay Department had not been organised on a system which afforded sufficient elasticity for it to cope with a task of such magnitude as the campaign in South Africa threw on it, both in that country and in England. When the war commenced, the Establishment allowed for the Army Pay Department was 209 officers, namely, Chief Paymasters, 16; Staff Paymasters, 68; Paymasters, 125; making a total of 209, and actually serving at the time were 207 officers, the deficiency being in the junior ranks. By obtaining the services of some retired officers from this Department, the numbers were increased from time to time by 30. The elasticity the Department received was obtained, therefore, by voluntary service on the part of retired officers, and was not service which they could have been called on to render, so that the Department was really increased through voluntary service. The total number of paymasters who served in South Africa during the campaign was 78 and four re-employed officers, who only served out there for the early part of the campaign; the number invalided was 16, and one died. The largest number employed during a period never exceeded 65. The War Establishments (I had, perhaps, better explain that the War Establishments is the book in which all establishments for the various units and equipment required by them on service is laid down) for 1898 allow 20 paymasters for an Army Corps 36,259 strong. In South Africa there were about six or seven Army Corps of this strength, or the equivalent thereto; hence, according to the allowance in the War Establishment in 1898, about 130 paymasters should have been sent out—double the number of those working out there at any one period. Then, in regard to the Army Pay Corps in 1899, the establishment of Army Pay Corps clerks totalled 615. The reserve consisted of 23 clerks, of whom 19 were mobilised. There were also employed 62 permanent civilian and pensioner clerks, making a total of 696. In 1900 the establishment was increased to 620; in 1901-2 (750, and War Establishment 50) it was increased to 800; in 1902-3 (750,

18828. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) When you say eventually came out, do you mean after a year of war?—No, we kept on receiving consignments from time to time.

18829. Spion Kop was on the 24th of January, 1900?—Yes.

18830. Was there any large amount out at that time?—No.

18831. (Sir John Hopkins.) What is your allowance of field cable for an Army Corps? Is it a certain number of miles?—I think, at the present moment, under the present organisation, it is 32 miles per Army Corps. But that, I may say, is undergoing change at present; they are going to give us more. There are four sections to each Army Corps, and each section has eight miles of cable; that makes 32 miles per Army Corps. And then there is a certain amount held in reserve to be drawn by the sections as they want it. The actual figures of that I am afraid I cannot give you without reference to the tables. I should think it is about 150 miles in reserve, something like that.

18832. It is pretty heavy stuff to cart about, I suppose?—Two miles of it, including the drum, weighs about 200lbs., I think.

18833. (Chairman.) Is there anything else you would like to add?—No, I think not.

and War Establishment 150) it was increased to 900. The total number of Army Pay Corps clerks sent to South Africa during the campaign was 327; the number invalided was 82, and the number of deaths, 5. The most ever employed at one period would be about 268. The War Establishment of 1898 allowed 65 clerks for an Army Corps 36,259 strong, and, as the force in South Africa was six or seven times this number, about 440 would have been the proportion to have had out there, i.e., 172 short of the number allowed. There being practically no reserve, civilians had to be engaged, namely, in England up to 317 and in South Africa up to 194. In addition to these, 30 clerks were specially enlisted for the Imperial Yeomanry Pay Office. As troops were sent to South Africa, so also were officers of the Army Pay Department and clerks of the Army Pay Corps, but the proportion that could be, and was, sent was inadequate for the magnitude of the work they had to undertake, and, therefore, from the very outset of the campaign, nearly everyone had a share of work allotted to him which was too much for one person to perform satisfactorily, and in some instances was, no doubt, the indirect cause of individuals having to be invalided home. During a campaign of any magnitude, the duties and work which fall to the Army Pay Department and Army Pay Corps at home, and at the scene of operations, are heavier than in peace time; at home, by reason of payment of separation allowances, allotments from men's pay, half wages, all of which are paid monthly by station and other Paymasters, and the large amount of correspondence in connection therewith. Then, as the Militia is called out, so does the payment of the separation allowances and allotments increase. The correspondence, too, with charitable agencies is considerable. All this is in addition to the ordinary work of the Paymaster, which goes on as usual. At the scene of operations their duties are greatly increased in consequence of the constant changing conditions which cannot be foreseen, but which, irrespective of the treasury duties and duties connected with the payment of troops, and bills on account of contracts and otherwise, bring with them accounts, audits, correspondence, responsibilities, framing of regulations, and work which was hardly contemplated. For example, in South Africa irregular corps were raised, and various Colonies sent corps to take part in the campaign. The accounts of those units had to be provided for, and in some cases they were the cause of much trouble, particularly so in some of the South African irregular corps, owing to the acting Paymasters of them not understanding military accounts, not taking the trouble they ought to have taken in preparing and keeping them, lacking firmness, with both officers and men, and allowing their accounts to become involved. These were novices taken on as Paymasters at a minute's notice. The Imperial Yeomanry which was raised and sent out to South Africa became a source of trouble also, owing to the officers generally being inexperienced in accounts and not giving

sufficient care to the payment of their men and the preparation of their company accounts. Then there are exceptional accounts which we never see in peace time, such as railway, postal, Colonial Government, telegraph and cable, secret service, miscellaneous, provision of specie in the field, and numerous others which I could not quite call to memory, as I have written all this more or less from memory, and I have no records to refer to. These will give some idea of the additional work of an extraordinary nature which falls to the Army Pay Department in war time, and shows the necessity of having ample trained officers and clerks to fall back on. In further support of this I may mention that from the 1st October, 1900, to 31st July, 1902, during the period of Lord Kitchener's command, accounts were rendered to the War Office which showed receipts amounting to £10,015,201 9s. 9d., and expenditure amounting to £63,989,843 2s. 8d. I have no record of receipts and expenditure during Lord Roberts' command or subsequent to 31st July, 1902, but they will be proportionately large till the end of November, 1902, that is, proportionately large to the figures I have mentioned. The Army Pay Department, in spite of the scarcity of officers and trained clerks, and a peace training which is not calculated to encourage officers to take individual responsibility, managed to give general satisfaction not only to the authorities, but to all who had dealings with them. The fact, however, remains that their numbers were insufficient to enable them to have given the attention they ought to have given to many questions of detail: neither was it possible to send field paymasters to the front with large bodies of troops, as, for example, a division, or to post one at every point it would have been desirable to have had one; and it was due to banks opening at towns and stations that the scarcity in this respect was not felt to the extent it would otherwise have been. The deficiency in clerks was met, though not in the manner it would have been with trained clerks, by the employment of refugees from the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, many of whom had had clerical experience. The chance of obtaining the services of about 194 clerks from any other country we may go to war with is highly improbable. At home the want of trained officers and clerks was also very much felt, but the re-employment of 30 retired officers who volunteered for service, and the employment of 317 civilian clerks, carried the financial duties through. A knowledge of accounts and of the numerous regulations connected with the finance of the Army is necessary before any officer or clerk can be regarded as being of use, and this cannot be obtained without experience in a pay office for some months. The paucity of trained officers and clerks, then, is what was felt from the very outset of the campaign, and to obviate similar occurrences in future wars, the introduction of some system which provides a useful reserve of officers and clerks appears necessary.

18838. Have you any suggestions to make for remedying that state of things?—The suggestions I would submit are as follow:—A serviceable set of officers might be obtained from the Militia. Each territorial regiment might have one officer who had not done less than five trainings, or, if he had been in the Regular Army, had not less than five years' service altogether, and was going to remain in the Service, appointed Militia Reserve Paymaster. It would be advantageous if the officers had had a business training. These officers should come up some days previously to the training of any of the battalions belonging to the territorial regiment, and go down one month thereafter. It should be their duty to prepare the accounts of the battalions, or to do any other work the district or station Paymaster under whom they will be serving puts them to, so that they may learn the work in a pay office, and gain experience. It would be advisable that they be in addition to the present strength of the regiment. This yearly practice will produce about 68 useful Paymasters, who could be called on at any time. The following appointment appears necessary on active service, and the most suitable officers for it would be officers of the Army Pay Department, namely (if possible), a Chief Paymaster, to whom, if necessary, additional local rank might be given. His duties would be distinct from those of the Chief Paymaster in command of the Army Pay Department and Army Pay Corps. The appointment is that of financial adviser. It should be the duty of this officer to watch all contracts, financial arrangements and transactions, banking arrangements, expenditure and receipts for the General commanding, and to advise

and inform him on them; also to carry out any financial business which does not fall to a department, and, I ought to add, to communicate direct with the Accountant-General for the General commanding. Lord Kitchener found the want of such an appointment to assist him in controlling expenditure, and it was felt that the appointment was one which would have had beneficial effect had it been made from the commencement of the campaign. The advantage of having a Paymaster of experience to fill such an appointment is obvious, for he is conversant with regulations connected with finance and with accounts; he has been in touch with the finance branch of the War Office, and has had the advantage of benefiting by their observations on accounts to an extent no other officer could have. He would be able to enter a pay office and inspect vouchers, books, or records, without troubling anybody, and would be likely to treat in a more efficient manner financial questions and transactions than any other kind of officer. He would also be the best person to advise the General Officer as to writing off sums as losses, or how to treat such questions. To aid in qualifying Chief Paymasters for such duties, General Officers commanding Army Corps and districts should make their Chief Paymasters their financial staff officers, and make them deal with all financial questions which do not belong to a department or appertain to appointments. It is difficult to specify such questions, though on active service they are constantly arising, and in peace time are not infrequent. As regards clerks, the question of obtaining them from the Volunteer forces was recently considered by a committee at the War Office. It recommended the formation of a Pay Corps section in each Army Service Corps company, which, on mobilisation, would join the station pay office to which it was allotted.

18839. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) When you say recently, about what date was that?—I think within four months. I could not tell you the date exactly, but it is quite recently. I think I am quite right in saying about four months ago. It was shortly before I came to the War Office, and I joined on the 1st of January. It recommended also that this section should be allowed to enlist in the Reserve, and that the Volunteers should be required to go through a course of three weeks' training in a pay office before they passed to the Reserve, and should subsequently give six clear consecutive days each year in a pay office, which should count in lieu of 20 attendances for grant as for camp. This proposition, though it does not promise to give efficient clerks, might be given a fair trial, and, if the reserve of clerks could be utilised in connection with Militia accounts, the reserve officers and clerks could be trained together. Then we are not getting the very best of clerks for the simple reason that we have not the same opening in the Army Pay Corps as is offered in other departments and corps. In other departments and corps a good clerk may rise to the position of a Quartermaster. It is said that in the Army Pay Department there is no necessity to have Quartermasters, and that we have no appointments suitable to them; but to induce good clerks to come in, and to reward good superintending clerks, I have made the following suggestion: To induce the best class of clerk to come to the Army Pay Corps, and to remove a hardship from the warrant officers of the corps, prospects somewhat similar to those offered by the Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps, and Army Medical Corps might be extended to them. Under present conditions, however good their services might be—active service or otherwise—there is practically no advance beyond first class Staff-Sergeant-Major for them, and therefore they are at a disadvantage as compared with warrant officers in other corps. Some years ago they were granted a higher rate of pay, namely, 6s. 6d. per diem, to compensate for this, but this is poor consolation to a deserving and able man, who finds his juniors promoted over him, and it is no inducement to able and ambitious clerks to join the corps. It is stated that there are no positions for the Quartermaster in the Army Pay Corps. Be that so. Then I would suggest that they be treated similarly to bandmasters, and for special meritorious service be granted commissions in the Army Pay Corps as lieutenants with corps pay, at 2s. 6d. a day. I have made a comparison here. The pay of a warrant officer is 6s. 6d., and he gets a ration allowance of 6d., and messing and kit 5d. a day, Service pay 6d. (that commences in 1904) a day, lodging 1s. 6d., and fuel and light about 8d., practically 10s. 1d. As a lieutenant he would get—pay 6s. 6d., corps pay 2s. 6d., lodging 3s., fuel and light about 4d. In the fuel and light I have to strike an average, and that gives him

Colonel
W. H.
Mortimer,
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13 Mar. 1903.

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C.B.
13 Mar. 1903.

a total of 12s. 4d. a day, practically 2s. 3d. increase of pay to a deserving man, as a special reward. That is small enough, but it is in the pension where these people feel it more than anything else, because a warrant officer with 30 years' service—15 years a warrant officer, five of which must be as a first-class warrant officer—can only get a pension of 5s. a day, whereas a lieutenant, on retiring, if he is retired for age, would get £200, or a minimum of £150; therefore, as a commissioned officer he would get the benefit which they all very much look forward to, and that really is what makes them so dissatisfied, to see other people benefiting so vastly as compared with themselves. That is all I have to say with regard to the organisation of the Army Pay Department and the Army Pay Corps.

18840. Then we pass on to the accounts?—As regards the accounts, officers commanding squadrons, batteries and companies found difficulty in preparing and rendering their accounts in the field, owing to constant trekking, field duties, casualties, and other causes which are common to active service, and a general opinion has been formed that on active service they should be relieved from this duty. Owing to the difficulty experienced with the accounts of the Imperial Yeomanry a system was tried by which the paymaster at the base compiled the company accounts from statements sent him, showing advances made and the men's acknowledgment thereto. Each man was provided with a small pay-book, from which the state of his account could be ascertained. This system, though simple, was not a success, not from any fault in itself, but principally on the part of the men who used the leaves of the book, which represented requisitions and receipts for other than the purposes they were intended for, and hence it became impossible for the paymaster at the base to reconcile his accounts with the men's pay-books, which became valueless as a record. Two schemes have been drawn up, one by Lieutenant-General Sir William Butler and the other by a committee at the War Office which investigated the question. It would be well to await the result of the trial which each system is to have. Lieutenant-General Sir William Butler's propositions make the paymasters perform all duties in connection with the payment of troops and compilation of pay lists. The recommendation of the Committee is that the officers commanding companies, etc., should pay the men and account to the paymasters, who will compile the pay lists from information furnished them—in peace time on a pay and mess sheet, in war time on a simple acquittance roll, when each man will be in possession of a pay-book showing all advances made to him.

18841. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do I rightly understand from that that Sir William Butler proposes that the paymaster should pay in peace time as well as in war time?—Yes; in fact, Sir William Butler's scheme is that the paymaster is to prepare all the rolls on a system somewhat similar to what is done in a civil establishment, and should send them up with the money to the officer commanding, who would pay the men their money weekly. It is to be given a trial, but my own opinion is that it will not succeed, because in the field I do not see how that is to be done. The system of recovering allotments of pay of non-commissioned officers and men to families and relatives was not suitable to active service. It was cumbersome, and caused trouble, confusion, and loss, not to mention correspondence and clerical labour; in fact, the clerical labour it imposed was stupendous. Every pay office almost in the field had to have a special clerk to look after these allotments. It has been suggested that on active service, for men who allot part of their pay to their families or relatives, only the net rate of their pay should be entered in the pay list in which their pay is charged, and that the amount allotted should be charged by the paymaster paying the allotments. That is all I have to suggest.

18842. (*Chairman.*) In South Africa I do not quite understand what your duties as paymaster were?—Practically our duties were to pay all the troops and all the expenses in connection with them, that is to say, all expense connected with the Army. As the Army advanced so the duties increased. For instance, it entered the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. Then civil expenditure for a certain period had to be met, and of that we were relieved on the 1st of April, 1901.

18843. Then, do I correctly understand that all the expenses of the Army passed through your department?—Just so.

18844. Then the paying of the men passed through your department?—Yes, all payment of the men.

18845. But still that was carried out in the regiment by the company officers?—Just so; we were practically auditors of the accounts. The company officers prepared a pay list and sent it into the paymaster, who audited it, and the paymaster then compiled his pay list, which was sent to the War Office.

18846. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is there a paymaster to every regiment?—No, there is not. The way it is done is, a station pay office or branch pay office is formed, to which we attach so many regiments—say about eight or 10 regiments—for payment, and the regiments render their accounts to this branch pay office.

18847. That is in South Africa?—Yes.

18848. In the Home District here, how is it?—At home it would be done very much the same.

18849. Is that the way it is done now?—Yes; units have a station paymaster, to whom they render their accounts. For instance, take the troops at Dover, or at Aldershot. At Aldershot they have three station pay offices to pay the first, second, and third brigade. Each brigade has its own pay office there, and the troops in those brigades would render their pay list for audit to the paymaster in charge of each brigade.

18850. But how does the officer commanding get money to pay the men?—From the Field Paymaster; the Field Paymaster should accompany the troops.

18851. That is in time of war. How is it done at Aldershot to-day?—He requisitions on the paymaster in whose financial charge his company is, and this paymaster would give him cash or a cheque on the bank. In the latter case he would go down to the bank, draw the money, and pay the men.

18852. He has an account at the bank in Aldershot?—Yes.

18853. Who actually draws the cash?—The officer commanding the company or another officer.

18854. Then he has to have another cheque?—Yes, the paymaster receives his advance from the Accountant-General.

18855. Then he hands the cheque to him?—Yes, or he puts it to his credit in the bank; the paymaster receives what he calls an imprest, and he has another account with the officer commanding the company.

18856. I know he pays, but I did not know he drew the money actually?—Yes, he draws the money, prepares the pay list at the end of the month, and accounts for the money he has received from the paymaster. He prepares his pay list and sends the account to the paymaster.

18857. (*Chairman.*) There is no collective account for the regiment?—No; that really forms the regimental account. Say there are eight companies in a regiment; the eight company officers would draw for their eight companies.

18858. But there is no collective account, is there?—No.

18859. (*Viscount Esher.*) Then who is the sub-accountant? Do you consider the captain of the company your sub-accountant?—Yes, he would be the sub-accountant.

18860. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But he is surcharged in case of over-payment?—Yes; if he made any payment which was not according to regulation he would be held responsible.

18861. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That system has been in force since about 1888, I think?—Yes; we used to have regimental paymasters.

18862. Can you remember the previous system?—Yes, I was a regimental paymaster for some time.

18863. Would you agree with a previous witness here that the present system has broken down?—No, I do not think it is quite fair to say it has broken down, but it is not satisfactory. It wants improvement. It certainly did not work satisfactorily in South Africa, for the simple reason that officers on trek did not find the time really to prepare the accounts of their companies. Also casualties were constantly occurring with them—some were shot, others fell ill and were sent home; others were sent hurriedly to take up extra duties and appointments; and transfer of accounts under such circumstances became very difficult.

advantages in the old system of a regimental paymaster.
18864. But even in time of peace, were there not great

master?—Yes, there were, of course, because the regimental paymaster was always with the regiment. In the 1882 campaign in Egypt, I was with the Gordon Highlanders, and, when the officers commanding companies got ill, and casualties occurred, for two months, I think I prepared the pay lists myself for the whole regiment.

18865. (*Viscount Esher.*) But you did not pay then under the old system yourself?—No, we never paid; we always gave the money to the captains commanding companies, who paid.

18866. But is there any objection to the paymaster actually paying the men?—I do not think he could possibly do so—he might do it on a few occasions—there are so few paymasters in proportion to the number of units. If you had a regimental paymaster for each battalion, etc., it might be done, provided the regiment was always together, but it is not. Parts are on detachment away, or it is split up for other reasons.

18867. But that only occasionally happens, and then you meet it by a temporary expedient; but do you see any objection to having a paymaster attached to every regiment, except on the score of expense?—Well, of course, that is the objection.

18868. That is the only objection?—No, but it has answered very well before.

18869. But then, as I understand, under the previous system the paymaster was only an auditor, and did not actually pay?—Just so; auditor and accountant.

18870. That might appear rather an extravagant system; but if the paymaster's duties, in addition to those of auditor, also comprise the actual payment of the men, then it would cease to be so extravagant a system, as he would obviously have more to do?—Yes.

18871. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) If I remember right, under the old system the paymaster was something more than an auditor. He was responsible for the pay list?—He was responsible for the pay list, and rendered it every three months.

18872. So that the captain of the company was not then responsible for errors as he is now?—Excuse me; if he made a mistake, and paid away what he ought not, he was held just as responsible as he is to-day.

18873. But was it not the fact that he had a pay list prepared for him by an expert, by the paymaster?—We prepared our accounts as regimental paymasters for the War Office for a certain period, but he had to give us an account of his company as he stood in our books.

18874. But when you were there as regimental paymaster, did not the captains of companies come to you in any difficulty?—Certainly. I used to help them through often.

18875. You were there, practically, always to give them a helping hand, and prevent their making a hundred mistakes, which they would have made otherwise?—Certainly.

18876. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you think it is a feasible scheme that every regiment should have a paymaster, who would prepare the pay sheets and pay the men, and subsequently forward the pay sheets to your Department?—Yes; provided the men are all together, it is feasible, of course, but I do not think it answers on active service very well. Perhaps I am prejudiced, but I think it is desirable that officers commanding should certainly pay their own men; whoever prepares their pay list for them, that might be another question, but I think the officers should see their own men paid, and carry out that duty.

18877. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Why is that not done in the Navy?—The gunners pay their own men, I believe.

(*Sir John Hopkins.*) They are paid by the paymaster in the presence of the officer.

18878. (*Viscount Esher.*) That is met, as the Admiral says, in the Navy by the officer being present when paymaster pays?—Yes; but then in the Navy you are in a confined space; you have everybody there at your beck and call.

18879. Practically, so you are also here in time of peace?—Yes; but then you really want a scheme to suit both peace and war.

18880. But no scheme that you can make will be perfect; no scheme that has ever been devised yet will do that; your present scheme does not meet both, does it?—The present scheme, of course, is not satisfactory.

18881. Exactly; it broke down in South Africa?—Well, it did not actually break down, but it was not satisfactory. It gave a lot of trouble, and it was the cause of a good deal of loss.

18882. That is breaking down?—But we were able to obtain and render accounts. It was defective because it threw a duty on officers in the field which they could not readily carry through; in fact, they had to neglect some of their field duties to carry out their financial duties.

18883. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Have they not now to neglect a great deal of their military duty in time of peace?—Yes, there is no doubt about that; it would be better if the pay list could be compiled without them.

18884. (*Viscount Esher.*) Then, of course, the paymaster, in time of war, does not come into the combatant rank, and then the remark you made just now does not arise; he does not run so great a risk of being shot?—No; but the scheme that is being prepared by the War Office now is that the captains commanding companies should draw the money from the field paymaster who is at the front with the specie, and should get the men to sign a mere acquittance roll. During active service many items, such as hospital stoppages, ration allowance, minor stoppages, and entries of that kind cease. A man merely comes on pay, good conduct pay and corps pay. The idea is that he should draw whatever money he wants, and sign this acquittance roll. The acquittance roll is taken to the field paymaster, who gives the money for it, and the men are paid.

18885. But when you were paymaster of the Gordon Highlanders, you must have had considerable experience there. How many captains of companies actually drew the money themselves that you ever knew of?—The regulations were very strict then; always some officer used to come and draw the money for the men.

18886. He did not send his pay-sergeant?—No.

18887. The officer drew it himself?—The officer, or his subaltern, always came to draw the money.

18888. Who practically keeps the pay sheet, the sergeant or the officer?—They used to have, in those days, small books and pay sheets, and the colour-sergeant, who was the clerk of the Commanding Officer, prepared all company accounts for the officer commanding the company.

18889. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) So that it took two men from their military duty. First of all, the captain or squadron leader, and also the colour-sergeant, in order to pay the men?—Yes, it interfered with their military duties, of course.

18890. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is it not the fact that the principal part of a colour-sergeant's work nowadays is to look after these pay sheets?—No, but it causes him a great deal of worry and anxiety.

18891. He is not a trained accountant?—No.

18892. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You spoke just now of district pay offices, I think, for the Army Corps?—Yes, there is a district pay office; that is where all bills for contracts for supply, Engineer, ordnance, and other services are paid from, also payment of staff and subordinates, etc.

18893. But it is from that district pay office, is it not, that the regiments are ultimately paid; that is to say, it is from that office that the pay comes for the regiments?—No; that would come from the station pay office or the branch pay office.

18894. Well, say the branch pay office. How many regiments are there attached to the branch office—how many battalions?—That depends upon circumstances.

18895. How many would you say, as a rule?—On active service, do you mean?

18896. No, in peace time?—It would vary according to the number of troops quartered in the command. For instance, there is a station pay office at Dover.

18897. How many battalions are there there now?—I think there are about five; but I am speaking from memory. It must not be taken as accurate.

18898. We will take it at five. How many clerks are there employed at that station pay office?—I could not say from memory.

18899. About how many do you think?—If I am to make a guess, I should think about from ten to twelve.

18900. Could you not get rid of a certain number of

Colonel
W. H.
Mortimer,
C.B.

13 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
W. H.
Mortimer,
C.B.

those clerks if there was a paymaster to each regiment?—I think you would have to give the paymaster a clerk or two.

18901. Why need you do that?—Because one paymaster could not prepare all the accounts himself and pay the men; that would be more than one man could do. You would have to give him a clerk to help him.

18902. (*Viscount Esher.*) That would be two men to each battalion?—Yes; if you had a battalion of 1,000 strong you would want two clerks.

18903. It would be a very good battalion if it were 1,000 strong?—Yes; but out in South Africa that is what we had.

18904. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But I am speaking of peace time?—We should not have anything like that in peace time.

18905. Do you not think that one efficient paymaster would be sufficient?—No, I think you would require to give him clerks according to the magnitude of his charge.

18906. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose the pay-sergeant gets extra pay now?—Yes.

18907. Then, at any rate, you would save that; that would go towards the paying of the clerk?—Yes.

18908. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Speaking of this War Office Committee on this subject, were you sitting on it, or did you give evidence before it?—No; I do not remember giving evidence; I do not think I was in the country during the time.

18909. I mean the Committee that you were speaking of as sitting during the last four months?—No; my information is only from what I have read.

18910. You did not give evidence before it?—No.

18911. We have had a very high opinion on this subject, and the witness, while saying, as you say, that it is a good matter of discipline that the captain should pay the men, went on to say: "But as regards the accounting, the keeping of the accounts of the men, I think we shall be able to take that away from the Captain of the company and put it upon the Paymaster, making the Paymaster the Accounting Officer and the Captain simply the Cashier, with the simplest possible account of cash receipts and cash expenditure." Do you approve of that?—I think that is very good.

18912. In peace, as well as in war?—Yes.

18913. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) But if there were a paymaster to each regiment, do you not think you might go a little further, and make him the cashier, so as to take away from the combatant officers all the responsibilities of pay. If you were to make him cashier, then you would make him the accounting officer?—That is very true; but, still, I cannot help thinking it would be a mistake to relieve the officer entirely from paying his men.

18914. (*Viscount Esher.*) But why?—I was 14 years a regimental officer myself, and, somehow, the system has grown up with me. Perhaps I could not give you any particular reason, but I am certainly of opinion that it would be a mistake.

(*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You say it keeps the captain in touch with his men, but I cannot help thinking that an officer, if he is training his men, is much more in touch with them while he is training them than he is by simply paying them their wage weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, as the case might be.

18915. (*Viscount Esher.*) And, you see, you have got this, that that is the plan which is pursued in the Navy, where the officer is present while the men are paid?—Yes, I admit that; but I think you would find, when the regiments were distributed all over the country in detachments there would be great difficulties in it.

18916. But regiments very rarely are distributed all over the place, and when they are you make a special arrangement. Could you not make a special arrangement to meet the special circumstances?—Of course, it could be done, but I cannot help thinking that you would find it would be a far better system to let the paymaster keep the pay lists and prepare them, and make the company officer the cashier.

18917. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) We have had evidence here from the colonel commanding one of the irregular forces raised in South Africa that they had a paymaster, but that that paymaster was itinerant; that is to say, he went about—wherever the men were, he went to pay them?—That was in South Africa.

18918. Yes?—I know that was done, but each of those paymasters had two clerks to help them in preparing their accounts, and that enabled them to go about as they did. And then they did not pay with the regularity with which a regular officer would pay; and there were a great many complaints by the men, who said that they could not get their pay, and made statements of that nature.

18919. This officer did not seem to think that there were complaints in his command?—Would you mind telling me the officer's name?

18920. It was Colonel Thorneycroft?—Oh, yes. Captain Chipman was the paymaster; he was a man whom I selected myself and recommended Colonel Thorneycroft to take for his regiment. He was a manager of the Lingham Timber Company, and he did remarkably well; but all regiments were not so fortunate as that. He was a very experienced accountant; and not only that, but he was a soldier at heart, too; he wanted to be in the front line and see a little bit of the fighting as well; so that took him up there. But all the paymasters were not like him.

18921. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have had evidence that during the war in South Africa if the bills and vouchers were presented to the Army Pay Department men it was their duty simply to pay, as bankers, without examining in any way whether the prices were fair or not?—Payments are made according to contracts, with which all bills are compared; but on active service in South Africa, where contracts could not be made, Army Book 67, the leaves of which represent an advice, draft, and receipt, was brought into use. Certain officers were given that book, and they used to pay at the time they made purchases. In the field it was General Buller's wish that expenses should be paid as they were incurred, and therefore this arrangement was come to. It was inadvisable to carry large sums of money into the field, and hence certain officers were entrusted with this book, and they paid for all the purchases made. Then these drafts came down to the paymaster, who audited them. The officer was directed to give the full details in the advice portion of the leaf or on back thereof, and the paymaster audited it and saw that it was correct, and if it was so he embodied it in his accounts.

18922. But the only audit that he would perform was an arithmetical audit; it was not his duty to see whether the prices were fair?—There was the agreement, and he had to accept it.

18923. That is just the point that I want to make. We have had full evidence on the point both from the Accountant-General and Sir Fleetwood Mason, and others; and at present the Army Pay Department has no authority apparently to control expenditure on behalf of the General?—None whatever. That is just the point, and that is why I recommend that there should be a financial adviser, who should watch all contracts on behalf of the General, who is really too busy in the field to give his attention to these matters. If the General had a trained officer who would watch these things for him, the paymaster would get acquainted with everything financial. I may illustrate that by telling you that when I went round to Natal, General Wolfe Murray, before he engaged nurses, doctors, clergymen, or any other person, would say to me: "What are we to pay?" I would find out what the market value was, and according to the market value so did we engage these people. Later on, when it was found that the rates we were paying were very much less than those paid at the Cape side, of course, they said: "We are all serving in the same Army; it is unfair that the Natal people should be paid a lower rate than the Cape people." And eventually when the two armies joined rates were levelled up and all paid alike.

18924. Then my point is this: Is it not necessary, not only to have a Financial Adviser to the General of the Army Corps—or, I will say, of the Army in the field—but also that comparatively junior officers of the Army Pay Department should be there to advise Generals, Division Generals, Brigadier Commanders, Captains, and so on?—Yes, I think it would be a very good thing if they always had somebody to watch that sort of duty for them and to advise them on it. For instance, Lord Kitchener wanted me, before any of the civilians were invited to come out, to accept this office, but I told him at the time I had not been trained, I did not think I could possibly do it, and that I did not quite understand what was required. He asked me to suggest some

See
Q. 7919.

names, and I really could not suggest anybody who I thought was fully trained to offer to him.

18925. But you understand, do you not, that I am not so much pressing the point of a Financial Adviser, such as yourself, to the General in Command. I am looking more to the details of troops in the field constantly making local contracts, and I am asking you whether you do not think it is necessary, both to strengthen the numbers of the Army Pay Department and to specially train them to meet those emergencies in time of war?—I think it is very necessary that they should have training to meet those emergencies. They do, of course, see all contracts that are made in peace time. In the district offices every officer sees the contracts that are made.

18926. Even junior officers?—Yes. When I was a district officer I made it a point that all these officers should see the contracts that were made, and I also set them to work to check the bills with the contracts, so that they should not be ignorant of the manner in which that is done.

18927. Do you think that is general with district officers?—I could not say whether they do it in every office, but I believe that in every office where the paymaster takes an interest in his officers you will find it is done.

18928. At any rate, you would recommend that it should always be done?—Yes, I would.

18929. So as to give the junior officers a knowledge of prices and of the system of making contracts?—Just so. For instance, at one time in South Africa, when I first went up to Pretoria, Lord Kitchener said to me, "I want you to look at the bills, and tell me whether you think the prices are fair for the purchases made, and I want you to instruct your paymasters to do the same, and I want you to let me know what you find," which was a very good thing. We promptly turned up the Ordnance vouchers, which showed that the expenditure on account of Ordnance was abnormally high.

18930. Did you happen to notice the price paid for bandoliers out there?—I forget now what it was, but I know that the price for leather leggings and one or two other things struck me as very funny at the time. One thing particularly was the price of breeches; ready-made breeches you could get for about 5s. 6d. or 7s. 6d., but if they were cut to order they charged £2 or £3 for them, and so on. Of course, if you put the paymaster in authority, as he runs through these things, he will draw attention to an expense of that kind at once.

18931. But in South Africa he had no authority to do that?—None whatever. A bill is sent in, it is allowed by the head of the Department, and we have to pay it; we have merely to run up the total, extend the figures, and see that it is right.

18932. And those accounts are kept and audited in London?—I do not know about that; but in that sort of way, if we were given authority, we might do a good deal. Lord Kitchener desired, of course, that we should do so.

18933. But you had no staff—your men were overworked?—I may mention now that, in order to do that, I took on some of those bills myself, and sat up to about midnight doing it, and I put in slips to show wherever I thought a thing was not right and proper.

18934. That would only cover, of course, a small proportion of the enormous expenditure in South Africa?—That was only for one month. Then, of course, inquiry was set to work; civilians were sent out from the War Office, and the matter was gone into.

18935. (*Viscount Esher.*) But had any of those points been considered before the war actually broke out?—No, I do not think any of them had been. You see every Department has a head, and that head is the actual responsible staff officer to the General Commanding for his Department and the expenditure connected therewith, and the General, naturally, would call on that officer to answer for any expenditure in connection with his Department.

18936. But what I mean is this: It had never occurred to the Accountant-General before the war that these difficulties might arise?—I do not think I am in a position to answer that.

18937. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) At any rate, you never heard of any organisation being established before the war at any period to meet the requirements in the field?—We had no organisation to meet the require-

ments in the field; but they were very good; they sent one out with a free hand, and I am not certain that I would not prefer to go out with a free hand and organise as I thought best.

18938. If you had sufficient men?—Yes.

18939. But you commenced your evidence by saying that you were very short of men?—Yes.

18940. And that your men were worked to death?—Yes.

18941. Without any control—merely in paying?—Yes, in pay duties. I ought to say that Lord Kitchener, when he came, wanted to exercise control, and did not quite know how to get it. He had had control in his own office in Egypt, he controlled the whole expenditure there, and he wanted to do the same with the large force in South Africa; but it was very difficult; and he used to make me bring him a statement every month, showing what the expenditure was for that month, and inform him of items where there was an increase, and, if possible, explain the reason of such increase. That, practically, was outside my duties. It was the officer in charge of the Department whose duty it was to explain that increase—or it might be a decrease; and so as I gave him the figures he used to call on the officers of the Departments to explain them.

18942. Would that be one of the Army Pay Department?—No.

18943. Of what Department?—For instance, the Ordnance Department, Supplies, Railways, Transport, Remounts, and so on. I kept rough copies of the figures that I gave him, and that is the reason why I was able to give accurately the expenditure and receipts for the time I was his Chief Paymaster.

18944. Have you served in India at all?—Yes, but not as paymaster; I was there from 1865 to 1875.

18945. Have you studied the Indian system? I have here a document showing that the system of control in India is very superior to ours?—Yes, I think it is. I saw that system, too, in South Africa. They had a control officer there, who absolutely controlled the whole expenditure. Of course, he is under the orders of the General Officer Commanding, but he absolutely controls, and he audits his own accounts, and they are accepted by the War Office. He had an ample staff, and was really a powerful and useful man.

18946. Do you see any reason why that should not be introduced *en bloc* into our system?—No, I think it would be a very good thing.

18947. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) If each regiment had its own paymaster, would not that give you the increase of men that you require in the field? These paymasters could be trained to the work, could they not?—Yes, it would certainly, but if you had a paymaster to each regiment, and you gave him two clerks, and he paid all the men, I presume you would propose to bring the paymaster and his clerks to the base.

18948. I mean that you could then work them, and, if they were trained under you, they would be responsible to you, in fact, as the Chief Paymaster?—Yes; but then there are the district works and other works. I have read you some of the extra duties that are thrown on to the paymaster on active service; you would want special officers and clerks to carry those out, too.

18949. But could not they take some of that extra duty off the hands of the Chief Paymaster?—I do not think so—that is, to any extent.

18950. This was the evidence which was given with respect to the paymasters who paid the detached units. The question is put: "The second point is the necessity of a regimental paymaster; that you have spoken to?" And the answer is: "Yes. It is impossible that a company commander or a squadron commander (whichever you like to call him) in the field, who is constantly out reconnoitring or on outpost duty or fighting, can have the responsibility of the cash and accounts passing through his hands; and I had advocated this for so many years in the Regular Army, as well as in any other corps, that I determined I would do it when I had the opportunity. The paymaster, when money was wanted, got it from the nearest point, either from the nearest bank, or he went down and got it from the district Chief Paymaster; he brought the money up to my camp, and he paid the men, marking on a simple pay sheet. Thus there was no checking of accounts again; he had not to check the accounts of the company officers; there were his own accounts kept in a business-

Colonel
W. H.
Mortimer,
C.B.

13 Mar. 1903.

See Q. 12461.

Colonel
W. H.
Mortimer,
C.B.
13 Mar. 1903.

like manner by the Paymaster himself, who was paid to do that job, of what he had paid to the men. The only necessity was that there should be some man, some officer or sergeant, present at the payment to say, 'This is John Smith or William Jones,' and to identify him to see that the right man got that pay. That relieved all the fighting officers of the responsibility of money affairs, which I consider a very great point in the efficiency of a corps." Then the question is put: "It is said that when a regiment is split up (which was constantly the case in South Africa), there might be a difficulty in getting the paymaster to pay them all?" And the answer is: "I found no such difficulty. The paymaster or the paymaster-sergeant took the money down. I had constant detachments, and I found no difficulty in getting the men paid in that way." That is the evidence that was given?—I presume that that is Colonel Thorneycroft?

18951. Yes?—As I say, he had an exceptionally good paymaster, but I do not think it was the same with all regiments. If we had trained paymasters, of course, it would come to practically the same.

18952. (*Viscount Esher.*) Does every non-commissioned officer and every man in the Army sign a pay sheet?—Yes.

18953. He actually signs it?—He signs the duplicate pay list.

18954. That is to say, when the money is handed to him he signs the pay sheet?—No, he signs at the end of the month. When his account is made up, he signs the duplicate pay list.

18955. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you wish to add?—I have nothing further to add.

FORTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Tuesday, 17th March 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

Vice-Admiral Sir R. HARRIS, K.C.B., called and examined.

18956. (*Chairman.*) You were in command at the Cape in 1899?—Yes.

18957. And you remained in command throughout the war?—I remained in command till 1901; in May I left the station.

18958. In 1899 were any preparations made for the war on its outbreak?—From a naval point of view, yes.

18959. At what date were those preparations made?—About August I began to assemble the ships in my squadron and put them all through a thorough course of docking and repair in readiness for any emergency.

18960. Was that on instructions from home?—No, I did it on my own initiative, on what I imagined was coming. Of course, I was in consultation with Lord Milner as well—Sir Alfred Milner he was then.

18961. But there were no instructions from home?—There were no instructions from home until immediately before the outbreak of the war.

18962. What preliminary knowledge then had you of the matter?—It was a matter of very common conversation in Cape Town that the Boers were preparing for war. That was in June; and in July I was shooting near Port Elizabeth and met several English farmers of that district who told me that they were absolutely certain from what they knew of their Dutch colleagues that they were preparing for war. Following that up again I went up the River Maputa from Lourenço Marques on a shooting expedition nominally, but for another purpose really, and there I came across a Dutch farmer named Kotse, who travelled constantly in the Orange River State and the Transvaal, and he asked to speak to me privately. He said to me: "Well, Admiral, I may tell you this in confidence. The Boers are certain to make war directly the grass comes in October." I said: "What is your reason?" and he said, "I travel about from farmhouse to farmhouse, and they all tell me war is coming." I naturally made a note of that and telegraphed it to Lord Milner.

18963. They were waiting for the grass to come in October?—Yes.

18964. But they were making all their arrangements to move as soon as the grass came?—Yes, as soon as possible; and as a matter of fact, they did; directly the grass came in October they commenced.

18965. And you then communicated that to Lord Milner?—I let Lord Milner have a telegram at once. I went up the Maputa River, I may say, with the view, in case war broke out, to find a base to get up by sea through Portuguese territory if they would allow it, and up the Maputa River you can take boats up to within 40 miles of the Transvaal, with very easy country for going over.

18966. Was the result of your communications with Lord Milner that you began to make preparations?—In a great measure. Of course, I had a very small squadron, and it was very necessary that they should all be perfectly complete before war broke out, as the station is a very extended one. It reaches from north of the equator on the west side up to the equator very nearly on the east side. The ships are generally spread about a good deal, and it would take me some three months, in the event of war, to get them together. They then want docking and repairing, and, as a matter of fact, every one was docked and repaired before the war. They were absolutely ready when war was declared on October 11th.

18967. You made your preparations with the concurrence of Lord Milner?—Hardly with his concurrence; with his approval. He thought it was quite necessary to do so.

18968. I mean he recognised the situation?—I may say also that in consultation with Lord Milner I had arranged that each ship should have a separate station or port to go to on the outbreak of hostilities, so that they could take up the protection of those places.

18969. I was only anxious to get out that Lord Milner agreed with you that the information that you got was sufficient to justify your taking such steps?—Most completely.

18970. Will you tell us the preparations that were made?—The ships of both my East and West Coast squadrons were got down to Simon's Town Docks, and all their engine-room defects were put right, and they were made ready; and as a matter of fact they lasted for a year without requiring docking or repairs, which was very important, because we were rather short of ships.

18971. Your object being to get them all together?—

My object being to get them all together ready for this outbreak when it did take place.

18972. And you mention in your *précis* that, fortunately, both coasts were quiet?—Yes, they were both quiet. Fortunately for us, there was nothing on on the East Coast, and but a small prospect of disturbance on the West Coast, but it did not come off for two years later.

18973. But you had to keep a ship there?—Yes, I had to keep a ship there on account of that; the "Barracouta" was kept there.

18974. Then what was the actual strength of your force?—The actual strength at the time of the war was as follows: The actual ships that I had under my orders at the time of the outbreak were the "Doris," "Forte," "Magicienne," "Philomel," "Tartar," "Barrosa," "Barracouta," "Monarch," "Widgeon," "Partridge," "Thrush," and "Dwarf." I may add that the "Dwarf" was not brought down till later, because she was a very light draught vessel, and her services are nearly always required at Lagos, which is almost her permanent station, but later in the war it was necessary for me to bring her down on account of her light draught.

18975. What class of ships were they?—The "Doris" is a second-class cruiser; the "Forte" is a second-class cruiser, the "Magicienne" is a third-class cruiser, the "Philomel" is a third-class cruiser, the "Tartar" is a third-class cruiser, the "Barrosa" and "Barracouta" are very small third-class cruisers, the "Monarch" is an obsolete ironclad, the "Widgeon," "Partridge," "Thrush," and "Dwarf" are all gunboats.

18976. Afterwards had you reinforcements?—Very soon after war commenced I had the "Powerful," the "Terrible," and the "Niobe" sent to me, followed by the "Fearless," the "Pelorus," the "Raccoon," and the "Thetis."

18977. And some of those were large ships?—The "Powerful" and "Terrible" were very large, and had very large complements too.

18978. And what was the disposition of those ships at the outbreak of the war?—The actual disposition just before the ultimatum of nearly the whole of the first I mentioned, except the "Barracouta," the "Dwarf," and the "Widgeon," was at Simon's Town, and immediately the ultimatum was received they sailed for the ports for which they were detailed.

18979. Was there any arrangement made between you and the military as to what assistance you could give?—I made every offer of assistance to the military shortly before the ultimatum. The reply I got was: "Very many thanks, but no assistance is required."

18980. Was that from the General Officer Commanding at the Cape?—That was from the General Officer Commanding.

18981. At the Cape?—At Cape Town. Sir Forestier-Walker was in command then.

18982. That was before the outbreak?—I should not like to be particular to a day, but it was very close on the ultimatum, either a day or two before or a day or two after. I may add that I sent a complete list to him of all the stores and small guns I had in Simon's Town Yard, saying they were available and at his disposal if he liked to request them. Owing to the confusion, I suppose, that took place at the beginning of the war Sir Forestier-Walker does not own up to having received that. I asked him if he had some time afterwards, and he said, No, he had not—he had never seen it. As a matter of fact, it was sent by my secretary and acknowledged.

18983. (Sir John Jackson.) Who was it acknowledged by?—I think it was acknowledged by one of the people on his staff, and probably signed by Sir Forestier-Walker. I am almost certain about that.

18984. (Chairman.) And were those guns used?—Afterwards they were all used.

18985. But not at first?—Afterwards they were used, and a good many guns were taken out of the ships and used as well. My position was this: that unless I had a demand made upon me by the military for guns I had no power to expend the money in the dockyard in fitting them or lending them.

18986. When did you receive the request for assistance?—The first request that I had for assistance was about three or four days after the outbreak of war. Then I was asked to send a small naval brigade and two guns to Stormberg, to hold Stormberg against any

attack of the Boers, who were coming down through the Orange Free State then.

18987. Did that come from the military or from the High Commissioner?—That came from the military, from the General Officer Commanding at Cape Town.

18988. Did the High Commissioner also approach you on the subject?—Yes. I may say that two days in the week at least I used to go up from Simon's Town to Cape Town to see Sir Alfred Milner and tell him what I was doing and where our forces were, and asked him if he wanted anything more done with them; so that he and I were in complete touch the whole time.

18989. And this brigade was sent up?—This brigade then was sent up to Stormberg with two 12 pound 8 cwt. guns, the short 12-pounder guns.

18990. And how many gunners?—About 140 all told, chiefly marines. The marines went as escort for the guns, and the blue-jackets worked them.

18991. Did that brigade remain on shore after that?—They were sent up to Stormberg, and when they arrived at Stormberg, the marine officer, Major Plumber, in command of the marines, or Commander Ethelston, in command of the Brigade, wrote to me, and said that he considered the position such that Stormberg, held then by half a battalion of the Berkshire Regiment and the naval guns and marines, was quite indefensible. However, they remained on until the arrival of Sir Redvers Buller. Then the question was put to him, and he decided that the position was indefensible, and they were then ordered to fall back to Queenstown, which they did; that was about three weeks afterwards, or a fortnight.

18992. And they remained at Queenstown?—There they remained at Queenstown for a considerable period, and then they were withdrawn on the request of General Buller, and moved up with an augmented force and two 4.7 guns to join Lord Methuen.

18993. And they were part of the brigade that served with him?—They became the brigade that served with Lord Methuen which was so much cut up at Graspan; but the two 12-pound 8cwt. guns were, by the request of the military, allowed to remain at Queenstown, but taken over and worked by the army afterwards, when this brigade came back to Simons Town again they were given two fresh guns—and two 4.7 guns—to take up to Lord Methuen.

18994. Was the strength that went with Lord Methuen the same?—It was increased by a number of bluejackets to work the two 4.7 guns, and a Captain was put in command instead of a Commander.

18995. Then the next operation was at Durban?—After that the question became a very serious and grave one at Durban. But, if you will allow me, I will just state first of all what the situation was at Cape Town.

18996. If you please?—Lord Milner told me that he considered the situation in Cape Colony was very grave indeed, and as troops arrived they were always hurried off somewhere else, and he thought the actual defence of Cape Town itself was very important, and he begged me that I would always have a Naval Brigade of 500 men at least ready for immediate landing and ships to protect the approaches to Cape Town, as from the shore there is a flat approach from either side—from False Bay on one side to Table Bay on the other. I followed out that plan always. I had to keep the force of 500 men always ready for landing and the requisite guns and ships necessary to take up a position on either side; the ships placed in False Bay on one side and Table Bay on the other very nearly command the flats of Cape Town. That handicapped me, of course, in sending people elsewhere.

18997. That would very nearly secure the protection of Cape Town?—Yes. I think the Boers would have been very chary of approaching under ship fire from either side. Of course, it also helped to protect Simon's Town, because if Cape Town had gone and Simon's Town was cut off it would have been a very bad thing for the coal depôt, the ammunition, stores, and everything else, which were very valuable in Simon's Town. I may say that after the ultimatum the Admiralty telegraphed to me and said I was to consider it my principal duty to protect the seaports of the coast, but not, if possible, to land any men except in a case of great emergency.

18998. That was immediately after the ultimatum?—Yes.

Vice-
Admiral Sir
R. Harris,
K.C.B.
17 Mar. 1903.

Vice-Admiral Sir R. Harris, from home. 18999. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That was an instruction from home?—Yes, that was an instruction from home.

K.C.B. 19000. (*Chairman.*) And were those instructions modified afterwards?—Yes. As the pressure became greater the Admiralty practically gave me a free hand as regards sending up people, on condition that the ships were kept fit for immediate service in case of contingencies occurring in Europe. But I was warned by the Admiralty that the "Terrible" was very much required in China, and that if possible I should avoid sending her men to the front, so that the men could be easily recalled and the ship sent off to China in case she was wanted out there.

19001. You are speaking now as to the position at Durban?—Yes; the position at Durban began to get critical. It was not so much at Durban at first; it was most critical at Pietermaritzburg. The Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, was very apprehensive that the Boers might leave Ladysmith and approach by the Greytown road, and come down and carry Pietermaritzburg very easily. It is a place I knew very well, and I thought it was quite indefensible, and so it was arranged in the event of any difficulties to retire on Durban, and put all the archives and things on board a man-of-war stationed there. Then Sir Hely-Hutchinson determined to try and make a stand at Pietermaritzburg until the Boers actually approached, and we lent him two long 12-pounders to mount on Signal Hill at Maritzburg by way of deterring the Boers from approaching. Then, as the Boers began to invest Ladysmith more closely, and we thought they might come down to Durban, the burden of protecting Durban was thrown upon my shoulders by the Admiralty by a telegram, which said I was to protect the towns, so I despatched the "Terrible" there, and asked that the Captain of the "Terrible" might assume the complete control of the place as Military Governor. Both the Governors concurred, and they appointed Captain Percy Scott as Military Commandant at Durban. He, about forty-eight hours after his arrival, telegraphed to me that Durban was in a state of complete defence, which relieved all our anxiety on that score.

19002. That was after the siege of Ladysmith had begun?—Yes, some time after; about a fortnight after.

19003. Then before the siege of Ladysmith, as we know, you sent up guns and men to Ladysmith?—Yes, the guns were sent up to Ladysmith first of all. They were sent up before we thought that Durban was in any danger. Sir George White telegraphed to me on October 25th for guns. I have got his message here. This is the way the message came to me:—"25th October, 1.30 p.m.—From his Excellency Governor Natal.—Following from Sir George White: '24th October.—In view of heavy guns being brought by General Joubert from the North, I would suggest that Navy be consulted with a view'—(then there comes in cipher a word or two that are missed out, and owing to Ladysmith being closed up rapidly they were never able to be put right)—'sending your detachment, consisting of blue-jackets, with guns firing heavy projectiles at long ranges' I have replied as follows: 'Sending undecipherable. Please repeat. I am communicating with Admiral. Do I understand you have determined to keep the troops at Ladysmith. If you have I ought to be informed at once. Seems no doubt now part of force of General Joubert will come in by Greytown. We are practically defenceless here and in Durban.' On that telegram I thought it was necessary to send guns to Ladysmith, and I determined that I would send a Naval Brigade from the "Powerful" with two 4.7 guns and four 12-pounders. Those left Simon's Town in the "Powerful" forty-eight hours afterwards. I telegraphed to have everything clear at Durban for sending them straight into Ladysmith, and they arrived forty-eight hours afterwards at Durban, and twelve hours after that they were in Ladysmith itself in time to help Sir George White. Then he telegraphed to me later on: "30th October, Ladysmith, from General Officer Commanding" (this was only five days after he asked for the guns)—"Your long 12-pounders

have been most useful to me to-day. Could you send as many more as possible with detachment to work them to Pietermaritzburg and Durban if railway remains open? I can get some more of them here. Natal Colony is in very urgent need of defence." I may say that I made preparations for sending more guns, but on November 1st, I think, Ladysmith was closed.

19004. So of course they could not be sent?—More ammunition did actually go as far as Maritzburg, but it could not get any further.

19005. Is that all you wish to say about the landing of the men in Natal?—Later on, of course, there were a great many more men sent to help General Buller on his advance, but I think, dealing with the actual period that we are talking of now, late in October and in the early part of November, I limited myself as much as possible to those men then, so as to keep the ships efficient. Sending a brigade to Ladysmith from the "Powerful" broke up the "Powerful." I had simply to tie her up during the rest of the war, and if I had had to deal with the men from the "Terrible" in the same way I should have had to tie her up too.

19006. What happened next?—After General Buller had got round to Natal he asked for assistance in guns and men. First of all he asked for a few, and then he asked for some more, and eventually they got up to a large number of guns. I think they had about twenty-two guns with them at one time.

19007. And how did you manage to provide those?—The Admiralty were very prompt in sending guns out from England. As fast as I sent a gun up another was despatched immediately, so that I was never more than three weeks short of a gun, and the ships themselves were never more than a week or ten days without a gun or the replacement of a gun from the arsenal at Simon's Town. I started with four 4.7 and, I think, eight spare 12-pounders, and they were very soon worked off.

19008. (*Sir John Edge.*) And the men?—I broke up the "Powerful" and the "Terrible," and the other ships had to go short-handed. When the "Terrible" men were landed for the defence of Durban she was simply tied up useless. The complement that remained on board were only enough to steam her. No fighting qualities remained at all.

19009. (*Chairman.*) You did not get any assistance from home in the shape of men?—Yes; men came out later, and came out fairly promptly, but not enough to fill up the "Terrible" and the "Powerful." I may say that the reason I utilised those two big ships for those purposes was because, in the first place, they had a large complement, and, in the second place, they burnt so much coal that they were absolutely beyond my power to keep them complete if I had used them as cruisers.

19010. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was there a large stock of coal at Simon's Town?—When the war commenced about 15,000 tons were in store, but we were always relying on supplies of Natal coal coming round from Durban, but the moment the Boers got to Dundee that was cut off, and we had to rely on England.

19011. Were you well supplied?—There was never any panic about it, but we ran rather close once or twice for transports. Sir Redvers Buller appealed to me once or twice for help for transports, and I said that I could do it, but that I should be very much put to it if I did. As a matter of fact, it was all got over in Cape Town, and there was no hitch.

19012. You could not have used the "Powerful" and the "Terrible"?—I think not. It would have put such a tremendous strain on the resources of coal. Every time they coaled they required 2,000 tons nearly, and sometimes more.

19013. (*Chairman.*) Do you know what the total number of men that you landed was?—The total number of men landed from the Navy at any one time, I think, a little over 1,400.

19014. And guns?—I have a list of the guns. This is a complete list of guns and ammunition supplied to the

Army during the whole of the war. (The list was handed in, and is as follows.)

GUNS and AMMUNITION supplied to Military Authorities and Naval Brigades, South Africa, to 10th April 1901.

Guns.						4.7" Ammunition.				12-pr. 12 cwt.			12-pr. 8 cwt.		6-pr. Rounds.	7-pr. Rounds.	Small-arm Ammunition.	6" Rounds.	3-pr. Rounds.
3-pr.	4.7".	12-pr. 12 cwt.	12-pr. 8 cwt.	6-pr. Q.F. Hotchkiss.	4.5" Maxim.	Lyddite.	Shrapnel.	Common.	Cartridges.	Shrapnel.	Common.	Cartridges.	Case Shot.	Cartridges.					
1	21	30	7	1	13	3,612	2,384	5,303	12,192	6,260	17,334	18,630	120	2,450	1,100	182	693,200	780	1,120
						11,299				23,594									

One 6-inch Gun was mounted at Durban and sent up to relief of Ladysmith Army, but as it weighed on its carriage 11 tons it was too heavy to be moved away from the railway; it fired about 200 rounds at very extreme ranges.

19015. I see a note in your *précis* "Seven-pounder gun sent with 25 men from H.M.S. "Tartar" to Pietermaritzburg, loss of gun"—That is the unfortunate gun that we lost, the only Naval gun lost during the war; it was a 7-pounder muzzle-loading gun, which was used only for short practice on board ship, and is practically obsolete. It was sent up by the senior naval officer there at the time for use against the Boers, and I immediately telegraphed to have it sent back again, but my telegram was too late. They used it in a truck, and the Boers mastered it with their rifle power, and captured it in the truck very soon after the outbreak of the war. That was a gun that never ought to have been used at all. It is a barbarous weapon.

19016. I see, on looking back, that you have a heading about the conveyance of Boer prisoners after Elands-laagte from Natal to Simon's Bay?—Yes; soon after the battle of Elands-laagte, I was approached by the High Commissioner, who wanted to know whether the Boer prisoners could be put on board a man-of-war. I said it was quite impossible, because there was no room or accommodation to put them on board a man-of-war on duty at Durban, but that, if he wished, I could accommodate about 200 to 250 as a temporary measure on board the "Penelope" at Simon's Town. I may add that at that time there was no possible arrangement on shore of any kind for receiving prisoners, and matters were so urgent that I thought it would be well if I put the "Penelope" at the disposal of the military; and we had, practically speaking, from 200 to 250 prisoners on board the "Penelope" for something like six months.

19017. Were those prisoners taken at Elands-laagte?—They were taken at Elands-laagte.

19018. Then, later on, what happened?—Later on they established a camp at Simon's Town, and we generally had two or three transports full of prisoners lying in Simon's Bay under Naval guard.

19019. They were all under your control?—Being afloat they were, to a certain extent. The ships were actually, as regards their internal discipline, controlled by the military, but I made myself responsible that the prisoners were not allowed to escape, and that my ships guarded and properly looked after them.

19020. And that worked well?—It worked very well indeed. I knew, of course, that it was wrong to put prisoners on board a ship at all—it is against one of the first articles of the Geneva Convention, and it was only on account of the extreme urgency of the case that I consented to allow them to be put on board the transport to be kept for any length of time.

19021. What is the objection to it?—The objection is that they are supposed to get sickly and overcrowded by being herded on ships for a long time, and that it is better to land them. I think that is the meaning of the article of the convention. It is really a remnant, I imagine, of the old French wars.

19022. Then you mention in your *précis* the stoppage of food and stores out of ships destined for the enemy?—It was very difficult to determine, in the first instance, as to whether food was contraband of war or not. I had two or three contrary instructions on the subject. At first we used to make all food supplies not actually contraband, but we used to make an arrangement with the ships to land them voluntarily, so that in

the case of all the first ships that arrived we made them land stores and things for the Transvaal or the Orange Free State, which had been shipped before the declaration of war, at Port Elizabeth, or East London, or Cape Town. Later on, after things kept coming on and consigned by our merchants, I suppose, in England, we made an example by capturing a ship, the "Mashona," and we put her into the prize court. She was not condemned, but much of her cargo was condemned.

19023. Only one ship?—We might have done it with many, but, as a matter of fact, the commerce was nearly all British, and we should have been robbing our own people. We have had so little war, that they seemed to think they might go on shipping things in that way for the enemy as if we were at peace.

19024. What happened? You did not let the things go forward?—They were all stopped at East London or Cape Town, or wherever it might be, and put into a big stores.

19025. For the owners?—For the owners, who got them again, or, probably, the consignees, who paid for them. A good many of them were innocent; the "Mashona" was not an innocent case, because they had a good deal of oil and other stores for the Netherlands Railway, which was one of our bitter enemies, so that I determined we would make an example of her.

19026. And were there any other things?—Simply flour, rice, wheat, and all sorts of luxuries—tinned meats and things of that sort, from America mostly.

19027. Generally speaking, most of them arriving at Cape Town?—Either at Cape Town, East London, or Port Elizabeth.

19028. But not in Natal?—No, not so much went to Natal.

19029. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Are provisions contraband of war?—They can be so, or they cannot. It depends upon the action of the Power that decides. The Government decided that they were not, unless it could absolutely be proved for the use of the enemy in the field. As a matter of fact, the Boers were all under arms in the field, and under that heading we might have seized everything.

19030. (Chairman.) What about warlike stores?—Very few warlike stores came to the Cape Colony or to Durban. Some went through Lourenço Marques, and those that came to Cape Colony or Durban were always taken out by my ships. They were not really stores for the enemy in the field; they were sporting rifles and sporting ammunition chiefly, but a good deal of ammunition I know did go through Lourenço Marques in the early part of the war.

19031. And was any step taken to prevent it?—We did our best to prevent it, but you cannot break a ship's cargo in bulk on the high seas. My cruisers boarded every ship they could, and they always went to the manifest; but it is easy to have a wrong manifest, and very often shippers of cargo will not have any at all; they wait to get their manifest till they arrive. But I think we put a certain amount of fear into their hearts, and they did not bring things as openly as they otherwise would, but they very often disguised things; a great deal of ammunition I know went in the guise of potatoes through Lourenço Marques; but you cannot

Vice-Admiral Sir R. Harris, K.C.B.

17 Mar. 1903.

Vice-
Admiral Sir
R. Harris,
K.C.B.

17 Mar. 1903

prove it, and also a good many small guns went through.

19032. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) What was your boarding limit?—I used to board anywhere outside the three-mile limit.

19033. (*Chairman.*) Then you had ships along the east coast?—I had five cruisers and gunboats doing searching party outside Lourenço Marques. It was really a blockade, but one does not like to call it a blockade, because it was a friendly port.

19034. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Under what flag did the ammunition come out to Lourenço Marques?—I think it came out under the German or French flag. I do not think any of it came out under the British flag.

19035. (*Chairman.*) There were alarms about privateers, I think?—Yes; there were many alarms about privateers, absolutely ludicrous many of them. Early in the war there was an alarm that one of the troop-ships had been chased by a Boer privateer somewhere off the Canary Islands; but it was absolute nonsense, although it frightened people a good deal.

19036. There were none?—There were none at all.

19037. Where there any points along the coast where warlike stores could have been landed, except Lourenço Marques?—Fortunately for us, there were none at all. Except under exceptionally fine weather, it is impossible to land things on any part of the coast, except at those towns which we held.

19038. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What about the west coast, Saldanha Bay?—I think it is quite impossible; they never would get things through the large sandhills that line the West Coast harbours, and Saldanha Bay was always under good observation by our own people. The only weak point would be at the mouth of the Orange River. Occasionally you can land things there in fine weather; that is a very unprotected part, and very small things might have gone through, but I doubt whether they did.

19039. You are not aware that any things did get through at those places?—No; but there used to be a great many scares about things going through German territory at a small port north of Walvis Bay; but the landing is very bad there.

19040. (*Chairman.*) You do not know that any of those articles got in from the coast at all?—No, I do not. I do not think anything got in, except through Lourenço Marques. There were two or three scares that they were putting things through the mouth of the Limpopo River, but I found that it was all baseless, and they said that things went through Beira, but I doubt that, too.

19041. And it was the duty of your ships at Lourenço Marques and other ports to look out for these things?—They were constantly employed in boarding and searching every ship. Every cruiser boarded some hundreds of vessels, and very arduous work it was, too. Of course, they were very much handicapped in this way—that the officials in Lourenço Marques, being very friendly, we were most careful not to offend their susceptibilities in any way.

19042. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Did you board foreigners?—Yes; and we used to board the mail steamers until the "Bundesrath" and the "Herzog" cases, when the Admiralty telegraphed out that they were not to be boarded.

19043. Had you any right, under the conditions that existed then, to board foreigners; any absolute right, I mean?—I considered so, on the high seas.

19044. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You had to pay some compensation, had you not?—We had to pay £25,000, I think, for the "Herzog" and "Bundesrath." I may tell the Commission that the information on which the "Bundesrath" and "Herzog" were captured was exceedingly good. We had information from a Dutchman, who was supposed to be loyal, that there were 7,000 saddles on board the "Bundesrath," and they were very much contraband of war, but they could not be found. In the other case we had information that guns were stowed away in the bunkers, but they could not be found either.

19045. (*Chairman.*) You say, also, in your *précis*, that gold was seized?—Yes, a good deal of gold was going out the whole time through Lourenço Marques, and we could have captured it easily, but it was decided by the Government not to make it contraband of war.

19046. That would be gold exported?—Yes. We also

seized specie. We seized about £25,000 or £26,000 worth of Kruger sovereigns out of the "Avondale Castle." I may say that the Castle Company then were absolutely blameless in regard to their part of the transaction; they had permission from someone in Natal to ship it. These were 26,000 Kruger sovereigns that were being taken round to Lourenço Marques, where the coin is not in circulation, for the use, no doubt, of the Boers. After it was on board information about it was telegraphed to me. I telegraphed immediately to Lourenço Marques, to one of my cruisers there, and they stopped the ship before she got into the three-mile limit; they sent the ship back to Durban, where we took the money out, so that the money never did reach the Boers.

19047. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point that you wish to mention?—I think not; I think I have dealt very fully with most of the points.

19048. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have heard a good deal of the advantages that there would be in keeping a large portion of our Army in South Africa. From your own experience, would you say that we could find transports on the spot, as a rule, to take them to other parts of the world in case of a sudden outbreak of war?—Not immediately.

19049. I mean immediately?—Not immediately.

19050. We should have, probably, to send transports out from England, should we not?—I think we should. From what I know of the trade of Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, I think you could lay hands on half a dozen steamers at once.

19051. But not enough for one or two Army Corps?—And they would be very poor things as a rule. It is not every steamer that is fitted for carrying troops; probably you could get hold of two or three good mail steamers and three or four more vessels, but I think that the bulk of the transports would have to come from England, or be sent from India or some other place.

19052. They would have to come from outside?—Yes.

19053. We are frequently having small expeditions in different parts of the world near the sea coast. There is always a difficulty in sending troops, because of dislocating the linked battalion system. Do you not think that if we were to increase the Marines it would be possible to use them more than we have done in the past?—Yes, I think so. I do not know whether you would get enough of them; I fancy it is rather difficult to fill the corps up at present.

19054. They are capital troops?—Yes; they are capital fellows.

19055. And they could easily be landed from the ships; they are in the ships ready?—Yes, they are always available.

19056. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) With regard to the guns that were landed by you in Natal and at the Cape, of course you had reports about them?—Yes.

19057. Were those guns, so far as you could judge from the reports, efficient as guns of position on all occasions, so far as you heard?—All the reports that reached me in the earlier part of the time were that the guns that were first landed were most satisfactory. Later on the guns were shot out, and had to be replaced—a good many of them.

19058. Did you replace many of them?—Yes; the guns were constantly being replaced. As a matter of fact, some of the guns that were first sent were not new guns; they were guns taken out of the ships, which had fired 200 or 300 rounds before they got there, and 300 or 400 more rounds made the guns practically smooth bore. The full charges of cordite wear out the rifling so rapidly that you cannot expect accuracy after 550 rounds, and it gets more and more inaccurate till it gets to 700 rounds, when they have to go into store again.

19059. Were you able to replace those guns at once?—Yes, by taking them either from ships or from store. The moment there was a complaint about a gun I had it sent back to Durban and a new gun sent in its place.

19060. We have had some evidence about the 4.7 gun in Ladysmith, to the effect that the firing was very erratic, to say nothing else of it; in fact, a rather condemnatory report of the practice as shown by the seamen gunners there. Did you hear anything about that?—No; I always heard that the reports had

been regarded as satisfactory. I conclude that towards the end of the siege the guns were getting a bit worn.

19061. And also that, at those excessive ranges, they were hardly fair on the guns?—I do not think the way the guns were used was at all fair. They were all expected to fire up to 7,000 yards and 8,000 yards, and the range the guns shoot well at is up to 4,500.

19062. They were used beyond their normal power?—My own private naval opinion is that to use the guns effectively they should be used at 5,000 yards, and not more, if you want to get good useful practice out of them.

19063. And there were other conditions, also, that affected accurate shooting, were there not?—There is no doubt that at the beginning of the war the very rarified air out there did affect the guns considerably; the guns were over-sighted, and the fuses were long, and burnt very much slower or quicker, I am not sure which. At any rate, they had to make considerable alterations to make them burst properly. I think they had to shorten the fuse a bit.

19064. Your Naval 12-pounders have fuses with a much longer range than the Army field gun?—Yes, they have, much longer. I think the Army field gun did not burst shrapnel beyond 2,500 yards originally, but they have increased it now.

19065. You did not hear anything about the effect of the ammunition used; that is to say, the difference between, say, common shell and shrapnel shell?—Yes; I made very careful inquiries as to that, and I think it varied according to the nature of the ground. If you were firing against rock, lyddite was very effective; if you were firing against ground not so hard, it was better to use common shell with a powerful burster, and against the Boers in trenches it was better to use shrapnel. I saw some of the Boer prisoners who came down after they had been damaged by lyddite, and they were very curiously coloured; three or four of them were yellow and green and all sorts of colours from the lyddite.

19066. Would you not think it absurd if you were told that a seaman gunner on a fixed platform, at a fixed object, could not make an accurate shot?—It would be absurd. When our men came back I asked them about it, and they said that the shooting on shore was child's play compared with the shooting afloat. The object does not move, and you have your own time, and can do what you like.

19067. The guns were all fitted with telescopic sights?—After the first guns they all had telescopic sights; we fitted them temporarily at once there.

19068. With regard to transports, were you satisfied with the way they were worked generally, from a naval point of view?—In the case of all that came under my supervision at Cape Town and the other ports, I think the Transport Department was very well worked indeed.

19069. There was a great accumulation of stores at various places, which could not be helped?—Yes. Cape Town Docks is a most awful place. Things are hung up there for months very often.

19070. But that could not be helped?—No. And the confusion, of course, was tremendous, owing to the war, all through the Colony. I may say, for instance, that I sent a truckload of 150 lyddite shells to Lord Methuen, which was absolutely lost for three weeks. He could not find it, and wanted to know where it was, and I telegraphed to say that I sent it. That shows that things were in a very confused state when you lose a truckload of lyddite shell.

19071. (Sir John Jackson.) I think you told us that you had no instructions as regards any preparations until immediately preceding the declaration of war?—That is so. I may add that the Admiralty were pretty well aware that affairs were critical, because the orders given to me were that I was not to be absent from the Cape later than September. I was on an East Coast cruise when I got this information on the way up, and my orders were that I was to be back at the Cape in September.

19072. So that, although you had not actually had instructions to prepare, you had had instructions to be ready?—I had, at any rate, a very good hint to be ready.

19073. Were there many facilities for dry-docking naval ships at Simon's Town in your time?—No; there was a small slip at Simon's Town, which would haul up a gunboat up to about 1,200 tons.

19074. Then, when you required to dock one of the big ships, where had you to take it?—It had to go to Cape Town.

19075. Are there any dry docks at any of the other ports in South Africa?—No. I think they have a dock or slip at East London, I am not sure which, but not an important one.

19076. Not sufficiently large for a line of battleships?—No.

19077. Now, with regard to the transport and the difficulties that occurred in connection with it at Cape Town, would it have been practicable to have landed part of those materials at Simon's Town and to have taken them by railway from Simon's Town?—Yes, it would; but the facilities for landing stores at Simon's Town in any quantity are very poor. It is very much easier to clear a ship alongside Cape Town Docks than at an anchorage at Simon's Town.

19078. But assuming that they could have got ashore at Simons Town, you do not see any reason why they should not have been carried along the railway from Simons Town to Cape Town?—No, it could have been done so, but it would have been a very awkward proceeding. At Simons Town you have to land them at the dockyard or at the town pier, and then take them by road to the railway. They do not go straight into the truck.

19079. (Sir John Edge.) Do you find that there is any element of error in the shooting of a naval gun; in the gun itself?—No; I think that, as a rule, our guns are very accurate indeed; sometimes the sighting may be a little wrong, but it is generally put right.

19080. Assuming the sighting to be right, you do not find any element of error?—No, the guns are very accurate indeed; the powder charge varies sometimes; the cordite has the peculiarity of increasing its strength and pressure in very hot weather, which has to be allowed for.

19081. Is it within your experience, I mean, that a shot fired from one of these naval guns within the normal range may fall 200 yards short without fault on the part of the firer?—No, not at all. As long as the bore of the gun is good, I consider that the guns are very accurate indeed.

19082. How about the difference in power of the cordite itself?—The cordite gets a good deal stronger in hot weather, and in cold weather it gets weaker. I think it burns with much more rapidity with a temperature over 80 degrees.

19083. With a new gun would there be any difference in the firing within the normal range of one of the naval guns with cordite in hot weather?—Certainly, at long ranges there would be a difference.

19084. Would it be liable to shoot over?—It would be liable to shoot over if the weather was hot and dry.

19085. And in cold weather?—It would be liable to shoot rather short.

19086. (Sir Frederick Darley.) After the declaration of war, do you think that the Boers got much ammunition through Lourenço Marques?—Not a very great quantity, I fancy, but it was going through, no doubt. That was eventually stopped altogether, because the Government found that it was impossible to make quite certain of the vessels being searched at sea, and also that the Customs at Lourenço Marques were not quite trustworthy. We sent a very efficient man there, Commander FitzCrowe, who was given very large powers, and was able to buy up nearly everything, I fancy. He got complete touch of things, and after he arrived there I think very few things went up.

19087. Do you think they got many guns after the declaration of war?—No, they might have got one or two through, perhaps, in the first part, but not later, and no very big ones either. The guns that went through were probably pom-poms, or something of that kind.

19088. Then in point of fact the bulk of the ammunition that they had and the guns that they had were all there before the declaration of war?—Yes, they were very well stocked indeed; there is not the least doubt about that.

19089. (Chairman.) Had you control over the transport service?—As a matter of fact, as Commander-in-Chief, of course, I had, but the officers in charge were so very competent, and my own work was so very great, that I was glad to let them have as free a hand as possible. Occasionally I moved a ship about when necessary, or I took one for my own purposes, but, as

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- a matter of fact, Sir Edward Chichester controlled the whole thing at Cape Town, and very well indeed, too.
19090. You were conversant of everything?—Yes, I was in touch with him by wire or telephone the whole time.
19091. And you think it was all very well carried out?—I think it was all very well carried out, indeed.
19092. Do you think that the system under which transport is done by the Admiralty is a desirable system?—Yes, so far as I saw it at the Cape it was very well done indeed, and I think it is a desirable system.
19093. There has been some criticism as to delays, but I suppose that is inevitable?—Yes. I think the way in which the troops were brought out and the safety of the transports was wonderful, considering the many hundred troops that they took; only one transport was lost, and that got ashore.
19094. But there were cases of ships on which demurrage had to be paid?—Yes, there were one or two cases I know; one or two rather inferior vessels were taken on at one time, but they were quite the exception. The majority of the ships that they came in were very fine ships, and very well fitted for the work.
19095. We have had evidence with regard to some of the ships that they were kept purposely in consequence of the representations of Sir Redvers Buller; were you cognisant of that?—I was not. I allowed Sir Edward Chichester a very free hand in that matter, and I did not detail to him what ships he should lay up, and what ships he should send down. I had not time to do it.

Rear-Admiral the Hon. HEDWORTH LAMBTON, C.V.O., C.B., A.D.C., called and examined.

- Rear-Admiral the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, C.V.O., C.B., A.D.C.*
19096. (Chairman.) We have had evidence from Admiral Harris just now with regard to the steps that were taken for sending up officers from the Navy in South Africa, and I do not think we need take you through that in detail. Perhaps you would tell us shortly the steps that were taken with regard to the detachments which you went up to command at Ladysmith?—Do you mean before we got there, or after?
19097. I mean before, in the first instance?—I have made out just a short précis: "September 24th, 'Powerful' left Singapore; October 3rd, arrived Mauritius; war rumours serious; bought up all available khaki; found half battalion Yorkshire Light Infantry; suggested taking them to South Africa. War Office approved. October 10th arrived Durban; ordered to Cape Town. October 13th, arrived Cape; disembarked troops. October 17th, 'Powerful's' marines and one 8-pounder and crew landed under command of Commander Ethelston"—that was for the other Naval Brigade.
19098. That went to Stormberg?—That went to Stormberg. "October 26th, 'Powerful' left Simons Town about midnight with two spare 4.7 guns belonging to third-class cruiser 'Philomel'"—they were taken out of the dockyard—"with fittings designed by Captain Percy Scott, of H.M.S. 'Terrible.' October 29th, arrived Durban; disembarked with Naval Brigade, consisting of 283 officers and men, and started about 7 p.m. for Ladysmith"; we had two special trains waiting for us. "October 30th, arrived Ladysmith about 9.30 a.m., and found battle of Lombard's Kop in progress. No instructions had been left as to disposal of Naval Brigade, so, having borrowed a horse, I accompanied Colonel (now Sir Edward) Ward to Observation Hill, and after an interview with Colonel (now Sir William) Knox, R.A., who had been left in charge of Ladysmith, at his suggestion I took the three long 12-pounders, with a company of bluejackets, to a position to the left of Limit Hill. I should have mentioned that whilst my brigade was detraining, Long Tom (96-pounder), on Pepworth Hill, commenced shelling the train, but no damage was received. On arrival at position indicated, but before the guns were unlimbered, an officer of the Devons came to me from Limit Hill and said I had better turn back, as a general retirement was ordered. As this was evidently in full swing there was nothing to be done but to slowly retrace our steps along the New-castle road. The long teams of oxen laboriously dragging our guns afforded a tempting mark to Long Tom, and, after some good shooting, he succeeded in pitching a shell under the leading gun, upsetting it, and seriously wounding all the three men in charge of it" (they only have three men, these 12-pounder guns), "the oxen and Kaffir drivers bolting into the town. Took up a position with other two guns on slope, and commenced duel with Long Tom, which, after some most brilliant shooting by Mr. (now Lieut.) Sims, gunner, ceased firing for the day (this was about 1 p.m.). Sir George White personally warmly thanked me for the timely assistance so unexpectedly afforded him." That is up to the arrival at Ladysmith, which is what you want.
19099. What exactly was the force you took up?—283 officers and men. We had two 4.7 and three long 12-pound 12-cwt. guns, one short naval gun, one 8-cwt. and 4 Maxims, 270 men and 13 officers, including midshipmen.
19100. After that you took part in the general defence of Ladysmith?—Yes.
19101. Have you anything to say with regard to the dispositions in regard to the Navy?—I suppose you all know that there was rather a state of depression and gloom in Ladysmith after the battle generally called "Mournful Monday," which arose entirely in this way. Of course, they had had some rather nasty knocks before; they had been shelled out of Dundee, leaving their wounded there, including General Penn Symons, and they had also lost about 800 men on "Mournful Monday," so that there was a general feeling of depression amongst the troops from the General downwards. Ladysmith was looked on as a second Sedan. I do not know whether anybody here has been to Ladysmith.
19102. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Yes?—Then you know what it is like. I have here a raised plan constructed by Major Mahon, R.A., who was at Ladysmith (*producing the same*). Ladysmith is very low lying, and these mountains, Pepworth and Surprise, were rather higher than they are on that plan, and with Bulwana and Lombard's Kop dominated the town completely, and there were no defences of any sort or kind to start with. What really caused the depression was the extraordinary ignorance of the power of Long Tom. So far as I can make out there was hardly a single soldier who had ever seen a big gun, and the exaggerated apprehension of this gun was really very marked. I have brought here a caricature book which was got up to relieve the tedium of the siege, which shows the feelings very well; it is rather an interesting book, got up by one of Sir George White's aides-de-camp, showing the difference between the first shell and the last shell (*handing in the book*). Why I produce this is because it is important from my point of view to explain what was the cause of that feeling. Between the feelings as depicted between the first picture and the last picture there was gradual change, of course, but in the first few days I think the majority of the people thought they were like rats in a trap, and that there was nothing to do but to "die in the last ditch."
19103. Owing to the long range fire?—Owing to their ignorance of it; that is the only word for it. Well, I may say that this feeling was not shared by the Naval Brigade. We have been brought up with big guns all our lives, and, as Sir John Hopkins will tell you, we look upon those guns for modern ships as really rather small—hardly a big gun at all. I saw Sir George White the following day, and I assured him I was absolutely certain from my knowledge of these things that there was no danger whatever of the town being taken except by assault; and I have here a private letter which I got after the siege from a very distinguished military officer, which confirms what I have said, as you will see by the expressions used (*handing in the same*). I must apologise for bringing this personal matter about myself in, but as the siege wore on I dare say a great many people rather forgot what their original feelings were, and in justice to my brigade it is only fair that I should point out what the position was, as my officers and men were the people who had at first to bear the whole brunt of the bombardment. For some years past the War Office had abolished all forms of shell excepting time shrapnel for the field artillery, so that the result was that those officers—and probably a more gallant lot of officers never existed—had never seen any guns fire at positions at all. I believe I am correct in saying that in those days certainly it was no part of an infantry or

cavalry officer's professional duty to know, even theoretically, anything about big artillery, and I am not certain whether that does not remain the same to this day.

19104. Then you think that the effect of the Boer long range guns was exaggerated?—Considering their small number. I say it is astonishing that anybody could suppose that these few guns could do more than kill a certain number of people, which is all they did, of course.

19105. And did they do very much material damage?—Every now and then there was something terrible. On one or two occasions one shell would kill seven or eight straight off, but, as a rule, it has always been the case in warfare that shells frighten people more than damage them.

19106. But we have had some evidence with regard to these guns of the Boers that they used them for such very long ranges that the effect of the shells was minimised altogether?—I do not know who could have given you that evidence. In what way do you mean, because if a shell bursts once it bursts, and it makes no difference whatever whether it comes five miles.

19107. I understand that the depression to get the long range made the shell drop so vertically that it did not burst with the same effect?—Very often the shells from "Long Tom" did not burst at all.

19108. (Sir Frederick Darley.) And if it does burst it goes so far into the ground, coming down from a great height vertically, that it has no effect; it simply blows up?—Well the ground in Ladysmith was tremendously hard, and they did not penetrate much; but shell fire—at least those small things like 6in.—never has done much damage. Why should it? It has only a small bursting charge. If you do get it into the gun it is another thing. For instance, my lieutenant, Egerton, was killed on the second day by a plump shot into the embrasure of our gun.

19109. (Chairman.) Of course that may happen?—Yes.

19110. Did it often happen?—That was the only time I am thankful to say. It was the only time they got into our embrasures, that is with a Long Tom.

19111. And the range that you had to fire in order to compete with the Long Toms was also rather a long range for your guns, was it not?—Up to that time I presume it was by far the longest range that people had ever fought at.

19112. Did it diminish the effect of your fire?—It made it much harder to hit of course, the range varying from four to five miles. I do not know whether you know what the Long Toms were like. They ran up—they were disappearing guns; they had every advantage; they ran up to fire, and if we fired they disappeared. During the first part of the siege I attempted to keep their fire down by firing as soon as the smoke of their guns was visible. But I must explain to you that our projectiles having a lower trajectory used to be about two seconds quicker than theirs, so that with the gun laid on Long Tom, if, as soon as we saw their smoke, we fired instantaneously, we probably lost half a second, but we got in always a second and a half before they did, which was very distracting of course to the Boer gunners.

19113. Do you think that the practice made was good?—I do not think anything about it. I am quite certain; it was brilliant in the extreme—shot after shot. On the second or third day of the bombardment, after a short time, a very good shot was put into the embrasure of Long Tom on Pepworth Hill, and they hoisted the white flag, which I immediately respected, but after twenty minutes or so they began firing again. I wrote an official letter to Sir George White, requesting him to communicate with General Joubert, and claim the gun, as hoisting the white flag at one battery whilst firing from other batteries was still continuing meant that that gun had surrendered. I did not quite anticipate that he would do it, and I do not think he did, but it rather cheered people to know that these things were going on. In fact, it was only our scarcity of ammunition that prevented our keeping their fire down altogether.

19114. You had some difficulties about that?—It must be remembered that when Admiral Harris sent us away from the Cape we had 300 rounds for each big gun, and of course it entered nobody's head in those days that Ladysmith was going to be invested, and there was no idea of the guns being cut off from their base. After "Mournful Monday" I telegraphed at once to send up

every available round they had at Durban, but the railway was cut before it could come up.

19115. Was that the amount you had—300 rounds?—300 rounds for each big gun.

19116. So that you had to husband it all through the siege?—Yes; which siege of course was of unknown duration.

19117. What did you do to bring that about; did you lay down rules for the gun firing?—The first day after we arrived there in Army Orders I was put directly under Sir George White; that is to say, the Naval Brigade received their orders direct from the General Officer Commanding, Sir George himself, of course. And I may point out that with the exception of General Hunter, I was a long way senior to every other officer at Ladysmith by relative rank. We were always on the most friendly terms with the whole garrison, a most delightful set of people; and I used constantly to be seeing and talking with Sir George White, and we both thoroughly agreed on the principles on which the naval ammunition should be expended. He left it to my discretion entirely, and there was not a single shot fired throughout the siege without my permission.

19118. And you regulated it according to the circumstances of the day?—Yes, to the daily circumstances; that is to say, after the first two or three days. At the very beginning, before one had quite realised that we were likely to be there for some time, we fired round for round. On November 2nd, which was the day Lieutenant Egerton was killed, we fired 40 rounds; I am only talking of the big guns; the 12-pounders were no use at those very long ranges—or very little use—except on the very first day; but I am talking of the 4·7, the main guns. On November 2nd I say we fired 40 rounds, on the 3rd 20 rounds, on the 7th 36 rounds, on the 8th five rounds, and on the 9th 39 rounds. There was a regular attack on the 9th on the town; it was the Prince of Wales' birthday, and with Sir George White I had arranged overnight, according to our naval custom, for a royal salute at noon, a shotted salute, an interesting thing to fire. Only four out of those 21 shots were fired from the 4·7; the remaining 17 from the 12-pounders, and with very great success. It cheered the whole of our camp enormously, and irritated the Boers extremely, which was a pleasant thing to do. I should like to point out, if it has not already been done, the great difficulties that my men had in fighting these guns compared with ordinary guns.

19119. If you please?—I do not know whether any of you have seen pictures of the guns, but I have brought a book here which shows them pretty well, and a magnifying-glass (*producing and explaining the same*). The chief difficulty we had to contend against was the alteration in the power of the cordite, the changes of temperature were enormous; it was constantly well over 100 degrees in the shade, and thermometers were so scarce in the town that I did not like putting mine out in the sun, because it might have burst, and I do not know what it would have run up to, and at night it was always cool.

19120. And that affected the cordite?—It affected the cordite tremendously. Between the early morning and the middle of the day, in the extreme heat, the range used to vary 500 or 600 yards, so that you may say that although the distance between any two fixed guns naturally always remained the same exactly, the range was invariably inconstant—it was never the same. It changed day by day and hour by hour. Lieut. Halsey, who fired most of the rounds, was up at Cove Redoubt. He was a very good rifle shot, and that gun fired about 420 rounds, of which he himself at least fired 400. I have a long paper from him here, which I can put in if you like, which he sent to me a day or two ago, or I can read extracts from it.

19121. Will you give us anything that is material?—He is now Commander Halsey of the "Good Hope." I will read some extracts: "It was found that the ranges varied very considerably with the atmospheric conditions, and in one single day a difference of as much as 600 yards has been used when firing at a mark 9,000 yards away with equally good results. As to the results of the naval guns' shooting, it is hard to say what actual damage was done, but there is little doubt that the 4·7 at Junction Hill damaged the 6-in. on Pepworth Hill. Reports from the Manchester Regiment camp on the east end of Caesar's Camp were continually received, and on several occasions they reported actual hits, and further, that they could see stretchers being carried along as the results of these shots." There is a good

Rear-
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A.D.C.

17 Mar. 1903.

Rear-
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A.D.C.

17 Mar. 1903.

deal more here, talking about different hits, but I do not know whether you require to have it or not.

19122. Generally, I understand they bear out your statement that the practice was good?—The practice was good. I was astonished at it. I was very much pleased, and I am not a person who is very easily pleased either. If there were any possible doubt in anybody's mind about the shooting of the guns, supposing there were any such thing as envy there, it should have been completely extinguished on December 8th, 1899. On the night of the 7th of December, as everybody here is probably aware, there was a brilliant sortie conducted by Sir Archibald Hunter, with a force composed of Colonials and Imperial Light Horse, which resulted in the capture of a gun on what was called Gun Hill, or Lombard's Kop, and a letter was found in a tent along the kopje by Major Karri Davies, who was in command of the Imperial Light Horse, and in the evening he sent me this translation—I will read the material parts. The letter is headed: "Ladysmith, Natal December 7th, 1899. Mrs. P. J. Groenewald.—Dear Sister, . . . It is one month and seven days since we surrounded Ladysmith, and still don't know what will happen. We see the English walking about all over the town every day, which we are bombarding with our cannon, but it would be very dangerous to attack the town, as they have several sinegas outside the town. They have two of their naval guns close to the town, which give us a very warm time, at times unbearable on account of the excellence (of the guns). I think a good deal of bloodshed will still be caused by their shells before the time comes of their surrendering, as Mr. Englishman fights hard and well, and we burghers are a bit shaky." I think after that letter was received, which was sent up to us, there can be little doubt what the Boers thought, and they really were the best judges as to whether our guns were doing any damage. I have a great contempt myself for small guns, and we would not allow a gun under 4·7 on to a first-class cruiser or a second class cruiser, but considering their size, I think their performance was marvellous.

19123. Your positions, too, were inferior to those of the Boers?—Yes, because they had every advantage. They could see the effect of all their shell, as they were firing down, whilst we were always firing up hill; we could see what was short, but if the shell went over it was impossible to tell how far it went over. And the Boers had unlimited ammunition against our extremely limited ammunition, and of course the first shot every day of ours was invariably only a sighting shot. It must be remembered, too, that probably the people who saw most of the shooting were the war correspondents. They had nothing else to do; they used to go and sit on the kopjes with telescopes and look at the firing. Other people, of course, had their business; for instance, Sir George White and General Hunter and the Staff, after the first month, all moved to a position behind Convent Hill, from which they could neither see nor be seen from either Bulwana, Pepworth Hill, or Gun Hill. They had had a shell into their own headquarters, so that it was necessary for them to go away; the result was that they could not see the shooting. I have mutilated three or four books by cutting out the remarks made by some of these people. When I stood for Parliament I said quite innocently, what was quite true, that the military guns could not go half-way, which was the absolute fact—it was nobody's fault at Ladysmith. I said they were no use, and I suppose it was because I said that that certain people said the naval gun were not any use at all out there. There is one thing to be said; the Boer guns never silenced us, and we constantly silenced them.

See Q. 1467. 19124. (Sir John Hopkins.) In connection with the shooting of the guns I should like to read you some remarks that were made by General Hunter. He was asked "Have you any other remarks to make upon the guns," and his answer was "I think our guns were up to their limit of range, very good. Our gun laying in the Army, judging by comparison, and so on, is infinitely better than the gun laying in the Navy. I know I am treading on very delicate ground when I criticise naval gunnery; but I say, and I know that it will not be contradicted by a great many men who were in Ladysmith, that the naval gunnery—" Then he asked, "Is it within my province to say this here?" And he was told "Yes, I think it is?" He went on, "I ask because what I say will raise a tremendous storm of indignation; but the naval gunnery left everything to be desired. The naval guns were fired from fixed

permanent platforms; there was no motion in the platform to disconcert the gunners, but the practice made with the naval 4·7's was—I do not want to use too harsh a term—well, it was such that I offered to take the girls out of the school to come and serve the guns, and make as good practice. I do not know whether that is not saying a very harsh thing, perhaps. Q. But was that exceptional? A. There were only two of them," and I think it is only fair that we should draw from you all we can to prove or disprove that. Is there any truth in that statement?—None whatever.

19125. Then Sir Frederick Darley asked "May the light have had anything to do with that—the clearness of the atmosphere?" And General Hunter answered, "But this did not extend over one day, it extended over the whole of the siege; they never profited to-day by the experience of yesterday. And they were firing off a fixed platform at a fixed target, not a moving target, as the Boer guns did. Q. At a known range. A. Yes, at a known fixed range. It was the same, probably, for more than a month—the Boer gun was in position in the same place, it never changed"—Of course he shows himself to be an extremely ignorant man. He is a very gallant man, but it is bravery and stupidity combined in his case. He talks about a fixed range when the range was always varying. There were several numbskulls there, and apparently he is one of them, who had not sufficient intelligence to understand that though the distance was always the same the range was always altering. General Hunter is a very young general, and a great friend of mine, at least I thought he was, and a very brilliant man; but I do not suppose he had ever seen a big gun before, and he certainly knew nothing whatever about the shooting—the firing. You cannot make any comparison whatever between military and naval shooting. The military shooting you may say is like a man going out in a duck punt and firing at a flock of duck. They only have time shrapnel; you all know what time shrapnel is; they burst it; they do not try to hit any one object. Our shooting is shooting as a rifle is shot. You cannot compare the two things at all; it is ludicrous; there is no possible comparison. The military never fired at a mark at all; they fire in the air. I am not going to follow his example. I have not a single word to say against the Royal Artillery. Judging from the few opportunities they had, nothing could have been better than their shooting. For instance, in the attack on Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill it was beautiful, but it was only at very short range. They could not go half way to the guns which we had to reply to throughout the siege, and I do not know whether General Hunter is a man of any memory or not, but he did not express those feelings in Ladysmith. I should like, if I may be allowed, to read a few things from people who can be called upon if necessary, which I have cut out from their books. I never met them before, and I saw very little of them, but I should like to read what they say.

19126. If you please?—Because after all they could see it better, and they had nothing else to do, and it is their business and duty to report truthfully on these things. I will commence with Mr. Pearce, the "Daily News" war correspondent. It begins rather oddly: "Killing three men of the Liverpool regiment and wounding eight." That refers to some shot of Long Tom. "This is the most fatal half-hour we have experienced since the siege began, but there was one lucky escape from a shell which burst in the guard tent among four men without hurting any of them. For the depression caused by these serious casualties there is some consolation in the rumour that Long Tom, of Pepworth's, has been knocked out for good and all. At any rate, his last shot into the town was answered effectively by the naval 4·7, which sent a shell straight into Long Tom's embrasure, and he has not spoken or given any sign of life since. Without wearisome iteration it would be impossible to do justice day by day to the good work of the Naval Brigade under Captain Lambton. Without the heavy guns of H.M.S. "Powerful" our state here would be much worse than it is, and everybody in besieged Ladysmith appreciates the bluejackets, who are always cheery, always ready for any duty, and whose good shooting has done much to keep down the fire of Boer artillery." Now, I will take a passage from a gentleman I do not even know by sight, called Macdonald, who wrote rather a good book called "How we kept the Flag Flying." He is an Australian. "Finding the most dreaded of the naval guns silent,

they sought to smother it up with weight of iron, and quite one hundred rounds must have been fired at it, one of the Boer 6-inchers being busy all day, and the scream of its shell splinters flying off the rocky hill had become a characteristic note in the siege of Ladysmith. The day's experience sufficed to show how badly we should have fared without the help of the naval artillery from the "Powerful." To use a current siege phrase we should have been 'blocked out.' I expect he meant knocked out. However, he says "blocked out," so we had better put it in. This next is referring to a little morning amusement we had; it is by the same writer: "Captain Lambton of the 'Powerful,' asked permission to give them a few shells on the morning of the 28th, and as soon as there was enough light to lay a gun on the thorn plot the Navals opened with a swift and sudden storm of metal."

19127. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Is this Macdonald, too?—Yes. "There had been heavy rain during the night; the air was clear, and the moon still luminous, when the crash of our guns brought the people of Ladysmith tumbling out of bed in the fond hope that the relief column, so often in their minds, was at length within their field of vision, for the echo of the few guns rolling, ringing, crashing down the valley made the din of a general engagement. Those at Intombi Spruit, who were close enough to see the result of the fire, saw that it must have been disastrous. They saw one man—the first riser in the Boer camp—walk out into the open, and stretch his arms. He heard our shot, and turned to look at the redoubt above him, then realised that it was coming his way, and tried to dart for shelter. He was too late, and when they saw him last, as the shell burst, he was whirling through the air" (that was from Intombi Spruit; we were always getting stories from Intombi Spruit). "Four shots were fired in about twenty seconds, a proof of what the 'Powerful' guns could do with ammunition plentiful, and then it was all over, and a crowd of Boers were hurriedly saddling up and flying round the shoulder of the mountain. After all it only squared a bloody debt, standing over from the day before. The Liverpools had had so little respite in their exposed position that a few days earlier the Devons took their trenches, on Helpmakaar ridge, nearest to the Bulwana guns. The officers of the regiment were sitting in their traverse on Wednesday morning, when a Dutch shell just cleared the edge, killed Captain Dalziel, who was seated at a camp table, writing a letter home, and wounded nine other officers." That is the thing I referred to earlier; as a rule they did nothing; but sometimes that sort of thing happened. Here is another interesting piece from the same author. I must tell you that I myself, and nearly all my officers, were very weak at the finish; we had 95 per cent. of our people sick at one time or other. Of course, most recovered, but at the end of the siege we had hardly anybody left. I had only Lieutenant Halsey, a gunner and a couple of midshipmen fit for anything, and unfortunately I had a small touch of fever myself, so that I could not go and see anything of these things as I wanted to do. Especially I had wished to examine Bulwana, but this describes Mr. Macdonald's visit. "On the morning after the Volunteers entered Ladysmith our first thought was to determine whether the coveted Long Tom, which had done us so much damage from the crest of Bulwana, had really been taken away, and at the first break of day Alick Macpherson, one of the local guides, led a party of men up its steep sides. We crossed without a challenge the mimosa flats, upon which to venture any time this last four months meant death. Not a Boer was to be seen upon the summit; the position had been hurriedly and completely evacuated. Within fifty yards of the Dutch gun pit, and on the Ladysmith side of the mountain, lay a gruesome relic of hostile occupation in the body of a swarthy Boer, who must have been dead quite three weeks or a month, yet partly sheltered by a thorn bush, had lain there unburied, without his comrades on the top being aware of it." It must have been one of the short shells that caught that poor wretch. "Nearing the top of that hill, upon which our eyes had so long been covetously turned, eagerness to be first overwhelmed every other consideration, and there was a unanimous rush for the redoubt. It was empty; our night bombardment had been futile; the gun—for which Ladysmith would have given much as a relic of war—was gone, and everything else had apparently been left. In

the magazines were 250 rounds of shell, which a few days later we destroyed. The cases of Mauser ammunition must have reached tons in weight. Even their search-light remained, though the engine was missing. The redoubt was less formidable than it looked in the distance. The top wall of earth was 11ft. thick on the crown, enlarging towards the base. It was heavily faced with rough stone, upon which was the mark of many of our naval shells. The 40-pounders had evidently not been heavy enough to do it great damage." Of course, it was nobody's fault. We hit it; that was all we could do—we could not do more than hit it. Now I have an extract from another gentleman, I think Mr. Stuart of the "Morning Post," in a book called "Pictures of War." This refers to when we came into Ladysmith for the first time. "I shall never forget my feeling of pleasure, of unmitigated delight, when I heard the sharp loud smack of the first of the new guns. The shell dropped just short of the parapet, with a slight inclination to the right. The moral effect on the straggling Tommies was immense. In three minutes they were cheerful, hearty soldiers again, whereas before they had carried the aspect of dejected punters after a bad day at Epsom. The second shot overdid the thing slightly, but it was a very pretty shot. The third, I fancy, was fired by the gun that had gone off first, for there was some error that took the shell to the left. 'Long Tom' had already found his enemy, and gave him a couple in reply. I was not able to observe their effect, as they both went over the hill into the town. The fourth naval shot was as neat as anything I ever saw in my life. It did the trick right handsomely, making a big hole in the embrasure, killing and wounding several gunners, and making a mess of the gun carriage." (I do not know who told him it killed the gunners.) "In spite of several invitations to renew the duet, 'Long Tom' announced by his silence that he was closed for alterations and repairs, nor did he reopen until the next morning." The same author, referring to the death of Lieutenant Egerton, said:—"The Navy has lost in him a promising and popular officer. I am told that he bade fair to be one of the finest gunnery officers of his day." (That is quite true.) "But his comrades are men of the same pluck and of little less ability. 'Lady Anne,' the gun of which he was in charge, is now under the care of Lieutenant Hodges, and is making some remarkably pretty practice. Friday opened well with an artillery duel, in which the Boer shooting was nothing like so good as it had been, though the shot that killed Mr. Egerton landed within 4ft. of the muzzle of 'Lady Anne,' a name given to the gun by the sailors, while the soldiers called it 'Weary Willie,' because it does not fire as often as they would wish." I may say that if I had fired as often as I was wanted to do we should have been like Mother Hubbard's cupboard before we had been there ten days. "Captain Lambton follows the naval plan, and he always succeeds in preventing the enemy from watching the effect of his shot. Moreover, it is never desirable to waste ammunition. At one point on Friday afternoon 'Long Tom' was put out of action again. It was impossible to tell what precisely happened, but the gun carriage was struck or else several of the gunners were wounded. A white flag was promptly run up." (That is the same instance I was talking about just now.) "Now in a civilised country that would have indicated the surrender of the gun, but the Boer gunners did not appear to think so, for within 20 minutes they aimed shot at the gun that had already dismantled theirs and might have finally put them out of action but for the signal of surrender."

(Sir John Hopkins.) I should think, Lord Elgin, that would satisfy us all so far as outside opinions go.

(Chairman.) I should think so.

(Witness.) I have a good deal more, but it is all the same sort of thing.

19128. (Chairman.) Will it not be sufficient if you say that you have a number of other extracts that you could give us?—Yes, and I will leave them here for anyone who likes to read them. They are all the same sort of thing. Perhaps I might read one of the earlier ones, or some people might think it was a late invention. "A singular fact about the naval guns deserves mention"—it is the same gentleman, Stuart, I have been reading before—"owing to a variable quality in the cordite it has been found necessary to treat the range as a variable quantity and the charge as a fixed quantity." (Of course, the charge is always a fixed quantity in brass cylinders, and you cannot alter it.) "The Cove Redoubt gun, that is to say, in firing at Bulwana, varied in range according to

Rear-Admiral the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, C.V.O., C.B. A.D.C.

17 Mar. 1903.

Rear-
Admiral
the Hon.
Hedworth
Lambton,
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A.D.C.

17 Mar. 1903.

the weather by as much as 500 yards. In this country it seems that you only get its full value out of cordite in dry weather. A word of high praise is due to the naval gunners, who have been our main tower of defence during the siege. They have watched day and night, they have never shown flurry in their shooting, and they never seem to tire. There can be no doubt that we should have made a better show if we had been able to give them more opportunities, if we had had more 4·7 guns, and more ammunition." Naturally, that is true.

19129. (Sir John Hopkins.) Just one or two questions with regard to the ammunition, now that I am on the gun question. Are you satisfied with your fuses?—Yes; they did not always burst, but the great majority burst.

19130. And with regard to the ammunition, which did you find the most effective? Had you any common shell there?—Yes, we had 300 rounds for each gun—100 common, 100 lyddite, and 100 shrapnel.

19131. Which of the projectiles did you find most efficient as a rule?—It is really impossible for us to say that. Of course, the common shell makes the bigger smoke and explosion, but the probability is, from what I have read of the Boer experiences that the lyddite, even such a small charge as that, was very unpleasant, the fumes were so dreadful.

19132. And with regard to the common shell of the 12-pounders, the same applies to them, I suppose?—They had not any lyddite with the 12-pounders.

19133. Then with the field guns, I fancy they found that the lyddite was not so destructive as they expected?—No; they are so small, you know. You mean what they had at Omdurman. After all, I think the bursting charge of the 4·7 guns is only 6lbs. or 7lbs. at the outside; the explosive power is nothing to speak of.

19134. (Chairman.) Are there any remarks you wish to make about the siege?—I do not think it is necessary, but I should like to say that I had a splendid lot of officers and men under me. I had only one man reported to me for an offence in the whole four months, and he was asleep on sentry—which is rather a remarkable average, I think. I do not think anybody else equalled it, and certainly no one else surpassed it. I should rather like to say a word also in praise of the shooting of the military howitzers; at about 3,000 yards it is beautiful. Of course, when the gun they drove away was taken into position about 5,000 yards off it was beyond their effective range; although they fired at it they could not do much, but as long as it was within their range the shooting of the military howitzers was beautiful.

19135. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Up to what range was that?—Up to about 3,000 yards. I was on that place called Middle Hill, and they were on Wagon Hill. That book with the caricatures gives a picture of one of their shells bursting (showing the same). That gun was too far off; it was out of range from our naval guns; they put it there, no doubt, preparatory to the attack on Cæsar's Camp, and it was a very good thing that it was knocked out. That was very good shooting, and they always shot well. I think also I might mention the extreme use that my engineer officers were there—I do not know whether you have heard of it before—particularly one of them, Mr. Sheen. He fitted up a distilling apparatus in the town, from which thousands of gallons of fresh water were distilled every day until the coal ran short, and no doubt if it had not been for that the losses from enteric, bad as they were, would have been much greater.

19136. (Chairman.) Sir Edward Ward told us about that. You would be in favour of landing a Naval Brigade, then?—It depends on the circumstances so

much. Under circumstances like there were at Ladysmith, certainly.

19137. Do you wish to say anything about the principle on which they should be landed?—I know the Admiralty principle is a very strong one that in a place like the Mediterranean any proposal to land a Naval Brigade should be looked upon with the greatest suspicion. If there is any possibility of attack by a hostile fleet, obviously you should not weaken your ships.

19138. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I do not know whether it is out of my province, I suppose it is rather, but I should like to make one observation, and that is this. It is very often said, "Why should naval officers criticise military officers, when military officers do not criticise them?" The answer is that a great part of our training is military. All young naval officers certainly have a very thorough grounding so far as the handling of a company goes, whilst no military man has any naval training whatever. I would not make these remarks if I was going to make any unfavourable criticism, but I should like to say that after all war is chiefly a matter of common sense, and I should like to pay a tribute to Sir George White for his decision, amongst other things, not to occupy Bulwana. Anybody who looks at that plan, and knows what the Boers are, cannot have the slightest doubt that if he had occupied Bulwana, as some people say he should have done, the force holding it must inevitably have been captured. You see on that map there is a plain between Ladysmith and Bulwana, which was completely covered by the Boer guns, and the troops never could have had any reinforcements of any kind, nothing could have saved them; they would have been attacked on all sides, and must have lost the position. A great many people at the beginning thought that he ought to have held Bulwana. I must tell you, that I think he showed the greatest wisdom in not doing so; what he felt, and what I felt, and what the lot of us felt, was that it did not matter the least bit how long we were in Ladysmith as long as it was not captured; indeed, the longer we were there the better for the general plan of the campaign, because it kept a large portion of the best troops against us, and enabled Lord Roberts to organise his great advance with greater ease. With regard to one other point—perhaps it is treading on delicate ground—as to whether Sir George White ought to have kept the cavalry there or not, I would only say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The cavalry soldiers rendered excellent services in the lines, and we ate their horses.

19139. And the cavalry also were of use in moving about a place with so large a perimeter?—Yes; on the occasion of Wagon Hill. But it is a very impossible cavalry country—it is quite impossible. Those are the only remarks I should like to make.

19140. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Were your men seamen gunners, or were they Marine Artillery?—They were all bluejackets. There were no Marine Artillery in the "Powerful" at all, but we had 95 Marines who had been landed on the other side, on the east side.

19141. Sent to Stormberg?—Yes.

19142. But the men you had at Ladysmith were all bluejackets?—Of all sorts. Bluejackets go through a tremendous training now in gunnery. Out of that party I think I had also something like 70 stokers.

19143. Seamen gunners?—Yes, the bluejackets were nearly all seamen gunners. We had been nearly 2½ years in commission, and as Sir John Hopkins will tell you, a ship is always at her acme then.

19144. (Sir John Hopkins.) She is at her very best?—Yes.

(After a short adjournment.)

Colonel E. E. CARR, C.B., called and examined.

19145. (Chairman.) I think you were in command of the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers during the war?—Yes.

19146. I believe you have prepared a statement?—Yes; I have just drawn out a statement of the line that the battalion took for the three years they were out there.

I landed at Durban on the 23rd November, 1899, in command of the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, arriving at Mooi River on the morning of 24th, and joined the Fusilier (6th) Brigade under Major-General Barton, C.B.

Colonel
R. E. Carr,
C.B.

On the 15th December half my battalion was engaged at the battle of Colenso, under my second in command—viz., Major Young. I was in command of Frere, with headquarters of battalion (four companies), two naval guns, and 100 mounted horse. Together with four companies of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, Major Young's half battalion, covered the 14th and 66th Field Batteries, under Colonel Long, R.H.A.

The half battalion lost 10 killed, 28 wounded, and 6 officers and 39 rank and file taken prisoners by the Boers.

On 21st January, 1900, the battalion left the brigade, and became corps troops to the army under General Sir R. Buller at Spearman's Farm.

Prior to the assault on Vaal Krantz we hauled the naval and field guns to the top of Zwaartz Kop, held the hill during the assault, and brought them down again during the night of 8th and morning of 9th February, after the retirement of the main army.

The battalion took part in the operations from 14th to 27th February, concluding with the battle of Pieter's Hill and relief of Ladysmith. In that action we formed the right flank of the attack, and lost, roughly, 100 killed and wounded, of which 13 were officers.

I went into hospital, wounded, on 28th February, till 10th April, and rejoined the battalion on the 16th April, sailing for Cape Town on the latter date as part of the 10th Division, under General Sir A. Hunter.

On 22nd April we left Cape Town, by train, for Kimberley, and encamped a few miles north of that place, viz., Dromfield.

On 4th May we crossed the Vaal River at Windsorton, south of Warrenton, detached a column from the Division for the relief of Mafeking, fought the enemy at Rooidam, and compelled his evacuation of Fourteen Streams.

On 15th May we marched, via Christiana and Vryburg, to Lichtenburg, and thence to Potchefstroom, arriving 14th June, having covered 350 miles since 4th May. During this time the battalion had marched 60 miles in three consecutive days and 43 miles in 34 consecutive hours.

The 10th Division was now broken up. Towards the end of June we garrisoned Krugersdorp with the Welsh Fusiliers, and placed it in a state of defence.

On 5th October we formed part of General Barton's column operating towards the Hekpoort Valley and Gatzrand Hills. In this trek we fought nearly every day for three weeks, during the last six days with De Wet at Frederikstad. On the 25th October we drove him off, capturing and killing about 100 of his men.

During this trek we had two officers killed and five wounded.

General Barton left us in November, 1900.

From December, 1900, to May, 1901, we were quartered at Johannesburg, and found the outposts for that town. We then left for the Krokodil Valley, holding Krokodil Poort, Nelspruit, Alkmaar, and Elandshoek, also the intervening blockhouses on the Pretoria-Komati Poort railway line.

In October, 1901, I went into hospital at Middelburg, Transvaal, for three weeks.

In November, 1901, 600 of my men were ordered to join a column under Colonel C. McKenzie, who had succeeded Colonel Benson, killed in action.

Our depôt was sent to Middelburg.

In January, 1902, the headquarters and three companies left the column and came into Middelburg, leaving a detachment to form and garrison a new cross-country line of blockhouses.

Our Volunteer company joined us in March, 1900, and left for the Orange River Colony in November, 1900.

Our casualties to 31st December, 1901, i.e., 25 months in the country, were: Killed, wounded, disease, and invalids, 665 of all ranks.

I left South Africa in August, 1902, on the expiration of my command, having been just under three years out of England.

The following are my remarks on the points raised in the memorandum which was sent to me by the Secretary to the Commission:—

Physique.

Excellent at the commencement of the war, as shown by marching and powers of endurance generally. Fair during last year, attributable to younger men arriving from home, length of war, life in blockhouses, and indifferently teeth.

The strongest men improved to near perfection with hard work.

The draft of 150 men, who arrived from India, with between seven and ten years' service, very good.

Morale.

Very good, especially considering the trying conditions of the climate, viz., sun and rain, afterwards intense cold on the march, and limited clothing. Also the hardships inseparable from all campaigns, viz., long marches, no water, and night duty for men already weary. Under fire very good.

Contented grumbling, an excellent safety-valve, indispensable to an army on service, neither out of place nor out of proportion to the occasion.

Intelligence of the Men.

Entrenchments.—Improved considerably as the campaign progressed and when in presence of the enemy with every likelihood of attack. Occasional want of intelligence when attack not imminent in the placing of entrenchments and direction of loopholes.

Intelligence was brought out soon after fighting began, and directly we had to undertake long marches, in the manner in which the men provided for their own comfort. They invariably secured and carried wood themselves, and fires were lighted and tea cooked at the shortest possible notice.

The ordinary trench taught in peace time had to be varied considerably. The ingenuity displayed by the Boers as regards shelter trenches was noticed by all ranks.

Cover.—After the first few occasions under fire the men began to take cover naturally or instinctively. Here or there some few officers and men would expose themselves unnecessarily, and it is often the duty of officers to do so. Much insistence on this subject during training is a work of supererogation. In some cases, when a rapid advance is of moment, it may be better to push on; it is often less costly than a very deliberate advance, and more conducive to success.

Under heavy fire the less said about cover the better.

Future Training.

Officers.—I think the average officer can teach as much as his men can assimilate, at any rate, in theory. In the field he can teach what he finds in books, but from the nature of his training he is rather inclined to think everything must be found in a text-book. When his work or instruction is inspected by a senior he anticipates a sort of adverse examination, and tries to think what the book says on the subject. The strict adherence to detail so necessary on parade should not obtain in the field.

An officer should not be too much supervised when instructing his men; he should be sent from regimental headquarters for at least a week at a time with his transport, tents, rations, etc., and be given a tract of country over which to manoeuvre, and with the knowledge that he may be attacked by night or by day by other companies. His work should be judged by results, and the knowledge acquired by his men tested. It is better for an officer to show originality, even though he makes mistakes, than a slavish adherence to books.

An officer is more ready to take the initiative and accept responsibility on service than in peace. He is less afraid of criticism.

Promotion examinations savour too much of cram, which is soon forgotten.

The system which obtains in a field battery is good, because each subaltern has a small command of his own, and is responsible for it.

On service each company section should be under command of a subaltern officer, because the late war has proved that greater extensions are necessary, and a subaltern cannot control a half company.

Officers must have the opportunity of moving over a country to gain tactical knowledge. The eye can only be trained to appreciate ground in this way. Rapid sketches and reports containing the most important information should be practical rather than elaborate maps, that take up much time, and are only occasionally possible on service.

When given a scheme, officers should be allowed the fullest scope in working it out, and never interfered with till completed.

An opposing force should always be provided and ambushes laid to create initiative on surprise.

Blank ammunition should be freely used.

Tactical exercises should take place continuously throughout the year.

Junior officers should be called upon to draw up schemes and criticise the results.

(At present the British subaltern rather resembles an Englishman on the Continent, who, knowing something of the language, hesitates, chary of making mistakes.)

On the subject of dash, nerve, pluck, and gallantry under fire, no one can teach the British subaltern.

Men.—No effort should be spared to make the men understand, by practical illustrations in fact, that they must exercise their own common sense in the field, and not only their own comfort, but their lives and those of their comrades may depend on this.

The role of infantry as regards attack and defence,

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
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17 Mar. 1903.

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escorts, and the power of the rifle, and the important part that infantry play, if complete success is to be insured, must be attended to.

They should be encouraged also to use their powers of observation, and not depend on an order for everything.

They should be practised in wider extensions than heretofore. This was a great difficulty in South Africa. The idea of every exercise should be thoroughly explained to them before it commences. The absence of a general idea stultifies initiative. When once an attack is entered on many orders are often impossible in the field.

Mistakes should be pointed out after, not during an exercise.

Non-commissioned officers should assume the position of officers and the men that of non-commissioned officers.

They should approach, though they cannot reach the individuality shown by the Boers.

Musketry training should be altered so that marksmen and first-class shots fire only at moving objects. A new system in this direction is absolutely necessary, which would ensure infinitely more interest in musketry; in fact, instruction and recreation would be combined.

The moving objects should include artificial birds and animals in motion. In action a man's shooting often depends on his nerve.

Extensions.—Picked men, selected for intelligence and stamina, should be trained as scouts. They would be most valuable to the officer commanding battalion or company. They should be constantly practised by day and night, and have a special position in their company.

Besides firing at special visible objects, men should be taught to cover a field of fire, between certain points. The order, so often heard, "Do not fire unless you can see your object," is not always good. Had this obtained in the last war we should have used very little ammunition.

Clothing and Equipment.

Puttees.—The "puttee" is a good article of clothing, as it can easily be thrown off when men return from work or marches. Its defect at present is that it takes too long to put on or readjust when once untied.

Trousers.—The trousers should take the form of breeches, but fastening at the ankle.

Gaiters.—The men always disliked the leather gaiter.

Capes.—A general service cap must provide protection against a sun that blisters the face, and shade to enable the men to shoot.

Pouches.—The pouches used at the commencement of the war were not serviceable. Bandoliers are best, but the flaps should prevent ammunition from falling out. Some worn by the drafts from England late in the war did not fulfil this condition.

The rounds a soldier is ordered to carry should be taken in whatever receptacle is decided on. He should not be obliged to fill his pockets or haversack with ammunition.

Boots.—Boots provided in 1900 were not good. The leather and make was most inferior in this very important article of clothing.

Supply of Food.—Transport.

I think regimental transport has a number of advantages. The system means rations, etc., being at hand as soon as practicable. There is more personal interest taken to ensure keeping near the battalion. The animals are better cared for, the personnel, white or native, do their work readily, and the result is beneficial to the battalion. The system is also more elastic, as it allows of regimental arrangements in carrying the most necessary and discarding the doubtful.

Tins of rations should not weigh more than one pound. Men will not carry a tin of six pounds.

The Wallace Spade and Pick

is not desirable. The men hate carrying it, and the tools are therefore lost. It is too light for any serious work. The heavier pick and shovel must be carried for the men when useful digging is necessary.

Ammunition.

The regulations for supply in the field are practical, and work well. The supply from mules, after the primary distribution, is the best.

Mules with an enterprising transport officer and willing drivers can often approach quite near the firing line, more or less under cover.

Every preparation should be made from the base to replenish battalions at once.

There should be no hesitation when more ammunition is asked for. If not at once available from the battalion reserve, it should be supplied from any other reserve battalion.

Arms.

The rifle should be more perfectly tested as to its sighting before issue.

The slide should be so arranged that it cannot slip when once raised; this is secured in some foreign rifles.

I believe in charging the magazine with a clip. The present method is too laborious and slow.

19147. Where did your battalion come from?—From Aldershot.

19148. It was a home battalion?—Yes, we had only been at home for three years.

19149. Had you many reservists in the ranks?—When we sailed we had 456 reservists; we went out 870 strong, and of that 870, 456 were reservists and 313 men were left at home; that is 313 of the battalion were left at home, and 414 were taken out.

19150. Those left at home being young men not fit for service?—Yes, that is either under a year's service or under 19½ years of age; that was the rule then.

19151. What was your experience of the reservists?—They were very good.

19152. Was there any difficulty in getting them to work in with the rest of the battalion?—No, I do not think in the least—none at all.

19153. We are anxious to have your evidence from the regimental side of the question; what do you say as to the physique of your men?—I think that the physique was excellent; of course the rules were stricter perhaps when we started than they were afterwards, and no man unless he had a year's service or was 19½ in age was allowed to go out (it might be 19, but I think it was 19½), and as about half that we took out were reservists, and the other half were all men of a certain age, or a certain amount of service, they were excellent. The combination was as good as it could be, and we never had any difficulty, at any rate, in getting them to go on, although we suffered at first very much from the sun and the long marches after having just come off ship-board; a good many men did drop out at first, but still the best improved, and if there were any weaklings they fell out and disappeared, but there were not many—it was quite the exception.

19154. And later on you got younger men?—Yes, I think perhaps some men who would not have come under the rules for taking out at the time we left; although many were quite good men, they were not quite as good as those we started with.

19155. How did they do?—They did everything that was asked of them; but then the hard fighting and hard marching was over, and their work more consisted of work in the blockhouses. In November, 1901, 600 men went out with the battalion, forming six companies; three companies came back shortly afterwards to build blockhouses, but of the other 300 who stayed out five and a-half months, they returned exactly half their strength after the five and a-half months, that is they went out 300, and they came back 150.

19156. You mean they stayed out on trek?—Yes, they were trekking the whole time; that is, they lost 50 per cent., but those 150 that came back were ready to go anywhere, they could have done anything; I think they could have marched 20 miles a day for a week; I never saw men more fit, and that is why I said in my statement that the fittest attained near perfection—the really hard ones.

19157. And the men from India were good?—Very good; they were all over seven years' service, and I think most of them would probably average eight to 10 years' service.

19158. You mentioned indifferent teeth as one cause of difficulty?—Yes, the men did suffer very much from the teeth, and they had no chance of getting a dentist as the officers had. The officers were allowed to go into Johannesburg, where dentists sprang up and increased from time to time, but it was very difficult for men in blockhouses, with no dentist, to eat the hard biscuit,

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
C.B.
17 Mar. 1903.

because, of course, when they got into a cross-country line of blockhouses where the train did not pass they could not get bread; bread could not be made for them, and all they had was meat and biscuit, and such vegetables as they could get occasionally.

19159. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Was there any particular reason for their teeth getting bad there?—It is supposed to be a bad country for teeth, but I think there are always a certain percentage of men who have bad teeth at home, but they can go into hospital, and perhaps have their teeth attended to or extracted. Out there, however, there was no dentist at hand, and even the officers had some difficulty about it.

19160. (*Chairman.*) And the morale of your men?—The morale was excellent.

19161. All through?—Yes. I do not say that we had no courts-martial and no trouble at all, but it was very slight; it certainly was not greater than it would be at home, and I think a good deal less. I think the harder the work the men had the more cheerfully they did it.

19162. You speak of contented grumbling?—Yes, that is my opinion, of course, that it is a very excellent safety valve. I did not hear it, the Commanding Officer does not hear these things, but as the officers slept with the men, and lived with them day and night, I used to hear from them that the men used to grumble, that they used bad language which they did not look upon as bad language, and grumbled in a mild sort of way, but it never stopped them. I would like to take that instance of pulling the guns up Zwaartz Kop, prior to the assault on Vaal Krantz. It was a most terrible night, and we had to go out after dark; the horses had failed to pull the guns, and the oxen had failed; it began to rain, and it was a frightfully bad road, and very slippery indeed, and when a man tried to haul on to the gun he probably slipped down and got covered with mud, but the men were only laughing at one another, and that is what I mean by saying that the harder the work they had to do the more cheerfully they seemed to do it.

19163. As to the intelligence of the men?—I think the intelligence was very good. I should like to say that I think it is often lost sight of, that we do not recruit from the very highest standard. They are not Senior Wranglers, if I may say so, the class we recruit from, and I often hear grumbling about the men's intelligence, but I think that fact should be borne in mind. I think that considering how they are recruited their intelligence was very good, and some were, of course, excellent. They vary a good deal, and one discovers that in the home training; if you go down the ranks and ask one man a question he will answer it intelligently, and take in what you are driving at, while another will not be able to do so.

19164. It is sometimes put the other way, that looking to the class from which you recruit you cannot expect intelligence?—Well, not a superlative amount of intelligence, I think.

19165. But I rather gather from your evidence that you think you can get a sufficient amount of intelligence to make a good soldier from the recruit you now have?—Well, the difficulty is that when you once come into action there are so many other things besides intelligence that may bear on the question. A man with nerve, dash, and pluck may show to the front without requiring a tremendous lot of intelligence. He knows where he has to go, he has to assault a position, and he has not to use very much intelligence as a rule; he may have, but, as a rule, he has not, and therefore a man, although he has not shown much intelligence when you have been examining him on the barrack square, may show very well to the front in an action, and I think the majority of the men do show sufficient intelligence. I am only trying to get at the fact that I do not think it is right to expect the men to show as much intelligence as if they were more thoroughly educated than they are when they come into the ranks.

19166. But, under the modern conditions of warfare, you do require a man to exercise his own intelligence more perhaps than under former conditions?—Yes, on occasions when men become detached you do require that, because when men are put on detached posts or to act as sentries they have to exercise intelligence, and I think, considering the way the men are recruited, their intelligence is certainly up to the standard you ought to expect.

19167. The present man can be taught to take cover,

and generally to act for himself, you think?—Yes, and I have said so in my statement, but I think I would go so far as to say that the cover of which we hear so much might be cut out of the drill book altogether, because when men come under certainly a heavy fire they take cover instinctively, and if there are any stones about or anything else they will take cover. That has always been my idea, other people seem to think that men ought to be taught a great deal about cover, but my own experience is that I do not think it necessary. I do not say that individuals do not expose themselves occasionally unnecessarily, but you will never stop that.

19168. But there is an intelligent use of cover?—Yes, and I think that may not always be used when there is only an occasional bullet whistling over a man's head, but if you came to really having to cross a plain which is fire swept, as Pieters Hill was with us, men will always take cover if there is cover to be taken.

19169. And use the cover at the same time to facilitate the advance?—Yes, I think so.

19170. You think the men can be taught to do that?—Yes, I think so without any difficulty. I really do not think that cover, as far as instructions with regard to it is concerned, is a difficulty at all.

19171. You found the men did it?—Yes, they did it.

19172. I think you also hold that sometimes it is better to push on?—Yes, I distinctly think so; if you come under a heavy fire where the cover is not very great it is very often better to push on where you can get at your objective, and perhaps get at a ridge, or whatever you are trying to get at, than be continually stopping; and there is this to be said—and I say it without any adverse comment on the soldier—that if the fire is very heavy, and you once got men down, it is easier to get them down than to get them on again. Therefore, as long as you can push on without taking cover until you get to the point you want, where there may be good cover, I think it is a very good thing, and that is what I mean by saying that it is often better to push on than to advance too deliberately.

19173. And the soldier of the present day has the pluck to do that?—Yes, he has, as long as he has got his officers there. Of course I consider that the infantry officers in that way are perfect, that is in regard to leading their men on under heavy fire.

19174. I think you put it in your statement here:—"On the subject of dash, nerve, pluck, and gallantry under fire no one can teach the British subaltern"?—That is my opinion.

19175. What do you say as to the training of the officers?—I think as regards what is so much talked about as to the extra training of an officer, what the officer has a chance of doing he does very well; for instance, so far as discipline and cleanliness, exactness on parade, and the interior economy of the company go, I think the officer does well, but when you come to talk about manoeuvres and field manoeuvres, I think he possibly breaks down because he never has a chance of manoeuvring over a country, at least it is very seldom that he has, and that is why I suggest here that the only way is to get a country to go over, and to send an officer right away with his transport, and with his tents and food, the same as you would do on trek in South Africa, and then let him know he is going to be attacked, and attack him by day or by night, and see what his dispositions are. I think if an officer does not know as much as he ought to know, practically it is not his fault.

19176. You say he will make mistakes?—That is why I think he will make mistakes; he does not get that eye for country which would come from constant practice. Of course it comes quicker with some officers than others.

19177. What I meant was that you would propose that he should be allowed to make the mistakes rather than that you should interrupt his movement?—Yes, and point out the mistakes afterwards.

19178. That is not done at present?—Well, I will not say it is not done, but I do not think it is always done; I think perhaps he is stopped in the middle sometimes. There is an inclination to say at the time, "That is wrong," and, of course, if you take the case of subalterns—captains have more confidence, as they have longer service—when a subaltern is being inspected by a general officer he is not brought up as an orator, he has not much practice in lecturing, and with the inspecting officer standing by and telling him to lecture on a certain subject, he gets nervous, and I think it would be better if he was told to lecture on a thing he

Colonel E. E. Carr, C.B. liked, so as to bring out what he knows rather than what he does not know.

19179. And training of that kind would make him more ready to accept responsibility?—Yes, and nothing came out more distinctly and more satisfactorily than that before we had been certainly a couple of months in South Africa, because we were in action almost at once, and in a few weeks you could trust any subaltern in my battalion to go and throw out a line of outposts. Of course they were inspected afterwards, but they were invariably right—that is towards the Tugela River.

19180. And you instance the system in the artillery?—Yes, and I would go a little farther, if I may. I say it in the case of the subaltern, but it obtains all through the artillery; for instance, when each rank gets a step it is a step worth having, but the infantry major may be doing the same work, or almost the same work, when he has got 25 years' service as he was when he had three years' service. That is not possible in the artillery, and the artillery field officer has a very nice little command, which is a battery. The infantry major may still be commanding his company after a quarter of a century's service. I have nothing to propose as to how you could assimilate the two; I cannot think of any way, but if it could be done I say the artillery service has a tremendous advantage over our service in that way. Each step means something, and it begins with responsibility over a section, that is, two guns and the men belonging to them.

19181. You think each company section ought to be under command of an officer?—I think so, because our experience all through the war in South Africa was that it is absolutely necessary to extend on as wide a front as possible, not only on account of the casualties, but because you have so much more power if you are covering the ground; in fact, it was the Boers' game to cover an enormous amount of ground with a very few men.

19182. (*Sir John Edge.*) You said that each company section should be in command of an officer?—And sometimes it may be a sub-section; a company is divided into four sections, but if a section is very strong it is then divided again.

19183. And you would have four officers to a company?—We have only two subalterns at present.

19184. But you would propose to have four?—Yes, I would have not less than four, and in a close country, where you would not extend so much, one man very often cannot see the man on his right or left, and you can imagine how impossible it is for the section commander to control the whole of the section. As I have said in my statement, we found it a great difficulty in South Africa; the men were not accustomed to these big extensions, and it was very difficult to make them extend. Anything is good there up to 20 paces; they were extended to about three in peace training.

19185. (*Chairman.*) They must have the opportunity of moving over a country, and getting practical knowledge?—Yes, I think so. I think all they do they do well as far as they have the opportunity.

19186. As to the training of the men?—I think, my Lord, that the difficulty of field days often is that they are perhaps a great deal of instruction to the higher ranks, but as you go down the instruction becomes less and less unless the training is given to every corps and battalion; what I mean is, that if you go to manœuvres the general sees a great deal and learns a great deal, and the staff and probably the mounted officers and the commanding officers, but those on foot do not learn a great deal probably. The Intelligence officers may pick up something, but as you go down the ranks to the non-commissioned officers and men, they have only to do what they are told, and they see very little, and, therefore, the larger the scale of training the less the lower ranks gain by it. It is very hard to ask a man to exercise intelligence on a big field day on Salisbury Plain or at Aldershot, because really he only has to go straight to his front or to retire or to go to a flank.

19187. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would not most of the purposes of manœuvres be satisfied by very extended staff rides for all officers?—Yes, I think that for officers that would be excellent, and have all smaller manœuvres if you are to bring out the intelligence of the men; that is really what I wanted to say.

19188. (*Chairman.*) Are the men trained to exercise their common sense?—Yes, I think they are, but if they had more field training in their companies or even in

battalion, and also if what I suggested is carried out, that the company went right away, and they were attacked by night, and men were put in the place of non-commissioned officers, and put on detached posts, they would be bound to exercise their common sense, but in big combined manœuvres now they are not bound to, and they do not do it always.

19189. You want to put non-commissioned officers in the position of officers?—Yes, because it happens on service, and, therefore, I think it should be done in peace time; there are casualties among the officers, and the non-commissioned officers have to take their place, and, therefore, why not do it at manœuvres?

19190. Did that happen during the war, in your experience?—Yes, repeatedly—certainly at Pieter's Hill.

19191. How did the non-commissioned officer stand that test?—The non-commissioned officer I think did very well. Of course, the non-commissioned officer is a difficulty, at any rate, in the infantry, and I think if a larger proportion of boys of a good class and of a good family were allowed to be enlisted, with a view to their becoming non-commissioned officers, it might help that difficulty to a certain extent. I made that suggestion some years ago to the Adjutant-General, but, of course, I believe the difficulty is that a boy costs a certain amount, and he cannot take his place in the ranks as a man can; that is to say, he is an expense without being absolutely available to go on any duty. I know that I have had to refuse boys of really a good class when I knew all about their people and parents, because I could not exceed the limit, which I think was 12. I asked that it might be increased to 20, but it is not allowed. I think that the non-commissioned officer is a difficulty in the infantry.

19192. What do you mean by the boys?—We are allowed to enlist a certain number of boys as drummer-boys, tailors, and buglers, but the number is limited. I think that if a commanding officer heard of a boy, and could find out all about his family—a boy that was well brought up, and an intelligent boy, that had been well educated—and he was allowed to take him on with a view to his becoming ultimately a non-commissioned officer, it might help commanding officers in that line eventually.

19193. Do the boys you recruit as drummers now become non-commissioned officers?—Occasionally, but there is no reason why they should be particularly intelligent boys; you can get boys of that class no doubt more readily than you can get men, and that would explain what I mean perhaps. It is difficult sometimes to get a young soldier to take the first stripe, the lance stripe, as it is a very trying position for him, and, of course, they must take the lance stripe before they can go on and become corporals, sergeants, and colour-sergeants.

19194. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are not the best buglers and drummer-boys drawn from the sons of men who have been in the regiment?—Yes, and they are the most contented of all soldiers; their whole idea is soldiering; they have always seen the barrack square, and they are always contented. The most contented of all soldiers are the non-commissioned officers' and soldiers' sons. I think we might get more; they are not entirely soldiers' sons.

19195. (*Chairman.*) You propose some alteration in musketry training?—Yes. What I would suggest with regard to musketry is this: a man becomes a first-class shot or a marksman, and he goes on year after year firing at a fixed target. Now he takes a certain amount of interest in it because he is a good shot, and he goes down to the ranges, but he would take infinitely more interest in it if that was varied. It is no longer necessary for him to fire at a fixed target, and as I saw at the Glasgow Exhibition, men will pay to go and shoot at mechanical contrivances which represent moving rabbits, birds, and so on; a man will pay his twopence a shot to do that, and it would be only the matter of a little money to obtain such mechanical contrivances, and if men that once were good shots at fixed targets were then allowed to fire at these sort of things, it would increase their interest enormously, because if a man will pay to do the thing, he will certainly go down with great pleasure if he can get it for nothing.

19196. (*Sir John Jackson.*) And if he has prizes offered to him, that would be a greater inducement still?—Yes; they do get a certain number of prizes as it is, but I have been for years advocating my idea about that. I have had a great deal to do with musketry, and

I am absolutely convinced that it is not necessary for a man to continue to fire at a fixed target, and that if he once becomes a marksman he would decidedly take a great interest in it if it was varied and was put more under the conditions as they are in the field.

19197. (*Chairman.*) You do not mention how you think the shooting compared with the Boers' shooting?—I have not said a word about that, because I think it is such a very difficult thing to give an opinion upon, it was so very seldom we could see the results of our shooting. We were often firing over a field of fire between two points where we could not see a Boer at all; occasionally a Boer was fired at by an officer, a non-commissioned officer, or a man, and was seen to fall, but except those we actually took killed, wounded, or prisoners, as we did at Frederikstad, when we got 100 of them, I really do not feel equal to saying what the result of our shooting was.

19198. Can you say anything of the result of their shooting?—Yes, of course, I have seen that in every sort of form. I have seen men rolled over like rabbits and slaughtered, as the Inniskilling Fusiliers were at Pieter's Hill on the first attempt, just before the relief of Ladysmith, and I have seen men advancing under ordinary cover, and I think in the ordinary course of events their shooting is good—very good.

19199. It is good all round?—They do not fire unless they are pretty certain you are there; I do not say they always see you; although the difficulty is that we cannot see them and they can see us, they can see us for miles, but we very seldom see them.

19200. Do you mean that their eyesight is better?—They can see our columns advancing; they can see us from the moment we extend, perhaps at 3,000 yards off, and they have only to wait. We come on, and we extend over a plain, we take them by surprise as much as we can, but it is absolutely impossible always to do it. The Boers are able to get out of sight of us much more than we can keep out of sight of them.

19201. Because they were mostly on the defensive?—Yes, they were acting on the defensive, and they knew the country more thoroughly, and they were not infantry, they were always riding, and they have either a natural gift, or by their ordinary training they have the power of keeping out of sight, but that they do keep out of sight is an undoubted fact, and we very often have to advance absolutely over an open plain which they can sweep from end to end with fire. It is known that our advantage over the Boer is that he can neither attack nor counter-attack; the Boer would never think of attacking as we attack in the ordinary course. I do not say that latterly, when the best were left they did not occasionally try to rush a position, but a Boer would no more attack a kopje that we were holding in force than he would fly, nor did he ever counter-attack, as he might often have done with great success.

19202. Some witnesses have said that although there were some very excellent shots among the Boers, the general result was not unfavourable to British shooting?—Do you mean that the British did not shoot well?

19203. No, that the British general result was about as good as the Boers; that would not be your opinion?—I do not say that, but I say it is very, very hard to tell what the result of our fire was, and if I gave an opinion, it would not be worth anything. I say the Boer is a good shot. I do not say he is as good as he was in the Boer war of 1881, when they could all go out with their five rounds, and bring back four springbok, but I think that he makes the most of his shooting, and I do not think he wastes his ammunition much, and I think he was infinitely better placed than we were, as he generally had a target, and we very often had none.

19204. You say that picked men should be trained as scouts?—Yes. I say that because when you come under sudden fire, the Boers are very good at ambushes and at laying traps for you, especially when the guerilla warfare began. They were constantly doing it, and often successfully, and you have not always got mounted infantry or cavalry, and I would therefore propose that the ordinary infantrymen should be trained to scout properly; the ordinary man will scout to a certain extent, but the difficulty is to get him to shove on, and extend, and send back the information that you want. You really want intelligent men for the work of scouting, so that, although the man himself might be bagged, he would prevent anything like a surprise. The scouting, of course, ought to be done by mounted troops, but in a long war like the South African war you occasionally had no mounted troops, and you were placed in all sorts

of positions. I would give the men a certain standing; I would select them, and make it a thing to be coveted. For instance, the football team in a regiment is thought a great deal of, and they have certain indulgences because they are the best men at football, and there is no reason why the same thing should not obtain in the matter of scouts or anything else that provides for the efficiency of the men.

19205. You would teach the men to use the glass or telescope?—Yes, that is where the sailors had an advantage over us. You cannot learn to use a telescope at once, and the use of the telescope was very often a matter of great importance. You could not see where the fire was coming from, as there was no smoke, and it was most difficult to locate how they were placed before us, and I think the sailor had an advantage, as he was accustomed to the telescope and we were not.

19206. As to clothing and equipment?—I have said that I believe in the puttie, and I do believe in it, for the reason that when a man comes in muddy and dirty and tired, he can throw it off at once. I think it requires a little improvement, because if the puttie once becomes undone in the line of march, it means that the man has to fall out, and if he is mounted it is more dangerous still, because it trails behind and gets entangled with the horse's legs, and it takes time to wind it up again. I think the puttie would be better without these long strings, so that the men could throw them off easily. A man always hated the leather gaiter because it kept his legs so hot, and he would never wear it if he could possibly help it.

19207. (*Sir John Edge.*) The puttee supports the muscles better, too?—Yes, and I believe it is a very good thing if you are inclined to varicose veins; something like a puttie is prescribed, in fact, for a man who has enlarged veins, and there is nothing that is a greater support. As far as the trouser goes, it is rather a business to get it over the trouser, but if the trouser was made something in the shape, although not quite, of the breeches you wear when riding, and it was made to fit more closely to the leg down to the ankle, so that a man need not fold his trouser in any way, but would just wrap the puttie round it, I think that would make it much easier, and then when he had thrown it off he would be ready to go out and do anything which was necessary.

19208. (*Chairman.*) What have you to say as to caps?—Of course, my regiment wore Glengarry caps when they were not wearing the helmet, but Glengarries are absolutely useless in the sun. The helmet is all right, but the best caps no doubt were those soft felt ones. I think the best test of a cap is what sporting men wear in tropical countries, when they want to go out shooting, and it is a felt hat—what they call a light hat in India—or a pith helmet; the lighter the better. Some of the helmets we started with were rather heavy; they were not serviceable, and the consequence was that when the men found it was not absolutely necessary to guard against sunstroke they used to throw them overboard.

19209. (*Sir John Edge.*) Is it quite easy to shoot lying down with a helmet on?—I do not think it always is, because it catches you when you put your head back.

19210. When you put your head back the helmet may come over your nose?—Yes. The soft hat was the one they liked best; it was light, and lightness is a tremendous pull to a man, and he can squash it up and lie on it.

19211. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Would you approve of a cap with a flap behind over the neck?—Yes, but not a cap like the Glengarry, which is all right for parade and for everything in England, and it looks right for a Scotch regiment, but it gives no shade to the eye for shooting, and is no protection to the head when the sun is at all hot, and the Natal sun was the strongest I have ever experienced. It would almost blister the backs of your hands, as well as take all the skin off your face, so that it was necessary to have something in the way of a head covering.

19212. (*Chairman.*) Of course it must depend on the climate?—Yes.

19213. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Did you consider the over-sea Colonial caps good—those slouch caps?—Yes.

19214. They give good protection?—Yes, and they were easily doubled up. A man likes to put his hat under his head when he goes to sleep, in fact he does that with his helmet, with the result that it gets rather

Colonel
E. F. Carr,
C.B.

17 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
C. B.
17 Mar. 1903.

squashed. He makes a pillow of it, as he wants all the clothes he has to put over his body; it is so cold, trekking in the cold weather; in fact sometimes the men could not sleep, and they had to get up and run about in the early morning.

19215. (*Chairman.*) The pouches were not satisfactory?—No, they were very unsatisfactory.

19216. And a good deal of ammunition was lost?—Yes, directly the men began to run. I could not state how many rounds were lost, and I reported upon that while I was in South Africa in 1900, and stated that the bandolier was better, as the weight was taken off the stomach and put on the shoulder, and the men would rather have that. It is also much easier in every way. I have also said with reference to those that came out quite late with drafts, that although they had bandoliers they were not satisfactory, because they had a long flap fastened by buttons, and the consequence was that the buttons did not hold the flap, which would lift up, and as the little receptacles got enlarged by being continually used the ammunition came out. They are all right as long as every five rounds has a little flap of its own, but the big pouches they wore, pulling on the stomach, were not good.

19217. How many rounds can a man carry in a bandolier?—I think an ordinary bandolier only takes up to fifty or sixty.

19218. Does not a man carry 150 or 200 rounds?—Yes, he does in these two pouches, but he must carry two bandoliers, and there is no reason why he should not. I think two bandoliers would be much more easily carried than those two pouches filled up, and all pulling on the stomach, which means that a man has to make his belt very tight to hold them, and also they did not carry as much as it was necessary for the men to carry, and we found them putting the ammunition into their pockets and haversacks, which I do not think was satisfactory.

19219. As to boots?—The boots were distinctly bad in 1900, and I reported upon that too. I also said if I did not actually name the firm that I could name it if necessary; they were brown paper, at least they were not very much better, they were very bad indeed.

19220. Were those boots that came from England?—Yes, they were very bad indeed, and it was very much remarked upon, because it is such a very important thing for a soldier to have good boots on, and even with the greatest care, unless you managed to get them replaced from your depôt, after a certain number of weeks some men would be almost walking on the ground with their bare feet.

19221. Were they hand-sewn boots?—I am not certain, but I could easily find that out from my Quartermaster, because he had all the details about that; in fact, he had the names of the firms that supplied them.

19222. How did they come to you?—In the ordinary way through the Army Ordnance Department; they came through the depôts.

19223. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Was it a question of one or more firms?—One firm specially was named, but I think there was more than one.

19224. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) It was the Army pattern, I suppose?—Well, they were in the form of the Army pattern, but they were not the boots we were supplied with at home.

19225. Not up to specification?—Not up to what we used to get at home; it looked as if the contractor had not been behaving quite fairly, and we were suffering for it.

19226. (*Chairman.*) Was that only one consignment?—No, it was more than one to the best of my recollection. I know I wrote that report about August or September, 1900, when we were at Krugersdorp.

19227. (*Sir John Edge.*) It was reported home?—Yes, I answered that in connection with a lot of other questions about the interior economy of the regiment.

19228. (*Chairman.*) You reported to whom?—It went in officially through the General. I do not know to whom it went eventually.

19229. You do not know whether it came home or not?—Well, I take it for granted that it did, because all these questions were on a printed form.

19230. Sent out from home?—Yes, sent out from home. I answered them opposite the questions,

and boots was one of the items. If they were not I put them in myself; but I think they were one of the headings.

19231. Was there any other matter you had to find fault with besides boots?—Well, I have mentioned the sighting of the rifles under the heading of arms; the ammunition pouches were not satisfactory, and the boots that came out were not satisfactory. The boots we started with were very good.

19232. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Had you any opportunity of seeing the over-sea Colonials' boots?—No, I cannot say that I ever did; although I was with the Colonials occasionally, I was not mixed up with them to the extent of noticing any details of their dress.

19233. Do you consider that the ordinary half boot is better than the long boot with soft leather for the legs?—Yes, I think that the short boot is better.

19234. Even when the leather of the leg is soft you think the short boot is better?—I think the short boot is better.

19235. Because some of the Canadians' boots were of that longer kind, and were said to be most serviceable and to wear well, the quality being good?—Yes, and, of course, I had not a chance of seeing those boots that you are referring to. I might have said that they were better if I had seen them, but I have never seen that particular pattern, and I was not sufficiently mixed up with the Colonials to see those little details of their equipment.

19236. I heard that they were preferred by the mounted infantry very much?—Of course, it was absolutely necessary in some parts of the campaign to have something that would protect you against spear grass; the spear grass is a thing which is maddening if you have not a protection, and, of course, a puttee was a sufficient protection for that. If you had not been wearing the puttee it would have been necessary to have something up your leg to protect you against spear grass, because it irritates you to the point of distraction.

19237. How long would a pair of those inferior boots you have referred to last?—I do not believe that in hard work, with the rough ground that we very often had, they would last a fortnight. I am not speaking exactly by the book, but from what my Quartermaster told me of the boots that were returned by the men as not serviceable, and they had them a very short time indeed.

19238. I have seen some of the Colonial boots that had been in use for six months altogether on the march in hard work, and they were still good?—Had they been marching or riding?

19239. Well, they were mounted infantry, but they had a good deal of marching?—Of course you see the ordinary regular infantry man is entirely on his feet, and his boots never get a chance.

19240. (*Chairman.*) As to supplies, you would prefer regimental transport?—Yes, that is my experience; we had it in Natal all the time, and it worked excellently. We had a very enterprising young officer, and whenever we wanted anything, as long as we could get the helio on to him we knew we should have anything he could bring us, whether it was ammunition, food, clothing, or anything else. That is why I believe in the regimental supply, because you can regulate what shall be carried and what shall not be carried. For instance, on one occasion we were allowed so much; we had one wagon per company, which carried a certain quantity, and I think one more wagon, and the General said, "The officers are allowed 35lbs., but I think they could do with much less, say 15lbs. or 20lbs., and then we could carry the men's great coats. As long as the transport is regimental you can regulate things in that way as much as you like by leaving behind what you like and taking on what you think more important."

19241. Was the officer in charge one of the ordinary regimental officers?—Yes, he was one of my subalterns.

19242. Did you ever have a call upon your transport to form part of the general transport? Was it taken away from you?—No, not in Natal, and I do not think it was ever taken away from us afterwards; I cannot recollect that it was ever done. I know that in Lord Roberts's Army the other system was in force, which was not regimental, and there may be advantages in it that I know nothing of, but I know the advantages of the regimental

system, and I know that on one occasion, when under a very hot fire, a message was sent back that we wanted more ammunition. The officer I have referred to was a long way off. The man had a very difficult way to go, and he had not any ammunition, but he took some mules from the nearest battalion to him, in fact he stole them, and he brought those mules up and replenished our ammunition pouches under the most difficult conditions. It was down a river bed covered with boulders, and up a tremendous slope at an angle of about 45 degrees, and if we had not had the regimental system then I do not think we should have got the ammunition as quickly.

19243. We can see the advantage of that, but supposing it might be necessary to use the regimental transport for the general work, what would happen to the officer in control of the transport? Would he leave you and go with the transport, or would you keep him back?—Well, it would probably be in brigade; it would be under the orders of the brigadier, although it would be regimental, and he would say where the transport was to move, and the officer would move either behind his battalion, or, if you were just coming into action, perhaps the whole of the brigade baggage or transport would be massed together and be right in the rear. It would depend a good deal on the kind of march you anticipated.

19244. That is when it still remained regimental, but supposing it became non-regimental for a time, as circumstances must arise under which it becomes non-regimental, would your regimental officer then leave his transport?—He would still be employed with the transport, but he would be under somebody else's orders other than the regiment; that is what I think it would mean.

19245. Has the officer in charge of the regimental transport no ordinary duties in the regiment?—Yes, he is exactly the same as any other subaltern; in fact, what he has to learn is his duty as transport officer. He knows the other duties, and with the experience of working we had, and the amount of transport that came into requisition in South Africa, an intelligent officer picked it up very quickly—the ways of the mules and the ways of the natives.

19246. Did you find you were often given tinned meat in tins of 6lbs. weight?—I have said 6lbs., and I think I am right, but I am not absolutely certain; certainly they were so large that the men would not carry them—they may have been 4lbs.

19247. Was that in Natal?—Yes. I do not say that afterwards, when they got more knowing and knew what it was to be hungry at the end of a long march, they would not have carried them, but they had not felt the pinch of hunger at that time—we had always been very well fed up to the relief of Ladysmith—and they threw them away. Of course, they suffered for it afterwards. A man is only asked to carry it for a short time, and then it would go to the next man of a section.

19248. Some witnesses have said that the tinned meat made the men extremely thirsty?—Yes, it is rather salt, and sometimes it seemed saltier than at others.

19249. (Lord Strathecona and Mount Royal.) I think it has been said that the larger-sized tins—6lbs. or 7lbs.—were issued only when the smaller ones could not be procured; the supply failed altogether, and they were not to be got from any of the factories?—I see. I know we had them of that size early in the war, before the relief of Ladysmith.

19250. (Chairman.) Speaking generally, were your men well supplied with food?—Yes, they were really never starved; they may have been hard up for water. Once, after a 26 miles march, there was no water of any kind anywhere, and of course that must happen, but they were well fed, I think, on the whole. I think everybody agreed that the commissariat arrangements were very good. Of course, occasionally we would get indifferent potatoes and no vegetables.

19251. (Lord Strathecona and Mount Royal.) Were your men always furnished with filters for the water?—No, they did not always get them, but we were very careful indeed about the water; every drop of water that was drunk, and even the water that the officers used for their teeth, was boiled.

19252. But on many occasions that must have been impossible?—It was impossible on the line of march, but whenever we were permanent for any time we always established a big boiler for the purpose of boiling water.

19253. There was no regular supply, then, of filters for the men?—No; it happened from time to time, and it

happened in regiments; regiments sometimes provided them, and sometimes they may have been provided by headquarters, but we never had a regular supply of filters. I will not say they were never supplied during the war at all by Government, but it was not regular throughout the Army; we did not have them.

19254. (Chairman.) The Wallace spade you do not approve of?—Well, my experience of the Wallace spade is that the only thing it was used for was to knock tent pegs in, and to dig trenches round when it was going to rain; there was nothing serious about it, because I do not think it would have been any use on the really hard, rocky, stony ground we had out there. The spade was too light, and another thing was that the men were expected to carry it, and they disliked that very much. A man would always take the opportunity of losing his spade if he could. He was found out and punished, but that did not produce the spade, and when you wanted it it was not there.

19255. We have had a good deal of evidence to that effect, and that the proper way to do would be to have really efficient picks and spades carried in a cart close up to the line. That would be your opinion?—Yes, I agree with that.

19256. Were the ammunition supplies satisfactory?—Yes, I think they were very good indeed. I do not say we never ran short of ammunition, but that is a thing that sometimes you cannot guard against. I think the ammunition supply was very good, and that supplied by mules I think was very good too. Especially if the country is at all undulating and you have a good officer with willing drivers he will manage to get pretty close and he will shove the ammunition on in one way or another. Take, for instance, the case I mentioned, where the ammunition was stolen from another regiment; it was a very heavy fire under which the officer got it up, but he did get it up, which shows that it can be done.

19257. As to the rifle?—I have always thought that the slide should not be able to move. At Hythe there is a specimen of every rifle used by any great nation, and many of them have the slide so that you shove it up with your thumb and then it is fixed. Our slide can slip, it can get loose, and instead of being at 600 yards it may be at 400 or 500—it may slip from the very top to the bottom. I think that some of the foreign rifles are better than ours in that way with regard to the slide. A man does not notice that it has fallen down, and he is using the wrong sight. The sighting is not always as perfect as it ought to be when the rifles are issued from Woolwich, or wherever they come from. I had an opportunity of testing rifles with a view to reporting upon them when they had come straight from Woolwich Arsenal, and the sighting has not been right. I remember that with reference to carbines at York once, and I had to report that although they had come straight out of the factory the sighting was all wrong.

19258. Was that a common thing during the war?—I do not say that it is common so as to make a great deal of difference, because perhaps 50 or 100 yards might not matter in a big war and in the ordinary course of events when we are firing at long ranges, but it was very common to find that the rifle was not properly sighted for shooting on a range to win prizes where you want extreme accuracy.

19259. (Lord Strathecona and Mount Royal.) Do you consider that the rifle would be better for service if it had a long wooden stock down almost to the muzzle?—No, I do not think that would make any difference; I think perhaps it might be a little longer than at present, but a man does not want to get his left hand so very far forward. Perhaps it would be an advantage to lengthen it a little, but I do not think you want it right down the barrel.

19260. Still, he would get a better grasp of it if the wood were sufficiently long for him, and especially when the barrel was heated?—When it is heated you cannot touch it without the stock.

19261. (Chairman.) Is there anything else you would like to add?—I have said in my statement that I believe in charging the magazine with a clip; other officers may say "No," but it is done by most of the foreign armies, and it is done by the Boers, and there is no doubt that it is a very laborious thing putting each round in separately.

19262. A good many officers have recommended that to us?—Are the majority in favour of the clip?

19263. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Some were against it;

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
C.B.

17 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
C.B.
—
17 Mar. 1903.
—

some say they would have the magazine as it is now full, and then you could load cartridge by cartridge if you were not firing in volleys, and you would have your magazine always ready?—Yes, but constantly when the men were told to charge their magazines at the beginning of the war it happened that two or three men let off their rifles while they were charging them, and there was a tremendous explosion; in fact, we had to say that any man who did it in future would be punished, because whenever you gave the order "Charge magazines," one or two men would let their rifles off, and there would be a tremendous explosion, and the bullets went anywhere. I do not think that would happen with the clip, and I think it would be done more quickly. I must say I believe in the clip.

I think there is one thing I should like to mention, if I may. I think it is a great mistake young officers being allowed to be detached from their battalions until they have a certain amount of service. I speak entirely by experience now. An officer may become detached; he may be put on the staff, and he may be eminently an officer that has everything to learn, both as a man of the world and as an officer; he may then for some reason or other not be available until the time comes for him to be promoted to a company; all his confidential reports have probably been favourable, they have not been supplied by the Commanding Officer but by the General Officer on whose staff he has been, and I think in that way an officer may be promoted to the command of a company who has hardly been through any experience as a subaltern, and I do not think the system a good one.

19264. (Chairman.) You are speaking more of the personal staff?—Yes; A.D.C. very often, or in other ways. I speak to you from what I have actually seen, and I am sure it is not good. Some officers, of course, pick up things very quickly, but others do not, and you will often get a case of officers who have no experience in regimental life, and no experience as soldiers, no responsibility, not having been corrected, and not having got their wits about them as they have to do in a battalion, and they suddenly become Captains, and although their reports may be good, their experience has not been such as would tend to make them fit for the command of a company at all.

19265. It affects the regiment?—Yes. I have been reading what other people have said, and I have noticed remarks about the infantry, and I should like to say this, if I may be allowed, although it is not quite within my province, that I am absolutely certain that it would be very deplorable if the idea got about that mounted troops—cavalry certainly—could ever take the place of infantry. Ladysmith would never have been relieved if we had gone on those lines, because it was entirely relieved by infantry and guns, and nobody else could have relieved it. I see that there is an idea that everything must be mounted troops in future because we were fighting under peculiar circumstances and required mounted men in the South African war, but anybody who had seen what I have seen, and what everybody else saw in Natal, would never for a moment suggest that infantry do not complete any big fight. I mean to say that a great deal was done by big bodies of mounted men in the advance through the Orange Free State, but if we were fighting against a different kind of enemy he might have just as many cavalry as we had, and he would prevent those turning movements threatening his lines of communication. That is, of course, where we scored over the Boer, as he could not bear to have his lines of communication even threatened; but supposing the enemy were as strong in cavalry as we were, that would never obtain, because our cavalry would never be able to outflank him.

19266. (Viscount Esher.) Do you approve of a proportion of your infantry regiments being trained as mounted infantry?—Yes, I do think it is an enormous advantage even if you only have a few, because it helps scouting so much, supposing you are cut off from other mounted troops. Mine was one of the few battalions in South Africa that for a long time retained its own mounted infantry. I only had 40, but they were of enormous advantage to get over the ground quickly, and also for scouting, which I think so much of that I suggested men should be trained even on foot especially as scouts; but if you have mounted men it makes you independent.

19267. Therefore you would be glad to see the whole of your battalion passed through gradually a course of mounted infantry training?—Yes. I do not think you

could make a mounted infantryman in three months, as we often try to do, although he might be able to sit on a horse. Take an officer; he cannot learn to ride in three months, although he probably begins when he is six years old; and I think we expect the men to do too much, and when you come to service there is this disadvantage, that even if he is a horseman he is not a horsemaster, and many horses died out there not from hard work but from want of care. I suppose that is not questioned.

19268. That is so, of course; at the same time, even if he only gets the three months' training, it is better than nothing at all?—Yes. I only say that the training should be longer, if possible, to turn him out as a really good mounted infantryman.

19269. Which would you prefer, to pass only a limited number through the longer course, or to pass the whole battalion gradually through the shorter course?—The limited number. I would rather have one company trained for a longer period than have the whole regiment just taught a little.

19270. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You would sooner have one company perfect than the whole regiment with a smattering?—Yes, that is what I was trying to convey.

19271. Has a Lieutenant in the regiment a distinct section to command?—He has a half company.

19272. Does he always command the same half company?—Yes.

19273. That is his command?—Yes.

19274. What does a Sub-Lieutenant have?—The same; there is no distinction except that, of course, in the absence of Captains, a Captain being on leave, the Senior Lieutenant would command the entire company. I do not mean to insinuate that a subaltern officer always has the same half company for a great many years, because something might happen whereby it might be necessary to move him to another company, but as long as he remains in one company he has the half company, and he is supposed to know everything about the men of that half company.

19275. He is in touch with the men of that half company?—Yes.

19276. (Viscount Esher.) But in point of fact they are shifted about a good deal?—Yes, that must happen, and the same thing applies to the men on home service, because you are always sending out drafts to India.

19277. (Sir Frederick Darley.) How many companies were there in your regiment in South Africa?—Eight of my own companies, and we had a Volunteer company for a certain time, which made nine.

19278. Your Captains were the paymasters of the companies?—No, not exactly that; the Adjutant is nominally the paymaster, but all he did was to submit an estimate of the money he wanted to Pretoria, Durban, Maritzburg, or wherever it may be. He gets a list from the Captains of the money they want, and then he puts it together, and the money is sent down from wherever the money comes from, from the town, in cheques to the officers commanding the different companies.

19279. It is sent to the officer?—Yes, in the name of the officers, a separate cheque for each one.

19280. So that there are nine officers?—Yes.

19281. And the colour-sergeant of that company is also assisting the officer in paying the men?—He is the pay-sergeant invariably with us.

19282. So that is nine more?—Yes, but eight is the ordinary number.

19283. Then we will take it as eight; that is eight more, which makes sixteen officers?—Sixteen officers and non-commissioned officers.

19284. But sixteen individuals are engaged in the pay of the men?—Yes.

19285. But those officers, the Captain and the colour-sergeant, are supposed to be charged with the drill of the men also?—Yes, under the present system.

19286. And most of their time is taken up with the keeping of accounts and this pay matter?—The company accounts are not easy things to keep; quite the reverse.

19286*. It may interfere with their time on parade, keeping of accounts and this pay matter?—You see that in a regiment you have about five men, or possibly six, that have the aptitude for drill, and the rule always

was that the recruits should be drilled by those men. The Guards have able drill sergeants; we have nothing, and therefore we make the best we can of them. Then that rule was brought out of training by companies, and we had to make men learn the drill out of a book, and hear them like schoolboys, but they could not teach men drill, as they had not the aptitude for it. It was a system which did not work well with us, and then the war broke out, and we had no more of it.

19287. The colour-sergeant is supposed to drill the men?—And he may not have the aptitude for teaching. You might have a very good man as a lance-corporal, and you could make him teach drill, because he has the aptitude.

19288. Do you not think it would be better, instead of eight companies having sixteen men employed in this way, that your officers should train the troops, and that you should have one paymaster, with perhaps a clerk, to do the other work?—Yes, I think every regimental officer thinks that; it would free one's hands tremendously, of course.

19289. It means that you would release the sixteen—the eight officers and eight principal non-commissioned officers—for their proper functions?—Yes, but they are supposed to comply with all their other functions as well. I do not think the heads of the department would acknowledge that it should interfere with them, and even if company accounts were easily done, it would not matter; but they are not at all easy—they are very complicated.

19290. An officer may be surcharged for paying men something more than he ought to pay them, and he has to make it up out of his own money?—A man would probably be debited with the amount, and if the man was absolutely discharged he might lose it; but I do not think the officers generally lose in that way, because the colour sergeant is very careful not to let his company officer in if he can help it. Of course, a man sometimes bolts with £20, as once happened to me, and that is, of course, a loss.

19291. This possible loss might make a man anxious about his position?—Yes, I perfectly agree, because the orders are very stringent now that the officer is never to entrust his pay-sergeant with any coin, and that involves the officer taking the money away, if there is any money over from paying the company, to his room, and

he locks it up, and it may be all right, but, on the other hand, it may be all wrong because it may be stolen.

19292. It is your opinion, obtained from your past experience, that it would be better to have a paymaster, and, if necessary, a paymaster's clerk, in each regiment to keep the accounts and pay the men, than to have the present system?—Yes.

19293. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) I just want to make sure about your strength when you went out; you left 313 at home and took 414 out?—No, our total strength going out was 870; of those 456 were Reservists and 414 were men that were serving, and not Reservists; that is, 414 and 313 would be what our strength was without the Reservists.

19294. 727 without the Reservists?—Yes; and of those we took the 414 and left the 313.

19295 (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You are strongly of opinion that there should be special bodies of mounted infantry trained as scouts, men selected as being especially well fitted for that purpose?—Yes, that is my opinion; and even if they cannot be mounted infantry, I would have them without being mounted; if they could be mounted so much the better.

19296. Had you any such during the war?—We had our own mounted infantry, but that is all; we had no specially-trained scouts. Of course, the idea was that at certain times you sent forward scouts, and that every man knew how to scout, because he was taught in his annual training, but I would go deeper than that; some men would never make good scouts and others would, and I would pick out those that were intelligent and had good wind and dash and pluck and observation, and I would make them special men in every company, so that the Commanding Officer or company officer could call for the scouts of a company.

19297. You would have them specially trained for that purpose during the time of peace?—Yes, but regimentally. I would not send them away to train, and the officers could train them all right. I would like, if I may, to lay great stress with regard to the officer's training upon this point—that if he is to be trained he must have a tract of country and be sent away absolutely as he would on service, carrying everything with him.

19298 (Chairman.) Is there anything else you wish to say?—No.

Colonel
E. E. Carr,
C.B.

17 Mar. 1903.

FORTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Wednesday, 18th March 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (Chairman).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., Secretary.

Colonel D. HAIG, C.B., A.D.C., Commanding 17th Lancers, called and examined.

19299. (Chairman.) You have been good enough to send us a *précis* of the evidence you are prepared to give, and if you have no objection I think we had better begin by placing that on the notes, and we can develop any point as we go along?—Certainly.

1. POSTS HELD IN SOUTH AFRICA.

1899. I left England in September 1899 with General French as Deputy Assistant Adjutant General for Cavalry in Natal and acted as his Chief Staff Officer there during October at the battle of Elands-laagte and engagements round Ladysmith.

On November 2nd I proceeded to Cape Colony as Deputy Assistant Adjutant General of the Cavalry Division which was then being mobilised in England.

On November 18th I accompanied General French to Naauwpoort, Cape Colony, and acted as his Chief Staff Officer during the operations in the Colesberg district.

1900. Appointed Assistant Adjutant General of the Cavalry Division with local rank of Lieut.-colonel during the march from Modder River to Paardeburg and accompanied General French as Chief Staff Officer until December 31st, 1900.

1901. On latter date we proceeded to Naauwpoort, Cape Colony, and took over command, with local rank of colonel of four columns—viz. those under Lieut.-Colonel Byng (South African Light Horse), Grenfell (2nd Brabant's), Williams (Mounted Infantry), Lowe (7th Dragoon Guards), and operated in the central districts against Kritzinger. I was at this time directly under Lord Kitchener's orders.

March 3rd, 1901, followed De Wet across Orange River into Orange River Colony, under orders of General Lyttelton, to Thabanchu.

April 7th, ordered to Cape Colony and took over com-

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.
18 Mar. 1903.

mand of the following columns from Major-General Settle—viz., those under :

Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. A. Henniker, Imperial Yeomanry and Victorian Contingent.
Lieut.-Colonel Crewe, Kaffrarian Rifles and Eastern Province Light Horse.
Lieut.-Colonel Gorringe, District Mounted Troops.
Lieut.-Colonel Scobell, Brabant's Horse and Imperial Yeomanry.

From this date until the end of the war I commanded a group of columns in Cape Colony, and also the western half of the Lambert's Bay, Calvina-Carnarvon block-house line.

1901-2. The following column leaders were under me from time to time, in addition to those already named :

Lieut.-Colonel Lukin, Cape Mounted Rifles.
Lieutenant-Colonel Crabbe, Imperial Yeomanry, D.E.O.V.R., P.A.G.

Lieut.-Colonel Watchorn, Tasmanians.
Lieut.-Colonel Macandrew, Midland Mounted Rifles.

Lieut.-Colonel Monro, Bethune's Mounted Infantry. 9th and 17th Lancers.

Warren's Mounted Infantry.
Lieut.-Colonel Neylan, Cape Police.
Lieut.-Colonel Kavanagh, P.W.L.H. Squadron, 5th Lancers.

Lieut.-Colonel B. Doran, Imperial Yeomanry, 5th Lancers.

Lieut.-Colonel W. Doran, Imperial Yeomanry.
Lieut.-Colonel Callwell, 5th Lancers, Imperial Yeomanry.

Lieut.-Colonel Lund, one Squadron 9th Lancers, Brabant's; one Squadron 17th Lancers.

Lieut.-Colonel Cappe, two Squadrons 12th Lancers, Colonial Light Horse.

Major Wormald, two Squadrons 12th Lancers.

Lieut.-Colonel Wyndham, 16th Lancers.

Lieut.-Colonel Kavanagh, 10th Hussars.

Major Rankin, W.P.M.R.

On conclusion of the war I commanded the western half of the Colony, and, in addition to regular infantry, militia, and artillery, I had the following Yeomanry under me :—

27th Imperial Yeomanry, Lieut.-Colonel Wight Boycott.

28th Imperial Yeomanry, Lieut.-Colonel Turner.

29th Imperial Yeomanry, Lord Longford.

31st Imperial Yeomanry, Viscount Fincastle.

32nd Imperial Yeomanry, Lieut.-Colonel Kemp.

30th Imperial Yeomanry, Lieut.-Colonel Birch.

I returned from South Africa on October 21st, 1902.

II. Efficiency of the Organisation of the Army as

II.—EFFICIENCY OF THE ORGANISATION AS TESTED IN THE WAR.

- (a) Staff.
- (b) Cavalry Division, Brigades and Regiments.
- (c) Mounted Infantry.
- (d) Colonials.
- (e) Transport.
- (f) Ordnance.
- (g) Supply.
- (h) Remount Departments.
- (i) Medical Arrangements.
- (k) Engineer Services.

(a) Staff.

1. Staffs were hurriedly formed after the outbreak of war. Officers were new, therefore, to their duties, and unacquainted with one another. The machine did not consequently work as smoothly as it might have done had all its parts been fitted together and tried during peace.

2. As a rule, a General was not allowed to select his own staff, but had to take whoever was posted to his staff by headquarters.

3. Some officers holding staff appointments lacked the requisite training.

4. Many officers were taken from regiments in the field for staff appointments and duties on the communications, thereby reducing the number of regimental officers at a time when there was much work for everyone. In the same manner non-commissioned officers and men were taken from cavalry regiments for clerks, orderlies, servants, etc., for divisional and brigade staffs. In fact, summing up, no organised, well-trained and complete staff took the field with any brigade or division.

(b) Cavalry Division, Brigades, Regiments.

1. The cavalry at Ladysmith was only organised when the Boers were practically at the gates on 31st October. (See Field Force Order of that date.)

The regiments of the Cavalry Division from England were hurriedly formed into brigades two days before leaving Modder River for Kimberley. Indeed, some brigades were not completed until after De Kiel's Drift (on the Modder River) had been reached.

So the division was really a collection of units and lacked that cohesion which is essential to success against any organised military force. That is a grave error.

2. No adequate provision was made for keeping corps at the front up to efficient strength; and at times, although regiments were able to mount all their officers, only a small number of men could take the field owing to want of horses.

During the advance to Bloemfontein corps like Kitchener's and Robert's Horse were formed and sent to the front. Had the horses used by these corps been available for the Cavalry Division, instead of being used by regiments which, owing to lack of training, were at that time of very little use, the efficiency of the Cavalry Division would have been more than doubled.

Throughout 1900 cavalry regiments generally had 700 to 800 men in the country, but very seldom had more than 300 to 400 men present at headquarters, because there were no horses for them. All this time fresh mounted corps were being raised composed of untrained men. The false economy of this method is obvious.

3. Regiments at the front had their numbers reduced, owing to officers being required for the staff, dépôt, or duty on the communications.

Farriers were also taken for extra regimental duty; men were taken for orderlies or servants to attached officers, such as medical, veterinary, and other officers.

Regimental signallers were taken and formed into a corps of signallers. I am of opinion that the latter corps should have been formed before the war broke out, and that in future a permanent corps of signallers and orderlies be kept up in peace.

The following points seem also of the greatest importance to ensure that a mounted force in the field is kept up to strength :—

First.—Regiments should consist of five squadrons in time of peace, so that on mobilisation four effective squadrons can at once be formed, and the remainder with the cadres of the 5th squadron are available then to form the reserve squadron.

Second.—When a brigade mobilises these reserve squadrons of regiments should be organised without delay into a dépôt, and sent over-sea for the purpose of preparing drafts for their corps at the front.

Third.—When a corps at the front becomes reduced in numbers, on the first opportunity certain squadrons should be made up as near to war strength as possible, by transferring horses and men from the other squadron or squadrons of the regiment. The cadres of the squadron thus depleted should then be moved to the rear to the dépôt, and reorganise.

4. The general physique and intelligence of the Cavalry Division was good, but many of the Dragoon and Lancer reservists were, however, far too big and heavy.

Our system, which sends reservists of one regiment to other regiments on mobilisation, is most pernicious. In the cavalry small parties are often isolated and in difficult situations. It is most essential that all the men must have been brought up in the same regiment, and be animated by the same traditions and *esprit de corps*.

The present system of enlistment by corps sends a man to serve in two or three different regiments, and possibly to a fourth regiment as a reservist. In peace time men should as far as possible be kept together in the same groups, and should certainly at all times belong to the same regiment.

(c) Mounted Infantry.

The mounted infantry was hastily organised. At the commencement of the war (December, 1899), excepting a few companies furnished by regiments stationed in South Africa, the men could scarcely retain their seats at a trot over rough ground, and were entirely ignorant of the first principles of the care of horses. After three months or so they improved in riding, but few ever became good enough riders to be fit for scouting work.

(d) *Colonials.*

The over-sea Colonials were good horsemen, but bad horsemasters. Colonials chiefly lacked trained officers. There were not sufficient Imperial officers to meet the demands of the Colonial corps.

(e) *Transport.*

The cavalry and artillery were handicapped by unfit and underfed horses carrying excessive weights of saddlery and equipment.

The question of providing light regimental transport to carry the daily requirements of men and horses is most urgent. The recent war proves clearly that, with the extended operations and increased mobility now necessary, it is impossible for the fighting men of any branch of the Service to be loaded up with the paraphernalia necessary for their warmth and sustenance at night. Articles such as picket pegs, blankets, mess tins, cooking utensils, forage and rations must in future be carried by some light transport.

In Appendix A (see page 405) are given certain proposals for reducing the weight to be carried by cavalry in the field.

(f) *Ordnance.*

Some of the equipment was unsuitable to the country and the work required of the troops. The cavalry was overloaded; the total weight carried by a troop horse in marching order exceeded 20 stone. This was composed partly of articles unsuitable and not required by individuals for warfare, and partly of food and articles that ought to be carried in the light regimental transport.

(g) *Supply.*

The supply services seemed well organised. Men, as a rule, had ample rations, but there was seldom a sufficiency of forage. In South Africa full rations were generally 10lbs. oats. Hay was never procurable excepting in standing camp on the railway. At Paardeberg the grain ration was reduced to 4lbs. per day. From February 10th to March 7th, 1900, horses were on reduced rations when even the full ration was insufficient. The grazing was then indifferent, and quite inadequate for the large numbers of horses then concentrated.

(h) *Remount Department.*

It is difficult to pass judgment on the Remount Department. There is no doubt that it was not organised for the supply of as many horses as were required by the late war, and the Army suffered in consequence. Our experience was briefly as follows:—

The trained English horses of the Cavalry Division were reduced by one-third when the division reached Paardeberg, and by two-thirds when it reached Bloemfontein. At Bloemfontein the remounts issued were good English horses, mostly registered horses, with many of the hunter type. Unfortunately it was necessary for brigades to march fresh from rail and ship, and only a few extraordinarily constitutioned horses survived this treatment. At this time the cavalry suffered greatly from lack of farriers, regiments having to send some of their farriers to the Remount Department and veterinary hospitals, where staff farriers were deficient. Also the mounted infantry were provided with some farriers from the cavalry. Many horses had been left unshod from the day they were embarked, and time and men were lacking to shoe all the remounts before marching. At Kroonstad more remounts were received, but of inferior quality to those issued at Bloemfontein. The cavalry division was again remounted at Pretoria, but the remounts had further deteriorated in quality, consisting largely of Hungarians of the harness or hackney type.

(i) *Medical Arrangements.*

The medical services were always sufficient, but some of the Colonial ambulance corps seemed to be equipped more suitably for operating with mounted troops than those sent from England.

(k) *Engineer Services.*

In earlier stages of the war mounted engineers to accompany cavalry regiments and brigades were not always sufficient.

In a country like Europe, where river beds containing water have to be crossed, the want of mounted engineers will be more urgently required with brigades than was the case in South Africa.

III.—USE OF THE DIFFERENT ARMS UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS.

(a) *Cavalry and Mounted Infantry.*

72C

(b) *Artillery.*(c) *Infantry.*

(Instances from the war will be quoted if required to bear out opinions herein expressed.)

(a) *Cavalry and Mounted Infantry.*

Cavalry will have a larger sphere of action in future wars; in fact, as now armed, it is a new element in tactics.

Besides being used before, during, and after a battle, as hitherto, we must expect to see it employed strategically on a much larger scale than formerly, when it was without an effective firearm.

The rôle of mounted infantry, on the other hand, is essentially a tactical one, although if combined with cavalry it may assist in the large strategical movements of the latter.

The rôle of the two arms must be kept distinct; the cavalry must not be permitted, while increasing its efficiency with the carbine, to become mounted rifles, nor must the mounted infantry be allowed to emulate the cavalry and depart from its distinctive rôle of mobile infantry.

At the same time there seems a danger of confusing their respective rôles if mounted infantry and cavalry are put together. Besides, it is a question whether any country can afford to keep up and train mounted corps of different values.

Apart from the value of mounted infantry as a support to cavalry, or as escort to artillery, its main sphere of utility will be its actual tactical mobility, which will enable the General to change the tide of battle in the greatly extended battlefields of the present day.

The possession of a rapid and accurate shooting weapon has rendered cavalry more independent, but it must not be allowed to acquire the habit of employing dismounted tactics in season and out of season. Indeed, I think the withdrawing of the lances and swords from our cavalry in South Africa was a serious mistake. The ideal cavalry is that which can fight on foot and attack on horseback, and I am thoroughly satisfied from what I have seen in South Africa that the necessity of training cavalry to charge is as great as it was in the days of Napoleon.

Cavalry (though in a few situations it may be strengthened by the support of mounted infantry) will be able to act successfully without it, but mounted infantry cannot operate strategically alone and independently of cavalry.

For horsemen armed with firearms only (even though highly trained as cavalry) cannot cope successfully with cavalry either in attack or defence.

To enable them to take the offensive they must dismount. Their led horses at once become a source of danger, while the opposing cavalry can push forward by a detour, and either outflank them or leave them severely alone. On the other hand mounted rifles cannot afford to run the risk of being caught mounted. The same argument applies to the defence.

The very soul of cavalry action lies in its power to rapidly assume the offensive. Mounted rifles do not possess this power. The recent war shows that a sudden unexpected charge shatters the morale of the enemy, and raises that of the troops so attacking as much now as in the past.

To take away from cavalry its power of assuming the active offensive by mounted action, by depriving it of the *arme blanche*, is to withhold from it a very considerable advantage without any compensating gain.

We must conclude, therefore, that cavalry must be armed with the best firearms obtainable, and with either the lance or sword.

Lancer and sabre regiments should be in nearly equal proportion in all field armies.

(b) *Artillery.*

"The aim of the artillery is to level at a distance "the material, intellectual and moral obstacles that "prevent the victorious forward advance of the other "arms of the force." It is easy to state the aim, but difficult to put it into useful effect. Indeed, artillery seems only likely to be really effective against raw troops, possessing a low morale and feeble manœuvring power, while the process of "wearing-out" an adversary requires an enormous expenditure of ammunition.

The experiences of the South African war have shown that the principles for securing victory are the same as ever, and that the best system for artillery to follow

Colonel
D. Haig,
C. B., A. D. C.
18 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

is to hotly engage the enemy along his whole front, so as to bring about a powerful moral strain, and, if possible, disorganisation in his ranks, and then (as far as possible by surprise) to strike a rapid and smashing blow by means of a heavy concentrated fire on some suitable point of tactical importance, and at once follow it up with an assault of infantry or cavalry, or both, before its staggering effect has passed away.

To produce this effect artillery must not be used independently, but one single will must control the fire of the guns as a whole. In fact, all experiences have demonstrated the small tactical value of guns used independently, and that good results can only be obtained by the concentrated fire of a number of guns controlled by a single superior will.

The moral effect of all firing (rifle or artillery) is always greatly increased by concentration and rapidity in securing effects. But to obtain such results shells must be well placed, and this is only possible if the targets can be seen and are vulnerable.

These two conditions are the great difficulty of modern fighting, especially at the longer ranges.

(c) Infantry.

1. Infantry is, and is always likely to remain, the backbone of every army. At the same time, infantry is more readily improvised than either the cavalry or artillery arms, hence I am of opinion that if expenditure on military forces in the Empire is limited, it would be better to spend the bulk of the money in maintaining the more "technical services" efficient; namely, artillery and cavalry.

2. The principle of the infantry attack is to place your infantry (as strong as possible in numbers and in morale, and as far as possible unperceived) on to some position from which they will overwhelm the defenders with rifle fire.

3. As to the defence, in training troops sufficient care has not been taken of recent years to conceal troops holding a position. In future men may be posted at greater intervals than formerly was the case in defensive positions. Consequently a given number of men will now not only hold the same extent of front as formerly, but a larger reserve will be available for purpose of counterstroke, which is the soul of a successful defensive action.

IV.—SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND MEN.

- (a) Training in general.
- (b) Training of staff officers.
- (c) Training of regimental officers and men of the cavalry.

(a) Training in General.

One of the most difficult problems seems to be the approximation of the conditions of peace manœuvres to those of actual warfare.

At field days before the war, owing to the small area of ground available, main-bodies were allowed to become engaged before any scouting could take place. For the same reason the actions were of short duration, so that the long wearing-out process of the real battle was scarcely realised by any. Nothing less than a ten hours' action will be of practical use to discipline troops and give them a small idea of the fatigues of battle—and I take it that discipline is one of the main factors in success.

The chief danger then, in my opinion, arises from the utterly false usages hitherto practised and ingrained into our troops at peace manœuvres; and from the troops these false ideas of war filter to the people of this country, and then are voiced by their representatives in Parliament.

(b) Training of Staff Officers.

Besides training officers at the Staff College, a large proportion of officers should yearly take part in staff tours under competent officers. By this means uniformity of ideas in staff management and tactics generally would gradually be produced throughout the Army.

Again, Generals and their staffs should as far as possible be accustomed to work together during times of peace, and general officers should have a free hand in selecting their staff from qualified officers.

(c) Training of the Regimental Officers and Men of the Cavalry.

Officers commanding regiments and squadrons must

be held really responsible for the training of their commands.

But in order to give officers of all ranks a chance of learning their work strong squadrons must be maintained in peace, and suitable training grounds be provided in the vicinity of barracks where squadrons at least can be trained sufficiently to take part in regimental exercises.

The tactical training of officers can be largely developed by means of cavalry tactical tours; for this money grants are necessary. These exercises should be regularly carried out by regiments, and not by district staffs only.

Officers only require a little encouragement, and their thoughts to be turned in the right direction, to enable them to embark on a system of really practical instruction.

As Regards the Training of Cavalry Generally.

Riding.—Our officers are, as a rule, good horsemen, thanks to their love of hunting, polo, and pig-sticking (in India). Horsemanship must be encouraged for both officers and men, for the horse is the chief arm of the cavalryman.

But men must do much more riding in open country and less "show riding" in the riding house. Hitherto inspecting generals have devoted much time to the inspection of work done in the riding school, hence this kind of equitation has come to be regarded as the end and object of our training, instead of only being a means to an end.

Men must learn to move freely across country, and be instructed as ground scouts, to take cover, to carry verbal messages, judging distance, reconnoitring, etc., and their intelligence developed out of doors.

Indeed, the main lesson of the war is that modern conditions of warfare entail higher training of the individual. Of course there is nothing new in this, but the country is flooded with half-trained Yeomanry officers who proclaim everywhere that training is unnecessary, that the individual is everything, and the result is that the country believes that it has a really valuable asset in its half-trained auxiliary troops. In fact, any effort on the part of the War Office to obtain greater efficiency from the Volunteers, etc., seems to be looked upon by the country as another instance of red tape, and a deliberate attempt to destroy the intelligence and the individuality of the citizen army.

Musketry.—The tactical use of dismounted service must be developed. To this end musketry must go on all the year round, and the practices must not be confined to the rifle range. More ammunition must be allowed, and commanding officers and squadron commanders be given as free a hand as possible as to how to expend it. Every squadron should also have its range; and miniature rifle ranges should be provided in or near barracks; briefly, greatly increased facilities for practical musketry are required.

Scouting.—To improve the scouting we must begin with the officers; in Appendix B (see page 405) are given proposals for improving scouting in the cavalry.

Horsemastership.—All ranks in the cavalry must be taught to realise that the horse is their chief arm, and how to look after him in the field.

Hitherto there has been too much pampering in peace time, and casualties at manœuvres in some cases have been due to lack of hard condition.

To sum up—

1st. Maintain strong squadrons in peace, and do not transfer men from regiment to regiment.

2nd. Give troop, squadron, regimental, and brigade commanders more opportunities for training their commands in open country, where mounted and dismounted tactical exercises can be carried out in a manner resembling the conditions of actual war, and judge officers by results and promote them accordingly.

3rd. In order to enable officers to devote the requisite time to their actual instruction more must be required from non-commissioned officers in supervising men at stables and in performing minor duties in barracks than has formerly been the case.

APPENDIX "A."

(Referred to under "(e) Transport," page 403.)

PROPOSALS FOR REDUCING THE WEIGHT TO BE CARRIED BY CAVALRY IN THE FIELD.

The first consideration is to relieve the horse of weight, and this seems only possible by having two classes of transport, one to accompany the squadron

wherever it goes, and one to accompany the first line transport.

I would make the following suggestions:—

(A.) To BE CARRIED ON THE MAN.		lbs.	ozs.
Helmet (or slouch hat) - - -	-	1	8
Frock - - - - -	-	2	0
Pants - - - - -	-	2	8
Braces (or belt) - - - - -	-	0	5
Shirt and vest - - - - -	-	2	4
Drawers - - - - -	-	1	0
Putties and socks - - - - -	-	1	5
Spurs and straps - - - - -	-	1	0
Field dressing and description card - - -	-	0	2
Ankle boots - - - - -	-	4	0
Knife and hoof pick - - - - -	-	0	8
*Water bottle (full) - - - - -	-	3	0
Two leather bandoliers, with 100 rounds ammunition - - - - -	-	8	8
Sundries, such as pipe, tobacco, matches, towel, soap, etc. - - - - -	-	2	0
		30	0

(B.)		To BE CARRIED ON THE HORSE.				lbs.	ozs.	st.	lbs.	ozs.
Colonial bridle and head rope	-	-	4	0	2	3	2			
Cavalry saddle (stripped)	-	-	14	6						
Stirrups, etc.	-	-	8	0						
Saddle blanket	-	-	4	12						
Nose-bag (with 6 lbs. oats)	-	-	7	0						
Cloak—8 lbs., or British warm	}	-	10	0						
4 lbs. 8 ozs. (according to climate),										
and mackintosh or waterproof sheet,										
2 lbs.					-	-	-	-	-	-
			48		2					
			st.		lbs.		ozs.			
OR			3		6		2			

Total weight to be carried by the horse:—

	lbs.	ozs.
As above - - - - -	48	2
Arms - - - - -	14	8
Man (clothed) - - - - -	182	0
	244	10

or 17st. 6lbs. 10ozs.
Too heavy!

So the weight of the saddle and bridle must be reduced by having lighter patterns.

Wire nippers (8ozs.) to be carried at the rate of one pair per section by light men.

(C.) To BE CARRIED ON TROOP CART (43 men).

	lbs.
1 rug (G.S.) per man - - - - -	194
1 small bag per man, containing 1 day's rations, 2 days' groceries - - -	215
Few light entrenching tools (say) - - -	75
	484

(D.) ON ONE SPARE HORSE (PER TROOP).

	lbs.
*Cooking pots - - - - - (say)	34
Picketing rope and pegs - - - - -	50
	84

(E.) ON TWO SQUADRON WAGONS.

	lbs.
Small tents (1 to 2 men—7lbs.) - - -	602
Change of underclothing (at 3½) - - -	602
Horse shoes—2 boxes - - - - -	168
Two days' forage and rations - - - - -	5,088
Horse brushes and combs - - - - -	272
	6,732

(F.) AMMUNITION (PER SQUADRON).

On soldier - - - - -	100 rounds	-	100 rounds per rifle
On 4 pack horses	8,800	"	50 " "
On 1 S.A.A. cart	13,200	"	73 " "
Total - - - - -	223		

(G) TOOLS AND EXPLOSIVES IN PIONEER EQUIPMENT (PACK) AS AT PRESENT.

(H) SIGNALLING EQUIPMENT.
On 1 pack horse.

TOTAL TRANSPORT PER SQUADRON.

(C) Rugs and rations - - - - -	4 Troop carts.
(D) Cooking pots and picketing gear - - -	4 Pack horses.
(E) Forage, &c. - - - - -	2 Squad. wagons.
(F) Ammunition - - - - -	4 Pack horses.
(G) Tools and explosives - - - - -	1 S.A.A. cart.
(H) Signalling equipment - - - - -	1 Pack horse.

Total:

10 Pack horses.
4 Carts.
2 Wagons.
1 Ammunition cart.

GENERAL REMARKS.

1. On ordinary occasions a man is sufficiently provided for by a cloak (or coat warm) and mackintosh (or waterproof sheet). At night he will get his blanket from the troop cart, which should be able to accompany the troop wherever it goes. A picketing peg is unnecessary if rope and pegs are carried on a lead horse.

2. I have found in practice four men generally like to mess together, and one cooking pot among them takes the place of a mess-tin or "dixie."

I recommend that some form of cooking vessel be provided which fits into another, to take the place of the dixie and the mess-tin or "billy."

In the event of a group being detached, a set of cooking-pots should be capable of being attached to the saddle temporarily.

These cooking pots and the picketing rope and pegs can easily be carried on a mule or spare horse at the rate of one per troop.

3. Horse brushes and combs are unnecessary except when a force halts for more than 12 hours, when, as a rule, the squadron wagons will be up.

4. 152lbs. or 10st. 12lbs. has been allowed for the average man naked. This accords with experience during the recent campaign, but I do not think the average Cavalry soldier ought to weigh more than 10st. 7lbs. stripped.

This, I am aware, is impossible if the Cavalry ranks are to be filled with Reservists on mobilisation, and is an additional reason for the maintenance of strong cadres in time of peace.

APPENDIX "B."

(Referred to under "As regards the Training of Cavalry generally." See page 404.)

PROPOSALS FOR THE MORE EFFICIENT TRAINING OF CAVALRYMEN AS SCOUTS.

1. Twelve non-commissioned officers or men per squadron, possessing exceptional intelligence, courage, nerve, and eye for country, besides being good riders and horsemasters, to be specially trained in each squadron under a specially chosen officer to act as scouts.

2. After a course of training sufficient to fit them to discharge the duties of scouts for special patrol duty (say about six months, depending on the opportunities offered in the district where the regiment is stationed and the aptitude of the individual), a selection of the 14 ablest to be made. The latter to be called Regimental Scouts, and undergo a further training under a specially-chosen officer, who might be called the "Regimental Scout Master."

The standard of efficiency of these latter must be the highest possible; they should be able to work as well by night as by day, with a view to passing unobserved even through an enemy's lines at night.

The training of Regimental Scouts should be continued systematically during the whole year.

3. Each Scout to be provided by Government with a telescope or good binoculars.

Two horses to be allowed per scout.

Arms: short rifle and revolver (Colt repeating).

4. The following will be the establishment and rates of pay of Squadron and Regimental Scouts.

NOTE.—In view of the arduous nature of the training, the rates of pay are proportionately higher.

* In many countries this would not be necessary.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
D. Huig,
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18 Mar. 1903.

(a) *Squadron Scouts.*

1 Sergeant, 3s. 2d. (usual rate, 2s. 10d.)
1 Corporal, 2s. 8d. (usual rate, 2s. 2d.)
6 Privates, 1s. 8d. (usual rate, 1s. 4d.)
with distinguishing badge of "S," gold or worsted,
according to rank.

(b) *Regimental Scouts.*

1 Officer, 5s. extra per diem.
1 Sergeant-Major, 4s. (same as S.Q.S.M.R.R.)
1 Sergeant, 3s. 6d. (same as S.Q.M.S.)
2 Corporals, 2s. 10d. (same as Sergeant)
10 Privates, 2s. 2d. (same as Corporal),
with distinguishing badge of "S." within a circle (gold).

N.B.—After 1st April, 1904, all to receive the extra 6d. per day granted by Army Order No. 66 of April, 1902.

19300. I do not think I have any question to ask with regard to the posts held in South Africa, except that I gather that in the earlier part your experience was entirely on the Staff?—Yes.

19301. And then, after 1901, you had commands of various kinds?—Yes.

19302. All of those commands, I suppose, had chiefly to do with mounted men?—All mounted men—yes; at times in some of the commands there was probably a company of infantry. In Cape Colony there were a lot of these Town Guards, and when I went into a certain district they were not actually under my command permanently, but they co-operated with me, and took orders from me. That was got in Cape Colony during the rebellion there.

19303. Even the Town Guards?—Yes, the Town Guards were in certain villages, and I would let them know if I was driving an enemy up towards them; although they were not actually under my orders, they co-operated if I wanted them, for instance, to block a place in the vicinity.

19304. They never moved far from their own locality?—No, but they had local mounted men with them who did move.

19305. The first point you call attention to is the staff, I think?—Yes.

19306. You think that under present arrangements or under the arrangements that existed before the war there was no machinery for making the staff perfect in peace time?—No.

19307. Do you think that can be done?—I think, certainly, with forethought, if you think it out beforehand and train the men for the staff.

19308. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Where are you at present?—I am at Edinburgh, in command of the 17th Lancers.

19309. And you have no opportunity of seeing whether it is being done now or not?—No, things are improving.

19310. Under the present system?—Yes, but I have no means of knowing as a fact.

19311. (*Chairman.*) But it is a feature of the present system that in the Army Corps there are to be staffs ready to move with the Army Corps; is not that so?—I believe they are making progress in that way.

19312. Would that be sufficient to meet what you think is required?—You see, the brigades are not properly formed yet; there are only ten cavalry regiments at home, and they have got a brigade staff at Aldershot and one at the Curragh, but, then, as far as I know, I do not think they have actually got all the troops there—they have only provisional requirements at some of these places.

19313. Naturally, it is in a state of transition at present?—Yes, and I do not think it quite fair to judge of it at the present moment.

19314. But if it was organised in brigades, as I understand is part of the system, would that brigade staff be sufficient to meet the objections which you had to the staff in South Africa?—I think so. Of course, the main question is to train the staff and troops together in peace.

19315. You remark here in your *précis* that a General was not allowed to select his own staff. Do you think a General ought to select his own staff?—I think, certainly, in order to work together; but I say they should

select them from qualified officers. I do not think it right that a General should take all his sons and nephews and friends of that sort on his staff, but if you had qualified officers on a certain list, and said, "Take your choice from that," that would be a good arrangement.

19316. Does not the idea of the present system go further than that—that the Staff will be organised in peace time under the General?—Yes, but, of course, that is a question of the future; I was dealing with the past.

19317. That was the principle on which all the Staffs were appointed, was it not, that they were appointed by superior authority?—Yes.

19318. With a great number of Staffs to appoint there is possibly something to be said for that?—I think the first thing is to have unanimity on the Staff; the General must be able to get on with the people who are about him, and especially, I think, the Chief Staff Officer ought, if possible, to be a friend of the General.

19319. Do you think difficulties arose from that method of selection?—I think on some of the Staffs there is no doubt they did.

19320. We have had a good deal of evidence from the Generals, who have expressed themselves as well satisfied with the Staff?—I would like to put it on record that I think a General Officer ought to be allowed to select his Staff from qualified officers.

19321. Do you mean by that officers who have been through the Staff College?—Yes, and who have had a Staff training.

19322. Of course, in the case of the war I suppose there were not sufficient officers who had that qualification?—No, I suppose not.

19323. The taking of officers from regiments is detrimental to the regiments also, in addition to their not being so well qualified?—Yes, and also because the number of officers with a regiment is limited.

19324. I suppose you would desire that an officer who had qualified for the staff should not lose touch with his regimental duty?—Of course he ought to go back to regimental duty from time to time.

19325. He ought to take a turn on the staff, and then go back to his regiment?—Yes.

19326. And there would be no hardship in that?—No, I think, of course, you might arrange, if he was a good man, to send him back in a higher rank than when he came to the staff; supposing he came from a regiment on to the staff, and served a certain number of years, then when he went back to regimental duty he might go back with a higher rank.

19327. Do you think that is necessary?—I think that would encourage officers to qualify for a staff appointment.

19328. Do you think the inducements to qualify for staff are not sufficient without that additional one?—No, I do not think they are; what does he gain if he goes to the staff?

19329. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Are there not more men who want to go to the Staff College than they have room for?—Yes, but I think some of the inducements are because they are settled there for two years, and they are able to take a house for two years, and if they are married men they are able to sit down quietly.

19330. Still there are inducements of a kind?—I have mentioned inducements why many go to the Staff College, but after that I do not see that the inducements to serve on the staff are very great.

19331. Nearly everybody is anxious to serve, I think?—I do not think so; there are a number of regimental officers who are quite happy.

19332. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything else to say with regard to the staff?—No, I have not.

19333. Is there any other form of training you would wish to suggest besides the Staff College as training for the staff?—Yes; tactical tours.

19334. Does that mean that after they pass through the course at the Staff College they ought to take these tours?—I think every year these staff tours should be carried out, and not only carried out by the staff, but also in regiments. The advantage of these staff tours is that they deal with everything as if it were on active service; in peace manœuvres you are hampered with

ground, you are limited by the state of the country, and the crops, and so forth ; whereas in these staff tours you take everything exactly as if it was on service.

19335. How is that managed ?—Of course the enemy is not there, but the General is sitting in a certain place, and he gets reports in message form as he does on service. These messages are sent in from the Director of the Staff Tour, so that the General actually has the military situation the very same as it would be in war, only, instead of the information emanating from a man seeing the enemy, it emanates from the brain of the director.

19336. Is the staff tour simply a tour of officers ?—Yes, it is a tour of officers, and the director takes a military situation, issues general and special ideas, and works out details based upon those ideas. For instance, let us suppose a brigade is ordered to halt for one night you have then to consider the cantonments, and issue the orders for billeting the troops ; every detail as to where the men would be, and the outposts for protecting them are considered with reference to that particular situation, and not with reference to generalities. I think what leads many to form wrong tactical conclusions is that we so often deal with generalities instead of taking a special case ; our tactics are too much adapted for suiting all occasions, instead of one particular case.

19337. By those sort of tours you think the staff officer should get useful training ?—It makes him think, and it is practical, because, provided he is under a good director, you take every situation, halting orders, orders for attack and defence of positions, for reconnaissance for marches, and consider supply questions ; of course, if you have got a stupid man as director, and who is not practical, you will not get good results.

19338. A great deal depends upon the director ?—Yes, but the training of officers as such is a mere question of time.

19339. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would you say that officers, on the whole, learn more from staff rides than they do from the ordinary manœuvres as conducted at present ?—No, I think you want to combine the two. I say the advantage of a staff ride over manœuvres is that you can actually take war situations in the staff rides ; this you cannot do really in manœuvres.

19340. Do you think the men learn much at manœuvres ?—That depends on the manœuvres.

19341. We have had evidence to the effect that they learn very little indeed ?—I do not agree with that. I think it is absolutely essential that they must go to manœuvres, and essential for the officers also to handle the men at manœuvres. Of course there again it is all a question of who is directing and the nature of the manœuvre area.

19342. (*Chairman.*) With regard to the cavalry in the war, at first there was little or no organisation ?—Yes.

19343. That, I suppose, was inevitable under the circumstances ?—Quite so. I think the best was done under the circumstances, and as I say further on about the Brigades when we left Modder River on the march to Kimberley, we actually left with new staffs, and regiments hastily put together in brigades, but it could not have been helped ; the organisation did not exist before.

19344. When you say it is a grave error, you admit that it was an error which could not have been avoided under the circumstances ?—I mean it was an error not of the military people on the spot, but an error of the authorities at home not to have organised during peace ; those that are responsible for the organisation of the Army are to blame, and it was a great error on their part.

19345. Did the organisation of the Army itself, if there had been proper forethought, provide for such an organisation as you required on the Modder River ?—I think it ought to have provided for it.

19346. Did it do so under the organisation as it then existed ? Was there any organisation ?—There was no organisation—that is the fault I find—there was no organisation before the war to meet a situation such as we had in South Africa or even a smaller situation than that.

19347. In what way was there no organisation ?—I think that they ought to have maintained Cavalry Brigades and a Cavalry Division as a unit in peace

time ; they ought to have been organised and trained for war.

19348. Cavalry were sent out in Brigades, were they not ?—They were sent out in two Brigades, they were mobilised in the two Brigades. But neither regiments, brigadiers nor staffs had worked together in Brigade or Division during peace. We had four Brigades eventually in the Cavalry Division.

19349. That was owing to the circumstances of the war ?—Yes.

19350. That is inevitable, is it not ; the circumstances of any war might lead to modifications like that ?—No, I do not think so ; if you think out the situation beforehand you will have an implement suitable for whatever work is likely to have to be done. I think that this sort of work is the duty of the general staff.

19351. Do you mean a regular plan of campaign before the expedition starts ?—Yes.

19352. Complete down to the organisation of each Brigade ?—You would estimate that so many troops are necessary, in the event of war with such and such a State, and according to the number of troops mobilised, the force would be divided up into Brigades and Divisions.

19353. But still you would have to maintain a good deal of discretion for the General on the spot ?—You cannot improvise once war has broken out, as a rule there will not be time. I think that is the teaching of history—you cannot improvise and organise an army in the theatre of war.

19354. But if the General on the spot finds circumstances such that he cannot act upon the plan given him beforehand, would he not have to improvise ?—Undoubtedly he will have to improvise, but you started by asking me should not these things have been organised beforehand, and I say they ought to have been foreseen.

19355. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Were they not organised into Brigades before they left England ?—They organised two Brigades.

19356. That is what you wanted ?—No. The Brigades did not exist as fighting units before they mobilised for South Africa.

19357. They ought to have organised two more Brigades ?—The four Brigades ought to have gone out complete, and we ought not to have had to organise four Brigades out there ; the regiments were in England, but they had not been organised into Brigades before war broke out.

19358. The first two Brigades had ?—No, the 10th Hussars, for instance, were at Shorncliffe or Canterbury, and it was not a Brigade in peace time before it went out. They were mobilised and then concentrated, and went out as a Brigade, but they had not been a Brigade actually in peace time.

19359. You wish to keep them as Brigades in peace time ?—I should say Cavalry Brigades and a Cavalry Division ought to be complete as units in peace time with the staff and regiments together, so that they are all accustomed to work together, and then take the field together.

19360. Does that apply to the divisional staff, too ?—Certainly.

19361. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is not that the idea underlying the new organisation—I do not say it is to be carried out, but it is the theory of the new organisation, as far as you understand it, or as far as we understand it ?—I daresay—let us hope so.

19362. Your point is the point which has been taken by the Secretary of State for War ?—To be ready—yes.

19363. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You mean that the regiments in a brigade ought to work together at home ?—Certainly they ought to work together and to be together in peace time, so that you know exactly what you can do with them.

19364. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And the Brigade Staff ?—Yes.

19365. And the Divisional Staff ?—Yes ; I do not think you could actually have them, say, at Aldershot, because you have not got the ground there ; but I think you ought to work them together during the year for manœuvres, so that you would know exactly what the

*Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.*

18 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.
18 Mar. 1903.

value of so-and-so is, and all ranks would get to know their duties.

19366. (*Chairman.*) There was a difficulty in keeping up the strength?—Yes.

19367. Was that owing to the want of men or the want of horses chiefly?—The want of horses. I think the men were in the country, only there was not the machinery in existence for keeping the squadrons actually in touch with the enemy up to war strength. You see, the country was very big, and the men drifted away to posts on the communications, chiefly from want of horses, I think.

19368. You mention about the squadrons afterwards, but in the first place I understand you are speaking of horses; was that because horses were not in South Africa or were not at the front?—Of course, it depends upon what time of the war you are speaking of; at the beginning of the war, of course, there were lots of horses in South Africa if they had taken them—in Cape Colony, for instance.

19369. If they had impressed them?—Yes. They did not collect the horses there.

19370. They had not martial law, and therefore could not commandeer them?—No.

19371. That we have heard, but I want to know whether you thought it was because there were not horses sufficiently provided either by commandeering or by being sent into the country, or whether it was that the horses were not at the front at the moment you wanted them?—I do not think the horses were actually in the hands of the military; the military did not have them to send to the front.

19372. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Not anywhere in the country?—Not anywhere in the country.

19373. (*Chairman.*) But that was because they were not commandeered?—No. For two reasons; if you could have commandeered the horses you would have had horses, or if you were not able to commandeer you ought to have had other horses brought from over sea, but the fact remains that the men were not mounted because there were no horses.

19374. Taking this case of the march to Bloemfontein: at that time, of course, you lost a great many horses in the ride to Kimberley and back to Paardeberg?—Not many, if one considers the hardships, climate, want of water, and length of march without rest or food.

19375. I suppose it would have been almost impossible to supply that deficiency at the moment?—There was not a very great loss of horses, it was only about 1,700. General French gave you the numbers, and I have the numbers in this book here, but I think these horses could probably have been supplied if new corps had not mounted, such as Roberts' Horse and Kitchener's Horse.

19376. The point I am taking is, do you not think that at that particular moment the difficulty would have been, supposing the horses were at Cape Town, and they may have been at Cape Town, could they get them up to Paardeberg?—No, I do not know about the difficulty of the railway transport, but I feel sure that if the horses had been in South Africa the Headquarter Staff would have got them up.

19377. We have had it in evidence from several witnesses who could speak to the facts that in the case of the delay at Bloemfontein there was an inevitable delay because of the difficulty of getting horses, among other things, up to the front?—That is when they changed the base, but we did get a few remounts from Cape Town when at Paardeburg, and we also got horses out from Kimberley. I think Mr. Rhodes or the De Beers people provided us with some horses—not very good ones; I think 100 or so.

19378. That is additional assistance you got in that way, but I am looking more to the general provision that was made at the base at Cape Town, and you think if the horses had been at the base they could have been provided in time to remount the men at Paardeberg?—Some few remounts did reach us from the Base, and, again, it should be remembered that the dismounted men had gone back to the line, so that they could have easily ridden out. Paardeberg was no distance really from the railway—one day's march from Kimberley.

19379. May I put it in this way: You do not know the state of the dépôt at Cape Town at that time?—No, I do not, and I do not know the actual number of trains

that were running from there, but I think that if the horses had been there we would have got them.

19380. No doubt the experience of the march showed that additional horses had to be sent up, and a message had to be sent to England for them?—Yes.

19381. (*Viscount Esher.*) Were they constantly moving horses up the line in anticipation of their being wanted by General French?—They were always keeping horses moving up to the dépôts at the front.

19382. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You think the difficulty as regards horses really began when the base was changed when you got to Bloemfontein?—I said that with reference to the question I was asked—could the horses have come forward then? I said no, not when we got to Bloemfontein at once, because at that moment the transport of food was such a difficulty.

19383. Your difficulty as regards getting the horses fed was much greater at Bloemfontein than it had been when you were on the Kimberley Railway?—Yes, but the horses eventually came up as soon as possible after the food supplies had been regulated.

19384. (*Chairman.*) We have the facts about that, but even the Kimberley Railway is a single line too?—Yes, they are all single lines.

19385. And you had to send up the supplies as well as horses by the Kimberley Railway?—Yes, as far as De Aar, which is the junction for the Bloemfontein line.

19386. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I rather wished to see why you drew a distinction between the time you were at Paardeberg and the time you were at Bloemfontein?—At Paardeberg we were drawing our supplies of horses all from the old Kimberley line; then when we moved across to Bloemfontein—it was quite a wide detour by Naauport, and the line had all been destroyed—it was some time before the railway was in working order and the horses came forward.

19387. (*Chairman.*) But your chief point is that it would have been better to have kept the regular cavalry horsed than to horse the additional men?—Yes, than to horse the irregular corps recruited at this time in the seaports.

19388. I suppose you do not want to represent those corps as otherwise than useful corps—Kitchener's Horse, Roberts' Horse, and so on?—I can give you a fact, and I have a message here which proves it. There was an officer in command of a squadron of Kitchener's Horse when we reached the Riet River who handed me a written statement that he had lost about 10 men—I can give you the exact number if you think it is important—and so many rifles. He had lost these rifles and horses and men during the march from Randam to where we crossed the Riet River, and that was an easy march. The following is the information about the matter taken from the diary. On Monday, February the 12th, at De Kiels Drift, on the Riet River, Major —, commanding E Squadron of Kitchener's Horse, reported that during the march from Randam to De Kiels Drift, nine men, six rifles, and seven horses were lost owing to the inefficiency of the men.

19389. (*Sir John Edge.*) What was the distance covered by the march?—Under 20 miles.

19390. (*Viscount Esher.*) Your point is that they were not worth mounting?—Yes, at this time a large number were not worth mounting.

19391. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And if you had only one horse between two men, one trained and the other untrained, you would desire to put the trained man on the horse?—Yes. Of course, afterwards these corps got trained and they became very valuable fighting units, but at this particular time I am speaking of they were not.

19392. (*Viscount Esher.*) Whose fault was it? Who decided that the horses were to be appropriated to Kitchener's Horse rather than to the trained cavalry?—I suppose the Commander-in-Chief.

19393. (*Sir John Edge.*) Were these men unable to ride?—Presumably so; these people had never seen the enemy at all, and they were marching behind the Cavalry.

19394. And simply tumbled off their horses?—Yes; and this officer, a very excellent officer, came and made this report to me as Assistant Adjutant-General of the Cavalry Division.

19395. (*Chairman.*) Were the men recovered?—I do not know.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

19396. (Sir Frederick Darley.) I think that corps was raised in Cape Town?—Yes.

19397. They were supposed to be the wasters of the place?—Not at first; I think they had some good men to begin with, and I think it was latterly, in 1901, that all these corps degenerated. To start with I think they were pretty good men.

19398. (Sir John Hopkins.) They did not take their horses out of the dépôts, did they?—I do not know how they mounted Kitchener's and Roberts' Horse to start with.

19399. I have some idea that a great many of those irregular corps provided their own horses by picking them up?—I do not think that was the case with the squadron referred to.

19400. (Viscount Esher.) Had the horses used by these corps been available for the cavalry division, how would you have proposed that cavalry brigades moving as rapidly as yours could always have been supplied with remounts?—I state later on—by having reserve squadrons mobilised as a dépôt. Then as men become dismounted they are sent back to this dépôt, and when remounted rejoin their regiments as a complete unit.

19401. (Chairman.) Then in that case in any cavalry regiment that was engaged in this march to Kimberley, the men that were dismounted would have had to go back to the dépôt at Cape Town, or wherever the base was, and to come up again?—I think a dépôt would then have been organised, say at De Aar or at some other suitable place.

19402. Wherever it was?—Yes, not as far back as Cape Town.

19403. But they would have gone back to the base, wherever it was?—Yes; if you had had your reserve squadrons out in South Africa organised as a cavalry dépôt, those men who became dismounted during the march to Kimberley would have rejoined you later on, probably at Paardeberg.

19404. I only wanted to understand the system you proposed, and that is the system—that if on a march like that to Kimberley the men had been dismounted they would have gone back to the base and been replaced by mounted men from the dépôt?—Yes.

19405. (Viscount Esher.) Is that a better plan than remounting them there and then if you could do it? One would imagine that if a man was dismounted the thing you would want at once to do would be to put him on a horse again if you could get one?—Yes. You must consider the loss in saddlery and the difficulty in bringing horses forward by detachments. I think it is everything to have the discipline which exists in an organised squadron, as against one not organised. Again, how will the dismounted men keep up with the column until remounts arrive?

19406. But in your ride to Kimberley, how many horses did you lose as you were actually going along? I suppose what happened actually was that horses fell dead during your march, did they not?—Not exactly, many were reduced to a walk, but were able to come into camp late at night. If there had been a dépôt to send these horses to, it would have been a great advantage. We did leave a number of worn out horses in Kimberley; some of them rejoined us later on. They were dead tired and worn out. As to those that straggled into Paardeberg, there was not enough food to freshen them up, and, besides, the work there was so hard that men had to be mounted on any animal that was fit to crawl, and these horses, of course, suffered more and more, and died. I think the want of forage is one of the reasons which caused a large number of casualties.

19407. Then according to your idea, when a man is dismounted in that way, he would have to walk back to the base, wherever it was, or get back as best he could?—There are always wagons going back.

19408. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Would it be possible to have spare horses running with the troops?—Yes, we have had that system, and latterly we always took spare horses. At the commencement of the war, when it was proposed that the cavalry should leave Ladysmith, the plan was to take 5 per cent. led horses.

19409. Supposing you took 25 per cent. spare horses with you, so that when a horse was tired and could only walk, the man might dismount and put a saddle on a fresh horse, and let that horse run spare?—We tried that, but 25 per cent. is a large number. You can do it

with ponies on the veldt that are accustomed to be driven, but if you are going along at any pace, horses that are driven get knocked about, they knock one another about, galloping over the rough ground.

19410. But once they are accustomed to going that way. I am talking of what I know something about, namely, overlanding in Australia; there may be perhaps six men with a large quantity of overlanding cattle; those six men will take perhaps some 60 horses with them, and as they can only ride six there would be some 54 horses running spare, and they may change horses four or five times a day?—Yes, but you have the whole ground open to you; in the case of a force on the march you have wagons on the roads and many troops, so that the horses get jostling in and out between the troops and vehicles.

19411. Once the horses get a little accustomed to it they run just like dogs?—I quite agree it is an excellent thing, but 25 per cent. is a large number in addition to the troops you already have on the road. In Cape Colony we always had spare horses running.

19412. I am speaking of men who might be three or four months on the road?—Yes.

19413. (Viscount Esher.) You do not train men to run horses in time of peace in that way with cavalry regiments?—We have not got enough horses for it.

19414. And they have no experience; what Sir Frederick point out is that a man requires experience, but the cavalry soldier has no experience?—I do not think that comes into the present case, because in South Africa we had lots of natives and men who had experience to drive the horses.

19415. You mean that you acquired experience in South Africa?—No, to start with there were these Cape Boys.

19416. You could use Cape Boys?—Yes.

19417. (Chairman.) But there would have been difficulty in feeding them?—Great difficulty, and also in watering them; there is very little water in that country, especially in the height of summer.

19418. Such a large addition of horses would have complicated matters very much?—Yes.

19419. (Viscount Esher.) The Boers had more than one horse apiece, as far as you knew. Had not a Boer sometimes two or three ponies?—Some had three; I have seen them ride one and lead two, and they put all their packs on led horses.

19420. They manage to cope with the difficulty of watering and feeding, and so on?—About which particular time are you talking? If you talk of the Kimberley time, the Boers were always falling back then, and they had not the same long marches that we had to make. It is so much easier to fall back from a position with your horses fresh than to make a wide detour to outflank the enemy and also retain horses fresh enough for pursuit.

19421. I was thinking of the 25 per cent. additional horses; they in point of fact had 150 per cent. in some cases?—Yes, but what do you think that proves?

19422. I was only pointing to the fact that it does not seem to me that the difficulty of coping with 25 per cent. led horses would have been insuperable if you had happened to have them, but you did not have them?—Look at the difference in the circumstances of the two forces. I think we had 6,000 or 7,000 animals there; there was not enough water really for that number at that particular time. If you are to strike a blow you must be concentrated, while if you are merely operating, as the Boers were, and falling back, troops may be kept more scattered.

19423. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Your spare horses were generally in charge of natives?—Yes.

19424. How many spare horses could one man look after?—Do you mean on the march?

19425. Yes, on the march?—Latterly we drove them as Sir Frederick Darley has suggested.

19426. I ask the question because I have seen a good deal of that sort of thing myself?—Latterly we drove horses with the columns always, but, of course, at the commencement the point I wish to make is that when you have got your cavalry concentrated to strike a blow you cannot have this very large proportion of 25 per cent. of spare horses; you may have, say, 5 per cent. spare, but you cannot have that very large proportion of 25 per cent.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

19427. But the trooper could not lead another horse?—Certainly not, and fight; when the soldier has got to fight he must have only one horse, and be lightly equipped for fighting.

19428. The Boers were in the habit of leading their horses. were they not?—Yes, on the march, but they had natives, too.

19429. Who had charge of them specially?—Yes, and when they were fighting they had only one horse; the led horses were in a different column further back.

19430. (*Chairman.*) You are satisfied with the physique and intelligence of the men?—Yes, the Reservists were rather too big—I mean they were fat, and too heavy for horses.

19431. How are we to avoid that?—By keeping stronger cadres in peace time, and transferring fat men to infantry.

19432. And not relying on reservists?—You should not require to call up the reservists on mobilising cavalry.

19433. Then you think the Reserve system has not worked so well in the cavalry as in the infantry?—The reservists did excellently, but you asked me how we were to avoid having these very heavy men; you see the men in civil life get very fat, and some of them, I say, ought not to have been put upon horses, as they were too heavy.

19434. I only say, therefore, that the Reserve system as it exists does not work so well practically for the cavalry as it does for the infantry?—No.

19435. You would rather have the cadres complete?—Yes, stronger in peace time, so that only very few reservists are required on mobilisation.

19436. If there are to be reservists, what do you mean by reservists going to more than one regiment being pernicious?—A man is enlisted first of all for the corps of Hussars. Although he may say: "I want to enlist in a particular regiment, say the 7th Hussars," he is told, "We do not enlist for a special regiment, but we will enlist you for the corps of Hussars." Then he is posted to a regiment, say, at home; possibly a Hussar regiment in India wants a draft, and they draft him from his regiment at home out to the regiment in India; next possibly his new regiment in India may be sent home, and he is transferred to another Hussar regiment out there to finish his term of enlistment, so that there are three regiments he has been in. Lastly he goes to the Reserve, and on mobilisation is probably called up for a fourth. Do you follow me?

19437. Yes, I think I do, that the men do not belong to a special regiment in the same way as they do in the infantry?—In the infantry they have the linked battalion system, but in the cavalry they enlist men for the corps of Hussars, or the corps of Lancers, or the corps of Dragoons. I think they ought to enlist a man for a particular regiment, say the 7th Hussars, and he ought always to be a 7th Hussar.

19438. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Supposing the 7th Hussars were in India at the time the Reserve men were wanted at home for a war in South Africa, you would want the Reserve men to join some other regiment?—Regiments at home ought to have enough of their own reservists to make them up to war strength if squadrons were kept at full strength during peace.

19439. Have we not found that in time of great stress we want the whole of the reservists?—Were all the cavalry reserves called up? I do not know, but it seems to me that the arrangements should be that cavalry regiments should be strong enough to take the field at once without calling up reservists to make them up to war strength. Continental States do this because cavalry cannot be improvised.

19440. Would your system be that during all the years a regiment was serving in India its Reserve man should be practically not available at all in case of war elsewhere?—I think you could arrange that.

19441. Could you arrange it in any other way in case of war than by sending the men to a regiment where that war is?—In the case of war it might be done, but why transfer a man in peace time from one regiment to another? You ruin the idea of *esprit de corps* by transferring men from regiment to regiment in peace time.

19442. (*Viscount Esher.*) What was the argument for it? There must have been some reason. Do you know at all?—Because some regiments have smarter uniforms than others, and always can get more recruits.

19443. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) What do you give for your horses now?—I think about £40 is the price of a cavalry horse.

19444. (*Chairman.*) Another heading you have here is: "Want of Transport." In that you are particularly speaking of the light regimental transport to be close up to the fighting line; is not that so?—Yes; we ought to have some light transport to come up every night with the squadron, to reduce the weight carried on the horse.

19445. In order to relieve the weight on the horse?—Yes.

19446. Which you consider to be excessive?—Quite excessive.

19447. You have given us in Appendix A (*see* pages 404-5) details?—Yes; I had it worked out in South Africa, and I thought it as well to tack it on. I have been thinking about it for a good long time.

19448. Is that what you propose he should carry—17st. 6lbs. 10ozs. the present weight on a horse?—That is the total weight to be carried by a horse, presuming no alteration is allowed in the pattern of equipment.

19449. I did not quite understand?—No, that is far too heavy. I say the weight of the saddle and bridle must be reduced by having lighter patterns; I think we ought to reduce the total weight on horse down to 14 stone.

19450. You head it "To be carried on the man" and "To be carried on the horse," and we were not quite sure whether that meant your proposals or the present weights?—I am taking the actual equipment as existing at present in A and B, and I say that unless you alter the equipment that is what must be carried, and that, after reducing it to the bare necessities, the total comes to 17 stone 6lbs. and 10oz., and therefore I argue that we must have a lighter saddle, and reduce the weight of some other things. I have put down the bare necessities; you cannot make a man go out with less.

19451. You think you could reduce the 17 stones to something like 14?—I think so.

19452. That is on the basis of having a man about 10 stone 7lbs. in weight?—I think if you do not hang so many things on to the saddle you can do with a very much lighter saddle; the weight of the present saddle stripped, without anything else, is 14lbs. 6ozs., and that does not allow for the stirrups and the saddle blanket; there are 2 stone 3lbs. 2ozs. simply for the saddle, and the accessories of that saddle alone, which is very much too heavy.

19453. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You speak of the colonial bridle; in what does it differ from the ordinary bridle?—The cheek of the bit is bent in form.

19454. Much lighter?—Yes, instead of being a bit and bridoon, it is of the nature of a Pelham; there is no snaffle part, and it is bent back like that (*describing*).

19455. And you recommend it in preference to the other?—I think so, but it is impossible to have a universal pattern of bit to suit all horses.

19456. (*Chairman.*) Have you considered what sort of light transport would be required for that purpose?—It depends upon what country you are operating in; I think it is good always to take the transport of the country as far as you can. If it is a mountainous country it will have to be pack transport—mules or horses. Latterly in Cape Colony we used led horses for carrying a lot of things.

19457. Light carts?—Light carts if there are roads; but transport has to get across dongas and rough ground, so a two-wheeled cart sometimes does not go so well along as a light four-wheeled cart. I think the kind of transport depends very much on the particular country in which you wish to operate.

19458. Speaking of that sort of transport, you are not dealing with the transport for supplies?—No. This is light transport, to relieve the horse of some articles now carried on the saddle.

19459. Were you satisfied with the transport of supplies?—Yes, there were a very great many difficulties to contend with, and I think it was satisfactory.

19460. As to the Remount Department, you have said a good deal as to the horses. I understand you to say that the quality of the horses deteriorated as the war went on?—Yes, latterly there were more horses suitable for vans—the Hackney sort—not well enough bred.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.
18 Mar. 1903.

19461. You refer chiefly to Hungarians?—Even the North American horses, too, which I came across were a number of them underbred.

19462. Too heavy?—Much too heavy.

19463. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) What would you consider the proper size for a horse?—I think a good average size would be about 15 hands.

19464. That is not too high?—15 hands is a good height, but we want a well-bred horse.

19465. (*Chairman.*) In most of these cases it was necessary to use these horses so soon that only a few could be expected to stand the treatment?—Yes, but even if they had been used in this country, I question if they could have carried weight, because they had not been accustomed to be saddle horses.

19466. Those in the latter part of the war?—Yes, and even at the commencement there were a number of horses that had not been trained; what we found was that the horses that had been trained as cavalry horses, and had their muscles developed, lasted very much better than the remounts that were sent out.

19467. Do you want to say anything more about the horses?—No.

19468. You draw a distinction between cavalry and mounted infantry, and I understand you to say that they must be kept entirely separate?—Well, I first of all state that I would not have mounted infantry at all; I think a well trained cavalry ought to supply all the requirements of mounted troops. Mounted infantry, owing to their infantry training, will be chiefly valuable then on the battlefield as mobile infantry. In that case I recommend to put infantry on motors or bicycles, and only in very exceptional cases to put them on horses. I hold that if cavalry is properly trained to make use of the carbine, they ought to suffice for all the requirements of mounted troops in our Army.

19469. But the cavalry training you require is a cavalry training including a weapon of offence; it is not merely a mounted rifle corps that you wish as cavalry?—I say cavalry trained to act mounted and dismounted.

19470. But trained also for shock tactics?—Most certainly.

19471. Did you find in any case a disadvantage from the mounted infantry in South Africa not having a weapon of offence?—We always had cavalry. When the sword and lance were taken away from the cavalry we did miss them. It was a great mistake, and moreover, General Smuts, who arranged the details of surrender with me in the west of Cape Colony, said that it was the greatest mistake to take away the sword and lance from the cavalry, because he said that they always estimated that if they got within 200 yards of a position they could take it, owing to the bad shooting of the British, but he said that if cavalry had been there he would never have attempted to go near the position, because the cavalry would have charged down upon them with the *arme blanche*. That opinion he volunteered.

19472. Was the sword and lance definitely taken away in South Africa?—Yes; just after Lord Roberts came home I think the sword and lance were sent into store in some commands.

19473. And the cavalry had nothing but their carbines?—Except a few; a few regiments—those under General French—retained their swords. I can give you instances where the 10th Hussars in Cape Colony charged in with their swords and captured a laager in the Clanwilliam district, and other instances of the success of troops armed with the sword. Again, only cavalry could have relieved Kimberley. I mean neither mounted rifles nor mounted infantry alone could have broken through the Boers near De Kiel's Drift.

19474. And you would like to keep both the sword and lance?—No, I say I would like to have some cavalry armed with the sword and some with the lance.

19475. That is what I mean?—You know at present the Lancer has a sword as well, and that is rather too much, I think. I do not say that we want a lance as long as we have at present, but I think a lance more like a hog spear, a shorter one, with a counterpoise at the end, would get over the difficulty of carrying it when acting dismounted.

19476. We had some evidence from one witness who said that if the rifle had a short bayonet attached it would be practically very much like a hog spear?—I do

not think so, because the balance is wrong. We tried it with the New Zealanders at Colesberg, and it is all very well to impress an enemy at a distance—the moral effect may be all right at a distance—but if you come to use it it is a very different thing. At the very commencement the New Zealanders came to Colesberg, and they had not a sword, and I remember General French trying them with a bayonet on their carbines, and, of course, they could use it, but not as an effective weapon really.

19477. What sort of a sword would you have?—I think a thrusting sword.

19478. A lighter sword than at present?—Yes, a light straight sword; at present the sword is a bad pattern sword.

19479. Some people say that the Anglo-Saxon will not point?—It is a question of training.

19480. You think he could be taught to do so?—Oh, yes. When I was in India Sir George Greaves, then Commander-in-Chief in Bombay, gave me this question of sword versus lance to consider. Many regiments were wanting to be armed as Lancers, and they gave me papers from the Record Office at Simla, amongst which were records of men who in the Sikh War had been accustomed to use the sword objecting very strongly to being armed with the lance, and I think the evidence all went to prove that whatever you taught a man to use, that weapon he would prefer.

19481. And to give him that training you say, further on in your paper, that he must be taught to move about the country more than he does at present?—Yes.

19482. Is that practicable in this country?—I think it is practicable if you do not take him up for trespassing; if you passed a proper Manoeuvres Act you could train cavalry thoroughly in England.

19483. You sum up your views about training in the last three paragraphs of your paper; do you want to expand that in any way?—No, I do not think so.

19484. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How long would you say it takes to make an average recruit a good cavalry soldier?—A good cavalry soldier?

19485. A good average cavalry soldier?—I take it that in four months you ought to train him sufficiently to ride in the ranks; he is then able to charge, but I do not think he will have the intellectual knowledge to fit him to go on service. I think that in a year's time he ought to be quite fit to take the field, but his scouting would be at fault.

19486. When would he be fit for that?—I do not think under three years.

19487. What are the qualities he would learn between the four months you speak of first and the year?—He has got to shoot, and scout; he is but an indifferent horseman in four months.

19488. And in eight months more he would be an average shot?—Yes; that is if we give up a good deal of that *haute école* riding which we have done in the past—there must be less riding in the Riding House. The Riding School has come to be looked upon rather as the end in view than as the means to an end. There are only six things you want to teach the individual man in riding—to start his horse, to stop his horse, to back, to turn to the right and left, to circle to the right and left, and passage, and if he can do those six things he is quite fit to go into the ranks, and you ought to be able to teach him those six things in four months.

19489. And by a year he would be a fair soldier, in your opinion?—I think he ought to be a fair soldier, but not able to go out on his own responsibility.

19490. That you would not get in less than three years?—I think for a mounted man you must train him for three years, taking the average intelligence of the recruit.

19491. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Taking the average sergeant, would it take three years before he would be efficient, rising from the ranks?—It is the same thing.

19492. Can you safely promote a man to be a sergeant before he has been three years in the regiment?—No, I think he ought to have three years' experience before he is a sergeant.

19493. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) You say that the horses provided at Kroonstadt were of inferior quality; were they South African horses or from South America?—The South American horses were bad, undoubtedly; at the commencement there were a few of

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.

18 Mar. 1903.

Argentines of a different class, but when we got the great bulk of Argentines over later in the campaign, they were so very underbred, and so very slow, that they were quite unfit for the work of mounted troops.

19494. Were those you received chiefly Argentine horses?—I can find out what the class of them were.

19495. You say that although inferior those received afterwards were still worse—the Hungarian horses?—Yes, the Hungarians were a bad lot, but not worse than the Argentines.

19496. They were very bad?—Those I saw; I had a Hungarian myself, but I think it was an exceptional one, which I rode all the way through, and many people who saw him would not believe he was a Hungarian. That shows there are some Hungarians that are good.

19497. (*Viscount Esher.*) You do not favour taking the regimental signallers to form a corps of signallers?—No.

19498. What is the plan exactly which you would suggest?—I think we ought to have a corps of army signallers just like the department of telegraphs.

19499. What is the objection to the present system?—Because when we go away on service regiments are deprived of their best regimental signallers. Every brigade ought to have a proportion of trained signallers organised as part of the Brigade Staff.

19500. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Mounted men?—Yes.

19501. (*Viscount Esher.*) So that you are left without the few trained signallers you have got in your regiment?—Yes, and similarly with orderlies; there are so many men required on service for all sorts of odd jobs that it reduces the strength of squadrons very much. I think a corps of orderlies should be maintained in peace time.

19502. With regard to the mounted infantry, you do not object to mounted infantry?—No, but I think that given the fact that the amount of money to be spent on mounted troops is limited, those mounted troops ought to be cavalry. Cavalry can do every thing which mounted infantry can do, and other duties in addition.

19503. Your objection then is to a regular corps of mounted infantry rather than to the training of infantry soldiers as infantry on horseback?—The objection again to the mounted infantryman is that you take away the picked men from the infantry, so that the residue is not so efficient, moreover it is difficult to get recruits for infantry; cavalry is always up to full strength.

19504. But do you see any objection to the present system as they are at present working it at Aldershot, which is to pass a certain number of infantry soldiers through a mounted course, because that is really what it comes to; do you see any particular objection to that?—I see this objection:—I do not think you will be able to keep them mounted in war. Supposing that you have say, 2,000 cavalry, and that with mounted infantry you have 4,000 mounted troops in the First Army Corps alone, it would be very much better if you had 4,000 cavalry, as their horses will last longer, being professional riders, as against amateurs, so to speak. I think the requirements of those corps in remounts will be greater than you can supply in war.

19505. You think we are misapplying the lesson of the war?—I think so; I think what we want to do is to perfect the training of our cavalry, and I think we are wasting horses in training mounted infantry.

19506. The idea being that it is an advantage to increase the mobility of the infantry, you think that a dream, owing to the impossibility of providing in the first place a sufficient number of horses, and in the second place feeding them; is that your point?—That is one reason against it, that is one of my points, but my chief point is that in the field the mounted infantry is not so effective as cavalry.

19507. I do not know that that would be contended, but would you say that mounted infantry were not so effective as infantry who were not mounted? That is the way in which I think it might be put?—Well, but it comes back to pounds, shillings, and pence; if you cannot afford to feed these horses in war, what is the good of keeping them up in peace time? Take the situation that in open country there is a mounted enemy against you—cavalry—then success or failure in that open country depends on the number of men you can put into the charge, the mounted infantry cob that cannot charge is a useless mouth as compared with the cavalry horse. The thing is to be strongest at the decisive point, and the decisive point there is the charge,

and, therefore, I argue that mounted infantry is a very expensive luxury, as it can only suffice in special cases.

19508. I see that, but on the other hand, supposing you were now responsible for the training of the infantry, putting all your cavalry experience and your cavalry predilections on one side for the moment?—But I had mounted infantry experience, too.

19509. Well, I will say, putting your cavalry predilections on one side, would you, if you were responsible for the training of the infantry at the present moment, stop them absolutely from passing these men through a mounted infantry course?—Yes, I would. I think they are wasting their time, and I believe that if the cavalry men, when the carbine was started, had gone in heart and soul, and trained their men to use the carbine properly, we would never have heard of mounted infantry.

19510. I suppose there is no objection at any rate to a few men in every infantry regiment being taught to ride for the purposes, scouting, signalling, and so on; I suppose that would be useful?—I think mounted infantry cannot scout. It takes years to train a good scout.

19511. But infantry soldiers, at least a great many infantry soldiers, in a battalion are trained to scouting?—That is a sort of blindman's dog business, but that is not scouting on an extended scale.

19512. Would not that man be more usefully posted in certain fields of operations if he could ride?—Then comes in the question of horse management; you cannot teach a man really to look after his horse unless he is always with horses.

19513. I see your point is that you wish to keep the two services absolutely distinct?—Yes, and I think if you do start mounted infantry it ought to be on an emergency, and they should be mounted upon any kind of animal which you do not mind abandoning.

19514. For the purposes of such a campaign as this last one, for instance?—Yes.

19515. You hold that it is unnecessary to train men as mounted infantry in time of peace?—I think so. My point is that all money which is available for mounted troops should be spent on the cavalry.

19516. As regards the lance and sabre regiments, which you say should be in equal proportions to the other arms, the latter has been abolished?—Yes.

19517. That you think is a mistake?—Yes.

19518. Against uncivilised people the lance has been found very useful?—The reason I say the lance is better is that it is so much easier to teach a man to thrust with a lance; I grant you it is an inconvenience to have the very long lance they have now, and I think a compromise might be arrived at between the thrusting sword and this very long lance we have now; you could have a shorter lance with a counterpoise like a hog spear.

19519. In your Appendix B (see page 405), with regard to the proposal for training the cavalry men as scouts, in the first paragraph you say: "Twelve non-commissioned officers or men per squadron possessing exceptional intelligence, courage, nerve, and eye for country, besides being good riders and horsemasters, to be specially trained in each squadron." Is there anything to prevent the officer commanding the 17th Lancers from training twelve non-commissioned officers or men per squadron in the way you suggest?—No, but it is only a question of the pay. This Appendix B was really a scheme I drew out for the 17th Lancers before we left South Africa; the regiment was going to remain out there, and we were working on this plan to improve our scouting.

19520. But there is nothing to prevent the Colonel commanding any regiment you like to name from carrying out this?—Nothing, except that the pay: I propose to give them higher pay.

19521. That, of course, you cannot do, without authority, but I suppose something could be done in the way of training them?—And is being done in training scouts; in Scotland now we are working at it.

19522. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) With respect to the lance, I suppose you have studied that charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman?—I was at Omdurman myself; I was with the Egyptian cavalry.

19523. Not in the 21st Lancers charge?—No.

19524. Have you heard that in that charge they did very little mischief to the enemy?—Because they charged over a donga, and many horses jumped over the enemy who were in this dry water course. I do not know what was the actual damage they did do.

19525. I have heard that it consisted of three men killed?—There were more than that; I think that is not quite fair; there were a good many more than three men killed. I went over the ground afterwards, and there were a good many more corpses than that on the ground; I went over the place a week afterwards.

19526. You mean where the Lancers charged?—Yes, the Egyptian cavalry went on pursuing the Khalifa. When we came back, I was in Omdurman for about a month, and we used to ride out over where the battle took place.

19527. You have been asked with reference to using the rifle with a bayonet as a lance; would there not be a danger, supposing there was a charge home, of losing the rifle?—I think so, and also of damaging it.

19528. But of losing it if it was used?—Yes.

19529. The lance is attached to the arm by a loop?—Yes.

19530. So that a man may let a lance go, and then draw it back, but with the rifle, if you let that go it is gone?—Yes, but they might attach the rifle with a sling, and I think that might get over that point, but it is the weight I think that makes it so unhandy.

19531. (Sir John Edge.) You would have to take the rifle about half way up the barrel?—Yes.

19532. You could not ride at a man holding it by the grip?—No.

19533. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You speak here of a Colonial ambulance; do you remember what ambulance you saw?—It was from Sydney, New South Wales, and a most excellent one it was. General French and I rode in it over rough ground for about a quarter of an hour to test it, and it was a very good ambulance.

19534. Do you remember the name of the officer who was in charge—Colonel Williams?—I have forgotten for the moment.

19535. Or Fiaschi?—It was under Fiaschi.

19536. Williams was the officer in charge?—We had several detachments of medical corps. I cannot find the name in the diary, but talking about the lances, I see that on the 27th October an urgent wire was sent to Pretoria for 300 swords and 500 lances, "as owing to the wear and tear many have become unserviceable, and in the present condition of the enemy an attack with the sword or lance is more demoralising." That was on the 27th October, 1900, before the Field-Marshal came home.

19537. You knew Dr. Fiaschi?—Yes, a first-rate fellow.

19538. And you approved of the ambulance?—I am not a doctor, but they struck one as being well equipped.

19539. Were you at Diamond Hill?—On the north part; it is called Diamond Hill, and I was with the cavalry on the north that day.

19540. Were there any New South Wales mounted troops with you there?—Can you recollect the date?

19541. I cannot recollect the date, but I think it was some time in October; there was a cavalry charge that

went home?—That was further south; that was not in General French's command on that day.

19542. That charge went home; the Boers waited for them?—Yes, that was where Lord Airlie was killed.

19543. If there had been reliable mounted troops like trained cavalry, even one squadron, with Lord Methuen at the time of that reverse, do you believe that reverse would have taken place?—Of course, I do not know enough about the facts of the case, but personally I believe if there had been any troops mounted with the sword or lance that the Boers would not have dared to charge home.

19544. Do you believe that the Boers would have charged in at all if there had been men there to meet the charge?—I have General Smuts' statement that they would not; he said that if they got up to within 200 yards of a position they always counted it as captured, but that they would not dare to do such a thing if there were cavalry there to charge them.

19545. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You speak of the over-sea Colonials, and say they were good horsemen, but that they lacked trained officers—there not being a sufficient number of Imperial officers; you do not wish it to be inferred that they were not capable of doing good service, and that they did not do good service?—Not at all; they did extraordinarily good service, but what I want to say is that they asked for Imperial officers, and we were not able to give them; from the very commencement they were all wanting an Imperial adjutant just to help them.

19546. But the Colonial officers did good service?—They did right good service.

19547. Do you know of any particular occasion, or occasions, on which they were at a disadvantage in not having trained officers?—I take one at the very commencement which I have here; some over-sea Colonials near Arundel went forward towards the enemy's position without proper precautions, and they came back rather hurriedly; the officer did not know what he was about, as he had only just landed in South Africa.

19548. And you consider that it would have been better had they had more trained officers, as in all other regiments?—Yes.

19549. You recommend that the men enlisted should remain by their own regiments, and that the *esprit de corps* should be maintained and encouraged?—Yes.

19550. Now, as a matter of fact, in the territorial regiments, is it the case, if the county is Essex, for instance, that the men of the regiment come from that county especially?—I do not know enough about those territorial infantry regiments to tell you, but what I mean is that if a man joins a regiment he gets imbued with the old historical traditions that are prevalent in the regiment, and he fights all the better for them.

19551. He should not be transferred?—No.

19552. He takes an interest in that particular regiment?—Yes.

19553. Take the Highland regiments, do you know whether the men of those regiments are almost entirely Highlanders?—I am not in a Highland regiment, but I fancy there are a good many Highlanders in them; anyhow, they have got the traditions, and Englishmen joining get to believe they are Scotchmen. There is a little leaven of Highlanders that leavens the lot.

19554. (Chairman.) Is there anything you would like to add?—No.

Colonel FORBES MACBEAN, C.B., Commanding the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, called and examined.

19555. (Chairman.) You are in command of the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders?—Yes.

19556. When did your battalion go to South Africa?—We landed at Cape Town on the 29th of November, 1899.

19557. You have been enough to give us a *précis* of the evidence you are willing to give, and I think, if you have no objection, we will put that in in the first instance, and you can develop any of the points as we go along?—Very good.

Précis.

Battalion embarked for South Africa; strength, 29 officers, 856 non-commissioned officers and men. Of these latter 500 were mobilised Reservists; of the officers, all but five had previous war service.

Of the men, over 600 had the previous experience of two campaigns—Chitral and Tirah.

General Physique and Morale.

Were excellent and all that could be desired; both qualities became more marked as the war went on. With the majority each man's aim appeared to be to do his utmost in his small way to bring the war to a successful issue, and to maintain the reputation of his regiment. In the most critical situations I invariably trusted the unconquerable spirit of the men under my command, a confidence shared by all my officers.

As a body the non-commissioned officers were magnificent.

Colonel
D. Haig,
C.B., A.D.C.
18 Mar. 1903.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

Intelligence.

Those men who had no previous war experience were at first wanting in this, and, as was perhaps only natural, did not know what was required of them, but they rapidly learnt from having experienced comrades to teach them.

Intrenching.

As regards this, my experience was that the men, unless at the advice of the officers, did not fully appreciate the value of hasty entrenchments; they certainly had no conception of the power of penetration of the bullets used against them, and appeared to think that a small mound of earth as a means of concealment was sufficient cover. They, however, very rapidly appreciated the necessity of excavating cover rapidly and on all occasions, and also the erection of sangars, which they learned during their Indian campaigns. In soft ground the regulation bayonet proved an excellent implement for digging.

Taking Cover.

My experience served to prove to me that the youngest soldier fully appreciated the value of this, and sought it instinctively and intelligently, after being a few minutes under fire.

I am of opinion that there is a danger of the teaching of recruits to take cover being overdone. It should only be sought when ordered by an officer. I consider it important that men should be trained how to reach and leave cover with least danger of being hit. The possibility of the old dash of the British soldier regardless of danger being lost, should be carefully guarded against.

Quality and Improvement.

Assuming that the quality of the men means fitness and aptitude for war, I consider the men under my command were possessed of all those qualities essential in a good infantry soldier, being confident and enduring under trying circumstances, and during the latter and more trying period of the war much good-humoured patience.

Future Training.

Although the system of training adopted in my battalion prior to the war proved all-sufficient to convince me that all ranks had acquired an intelligent and thoroughly practical knowledge of their profession, it must be remembered that their education was received in India and Ceylon, where facilities exist for the proper training of a soldier that are almost impossible at home.

The preparation of a battalion under home service conditions for active service is, except at one or two stations, next to an impossibility, freedom of movement, the most important factor, being almost unknown.

While quite aware of the great difficulties with which the authorities have to contend, I hold that giving a battalion month's exercise under canvas, or on manœuvre ground, is wholly inadequate training. Recruits and young soldiers are grounded in extended order work in all its many varieties on a barrack square, by which their ideas on the subject are as cramped as the space they work on, and these undeveloped notions they take with them to the larger ground when opportunity occurs, and it is essentially a part of the soldier's preparation for war that cannot be taught theoretically.

The system of training as laid down in the new "Infantry Training" is all-sufficient, provided officers are afforded the chance of teaching their men on ground adapted to the work.

Eyesight.

I wish to mention that I was on many occasions struck with the excellent eyesight of the men, and that their capabilities and power of observation increased very much during the course of the campaign.

Deaths from Disease.

As regards sickness, 37 died of disease; of these 25 were enteric cases, but as far as I can trace not more than one officer and six men contracted it while with the battalion.

Arms.

The arms were found to be very efficient, with the exception of the magazine, which could not always be relied on, owing to the jamming of the platform.

Clothing.

The thick felt hat was more suitable than the helmet, being lighter and allowing more freedom for the head when firing.

The new service jacket (drab mixture) most suitable for both hot and cold weather.

Kilt by far the best thing to march in.

Khaki canvas gaiters with foot-straps made of some strong material preferable; the drill khaki ones with buff straps which were issued only lasted a short time.

The great coat was found to be more an encumbrance than a comfort. It is only worn in wet weather (on the march), and after being soaked only adds to the discomfort and weight carried by the soldier, making him quite unfit to move rapidly before the enemy, and great difficulty is found in taking aim when clothed in wet great coat and accoutred.

Would suggest a strong light waterproof cape, similar to that supplied to the cavalry in South Africa, which could be thrown back clear of the arms on coming into action, and, if circumstances permitted, could be taken off, rolled up, and fastened to a belt behind in a very short space of time. When not required it could be carried strapped to the waist-belt, and if rain came on could easily be undone and put on. In cold weather the addition of a "British warm" coat should be sufficient for night work.

Shoes.

The shoes issued at the beginning of the campaign were very good, but later were of a very inferior quality, and seldom lasted more than a month or six weeks. The Indian-made were especially bad, the soles and heels giving way from the uppers, allowing the sand to get to the feet, and knocking the men up. As a rule these shoes were made too high at the ankle, and to prevent the skinning or blistering of the ankles, had to be cut down. In one or two cases "British makes" were also very poor, and had every appearance of being hurriedly "made up." All shoes as a rule were made too tight at instep, and had to be cut to give sufficient space and ease. The arrangements for provision of clothing to the Army by Royal Army Commissariat Department were excellent.

Necessaries.

Necessaries were too often issued on payment, at times when I think the men should have got them free. Even on, or after being on, trek, when necessaries were thoroughly worn out, if demanded from Ordnance, payment had to be made for issues.

Accoutrements.

The present accoutrements are cumbersome, heavy, and badly balanced, and ammunition was continually lost by falling out of the pouches. Would suggest two light bandoliers, one on each shoulder, and holding 50 rounds of ammunition each. A bandolier waist-belt, with frog attached, to hold 50 rounds (25 rounds on each side of front of the body); this would hold the 50 rounds issued before going into action, and would make a total of 150 rounds on the men.

Mess tins.—The cavalry pattern is preferable to the pattern issued to infantry at present. Mess tins were carried in the haversack, after experimenting, and the infantry pattern, originally intended to be placed on top of valise or great coat, was found to be of an awkward shape, and not so handy as the cavalry one.

Water bottles.—I think the aluminium water bottles, felt covered, and Indian pattern (holding three pints) are much the best.

Blankets and Waterproof Sheet.

As the present waterproof sheet is not much use for keeping out the damp after being a short time in use, I think that instead of one of the blankets and waterproof sheet now issued, one blanket-lined waterproof with pocket at end should be issued, the waterproof part to be made of thicker material than the present waterproof sheet, which cracks and admits damp in a short time—Wilkesden canvas would be suitable—three eyelets could be inserted on each edge to be used for bivouac when necessary.

Food.

The supply of food was, under the circumstances, very good, but I think that more attention could have been paid to what might appear to be of little consequence. Salt, for instance, was generally scarce at the beginning of the campaign, and was a most necessary article at that time. Again, tea, which I have great faith in as a stimulant, was very often reduced to half ration (12 men to one ounce), when to have given the men a full ration would not have taken much more transport and would have added greatly to the comfort and spirits of the men.

Ammunition.

I have always found the supply of ammunition to be equal to any demands made.

19558. You came from home, did you?—Yes.

19559. And, therefore, a large proportion of your battalion were reservists at that time?—Yes, they were.

19560. When you say that over 600 had previous experience of two campaigns, was that mostly among the reservists?—In the large majority.

19561. How many men did you leave at home when you took out the 500 reservists—recruits and under age?—It is hard to say; that is not a point I looked up before I left, and I would not like to state the number without being certain.

19562. But a considerable number?—A considerable number, and certainly not less than 150; I could easily find out.

19563. I do not think I need take you through this in detail; your opinion of your men was that they did excellently?—Yes.

19564. And that the reservists in particular did so?—Yes, they turned out very good.

19565. You think that perhaps there is too much said about teaching the recruit to take cover?—Yes. I think it is a thing that is inclined to be overdone.

19566. He does it naturally enough?—He does it naturally enough if he has been under fire once or twice, and, of course, as we were situated with the number of old soldiers we had, they very soon saw that any youngsters near them got under cover.

19567. You do not want them to lose the dash?—No.

19568. I suppose there was no sign of that during this campaign?—No, I never saw any sign of it.

19569. You say that: "Assuming that the quality of the men means fitness and aptitude for war I consider the men under my command were possessed of all those qualities essential in a good infantry soldier." Does that mean that you are satisfied with the class from which you recruit at the present moment?—Yes, thoroughly.

19570. Because a good deal has been said as to the class of recruit—that if we could get a more intelligent class we should have a better soldier. Is that your opinion?—Well, we are getting at the present moment very much the same class of recruit we have had since I have known the Service, and, of course, we do our best always to get nothing but the Aberdeenshire country lad, and he is not naturally a man gifted with intelligence, he has to be taught it.

19571. But given opportunities of training he has enough intelligence in him to profit by it?—Yes, I certainly would not consider him a thoroughly good soldier, under two years' or two and a-half years' service. He takes a great deal of training and teaching, he is very slow, but when he once learns he does not forget.

19572. Do you manage to get a large proportion of those country lads?—Yes, a very fair proportion; we are doing pretty well now.

19573. Is that the effect of the prestige of the war, or had you had any difficulty formerly?—No, I think any fillip that was given to recruiting on account of the war has disappeared; I think the country people have now begun to forget it, and I do not think they are joining the regiment now on account of the war for all that has been talked and written about it. I think they are now joining in our own district because they wish to be soldiers.

19574. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Were the men chiefly from the east coast of Scotland?—No; we do not get any coastmen; the Aberdeenshire fishermen will not enlist with us at all.

19575. (Chairman.) But they are mostly Aberdeenshire men?—A large percentage of them are; on the 1st January last I had 82 per cent. of Scotchmen in the battalion.

19576. And the rest?—A few Englishmen and fewer Irishmen.

19577. Would these Englishmen and Irishmen be men who were enlisted in Scotland also?—Yes, they might have been, or they might have enlisted in London at the time when we were open for general recruiting. When we do get Englishmen we generally get men from Northumberland and Yorkshire, and a few from London.

19578. What do you mean by being open for general recruiting?—If we are very much below our numbers; at present we are only open in our own district.

19579. And if you get short of numbers you can go outside your district?—Yes. 18 Mar. 1903.

19580. Does that often happen?—No.

19581. As for the training of the men, the difficulty that you see is chiefly in the facilities for getting the proper training?—Yes.

19582. Does not that exist in this country?—Well, I take it that Aldershot, and perhaps York and Salisbury are the three chief training grounds. I have no experience of any of them myself, but in my present station at Glasgow we have absolutely nowhere where we can go to train the men beyond the barrack square.

19583. And there you cannot give them the training that is wanted in war?—No.

19584. What remedy can you suggest?—The only remedy is having ground to drill them on. I am afraid there is no remedy that can be applied at Glasgow.

19585. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Would it be possible to entrain the men and take them out to the country?—They are taken; they go for the musketry to Barry, and they do their military training there, but that is only for a month or six weeks in the year, and during the rest of the year they are being trained on the barrack square in Glasgow. If we had the ground to work the men over I am convinced that the training would be very much improved.

19586. (Chairman.) You think the system as laid down would be sufficient if you had the ground to work them on?—Yes, I think the system is quite as it should be; all we want is the opportunity to apply it.

19587. You mention the eyesight of the men, but you cannot very well train that unless you have larger areas of ground?—Quite so, and in several instances I noticed the wonderful eyesight the men had when they were on outpost duty on the look-out, or anything like that.

19588. And they improved during the war?—Yes; of course, as you know from the opening statement in my evidence, the majority of the men were men who had seen two previous campaigns, and their eyesight had been trained then.

19589. In such matters as judging distances and that sort of thing?—Not so much that, but they had noticed anything directly, which had not been there five minutes before; a man riding in the distance, or a cloud of dust, or anything of that nature, they were very sharp at.

19590. But for shooting under modern conditions the judging of distance is a great matter, is it not?—Quite so.

19591. How did your battalion come out in that respect?—As far as we could judge they shot very well.

19592. Have you formed any estimate of the comparison between your shooting and the Boers' shooting?—I should say it is quite as good.

19593. Was the Boer shooting good, in your opinion?—No; I think comparing it with our own it is of a fairly high average, and they have a certain percentage of men who are uncommonly good shots, but taking it all round, I do not think they are any better shots than my own battalion. During the whole of the advance I might say after the fight of Driefontein to Johannesburg we always had the Foreign Legion opposed to us; they were the people we were always fighting. We were not fighting Boers, and during that period I saw a great many more dead Germans, Russians, and Italians than Boers. I saw hardly any Boers.

19594. How do you account for that, that they did not take cover so well?—I do not think they were quite so good at taking cover; I would not like to say, but I do not fancy that the German or the Russian is such a good shot as the Boer. Later on we had more to do with the Boers, and I saw a great deal more of their shooting then; but it did not strike me that their shooting was anything very, very wonderful.

19595. Was it better at long ranges or at short ranges?—I think they are better shots at short ranges up to 600 yards, than at long ranges.

19596. A good many witnesses have said that it is difficult to tell what the effect of our fire was, because you so seldom had a target?—Yes.

19597. And the Boers had a better target, as you were advancing?—Yes. Whenever possible they would always be behind rocks on a kopje.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.

18 Mar. 1903.

19598. Still, in spite of that, that is your judgment of the shooting—that our shooting was not inferior to the shooting of the Boers?—Certainly not inferior.

19599. And as to your arms, did the rifle compare well with the Mauser?—Well, I never fired with the Mauser, but the rifle that we had out there was a very good one, and I had no complaints against it; in this statement here I say that the rifle could not always be relied on owing to the jamming of the platform, but that occurred very, very seldom. It was a very good rifle indeed.

19600. And as to the sighting, we have heard something about that?—We had no cause of complaint at all.

19601. You prefer the hat to the helmet?—I think it is a more practical headdress; it does not look so well, but in wet weather it keeps the rain off a man's neck, and when you are lying down shooting it is much more comfortable and convenient.

19602. And the helmet sometimes gets in the way?—If you put the head back when you are shooting lying down you have to put the helmet back from over the eyes.

19603. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And the soft hat serves as a pillow to a certain extent, does it not?—The helmet is a better pillow than the soft hat.

19604. (*Chairman.*) The great coat you found in the way?—Yes, the great coat was not a success.

19605. It was too heavy?—It is too heavy, especially when it is wet.

19606. We also heard that it was rather inconvenient in forming a mark for the enemy?—Yes, especially in the early morning; on a misty morning on outpost duty I always made the men take off their great coats directly it got light, because you could see a man standing up, or whatever position he was in, directly some considerable distance off, if he had a dark great coat on.

19607. One suggestion was that the great coats should be carried in a cart close behind the men instead of their carrying them themselves; you would prefer to do away with it altogether?—I would prefer to have it done away with altogether. When there was transport available we did carry our great coats in carts.

19608. But it was not a part of the general system?—No.

19609. And even if it was made so you would prefer to have this waterproof cape?—Yes.

19610. With a coat for warmth?—Yes, one of the coats called the "British warm" coat.

19611. Could a man carry both that coat and the cape himself?—I think it would be quite sufficient if he carried one of them.

19612. And the other would have to be carried for them?—The other would be carried in a cart or wagon.

19613. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) What is the difference between the great coat and the "British warm" coat?—The "British warm" coat is the coat that is always issued in India, and used in the frontier expeditions there; it is made of a rough, thickish khaki serge, lined with grey flannel, single-breasted, and is an excellent coat.

19614. And much lighter than the great coat?—Very much lighter. It is not longer than an ordinary pilot jacket sort of coat, and it is a great favourite.

19615. (*Chairman.*) You had some bad shoes?—Yes.

19616. Particularly those from India?—Yes, they did not last.

19617. Had you used them before in India?—Yes.

19618. Were they different from the make you had there?—No, I think they were just the same; the Cawnpore shoe, most of them, I fancy.

19619. Were complaints made of them in India when you used them before in India?—That I could not say. I think the chief thing that ruined the shoes, especially in the early part of the war, was the marching early in the morning through the very wet grass, the leather seemed to get so very, very soft, and then with the constant kicking of a man's foot against the scrub and stones the toe went very soon, and they often went at the heel, and then the sand got in.

19620. I meant to ask whether it was a general objection you were taking to the shoes made in India, or

whether it was on this special occasion?—It was on this occasion only.

19621. You cannot say that there was any difference in the make you received from those you had had previously in India?—No, I could not say that.

19622. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was it a shoe or an ankle boot?—A shoe.

19623. (*Chairman.*) Do your men always wear shoes?—Always.

19624. And the make apparently was not satisfactory?—It was not satisfactory.

19625. Is that an Indian shoe or a British shoe also?—Well, they both seemed to be too roughly made up; it refers to both of them.

19626. I suppose these were all hand-sewn shoes?—That I could not say.

19627. I ask the question because we were told that one of the reasons why shoes were got from India was that there was a difficulty in getting hand-sewn shoes. Is it the case that the men even on trek have to pay for their necessities?—Yes.

19628. How is that carried out? Is an account kept against each man?—Yes, the colour sergeant keeps an account against the men; the quartermaster finds out what necessities are required by the battalion, and indents for them, and then the individuals are charged.

19629. What necessities do you refer to?—Boots, spats, socks, shirts, mess-tins, and helmets principally. I have a copy of a charge that was sent in against us for necessities after we arrived at Bloemfontein with Lord Roberts, and those are the articles specified that we drew.

19630. (*Sir John Edge.*) If a man wears out his shoes or his boots in campaigning over rough country sooner than he would on a barrack square, has he got to pay for the new shoes or boots?—Yes.

19631. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) They must pay for their shoes?—Yes, the men are charged for them.

19632. (*Chairman.*) Is it an individual matter, that is to say, if half the men of a company have worn out their shoes, and the other half have not, is it charged against each individual?—Yes, the man that gets a pair of shoes is charged for them.

19633. That must mean a great deal of accounting?—It does especially on active service.

19634. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Who keeps those accounts?—The officer commanding the company and the colour sergeant.

19635. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) How many pairs of shoes or boots is a man allowed by the Government in the 12 months?—On active service?

19636. Yes, without paying for them?—When we started the campaign every man had one pair of shoes on his feet, and a second pair in his kit; but when we started for Bloemfontein we had to leave the second pair of shoes behind, because there was not sufficient transport to carry them, so that a man started with the shoes he stood up in, the best shoes he had, and those shoes lasted the men until they got to Bloemfontein, but after that, from then onwards, shoes were drawn as they were required. There was no actual allowance made.

19637. (*Chairman.*) Does a man receive so many shoes a year?—Not on active service.

19638. In peace time?—Yes, in peace time he does.

19639. (*Sir John Edge.*) So many shoes a year free?—Yes.

19640. Is there no issue of shoes free on active service?—Well, there was not until January, 1902, but from that date necessities were replaced if the commanding officer certified that they were worn out through fair wear and tear.

19641. Then you got a free issue?—Yes, if I certified that the articles indented for were worn out through fair wear and tear they were supplied free.

19642. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) So that during the years 1900 and 1901 the men were actually worse off pecuniarily, being on active service than they would have been during peace?—Yes, they were worse off from the money point of view.

19643. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Did they have to pay

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

for a tunic too?—They had no tunics out there; only the khaki jackets.

19644. Had they to buy their khaki jackets?—No, only the necessaries.

19645. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you mean that the peace allowance of shoes was not issued to them during active service?—I honestly could not say whether they were looked upon as a peace allowance, but from the time of our arrival at Bloemfontein onwards until January, 1902, the men were charged for necessaries.

19646. Without any allowance being made at all?—I never heard of any allowance.

19647. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) What are they allowed in peace time—two pairs a year?—Two pairs a year.

19648. (*Chairman.*) Surely they must have had those two pairs given them during 1900 and 1901?—I am not aware of it.

19649. You would probably have known if there had been a free issue of shoes?—I should have heard of it at the time, but I cannot remember at the present moment any free issue taking place prior to January, 1902.

19650. Could you ascertain?—Yes, I will ascertain, and let you know.

19651. (*Sir John Edge.*) Would not your adjutant report to you if the usual free issue was not made?—Yes, the quartermaster would.

19652. And you do not remember getting a report of that kind?—Well, there are so many things to remember that it is rather hard to remember a little item like that.

19653. I thoroughly understand that, but you do not remember having a report that no free issue was made?—No, I cannot remember at this present moment. I may say that a charge was sent in for these necessaries I am talking about at Bloemfontein, and they have not been paid for yet, so that I have no doubt the payment will be allowed to lapse, and that that will constitute them a free issue.

19654. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Has it been stopped out of the men's wages already?—No, and therefore that would make it so very difficult to recover the money now, because the men have gone to the reserve, and they have died, and I am afraid we could not get the money now even if we were told to.

19655. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But any shoes they drew between the time you reached Bloemfontein, and January, 1902, were stopped out of their pay?—Yes.

19656. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Why are those things you have read out marked down as "necessaries" and not other articles of clothing?—I could not say why; they are laid down by Government as necessaries.

19657. And other articles of clothing are not?—That is so.

19658. (*Chairman.*) You said that a free issue could be made on a certificate by the commanding officer?—Yes.

19659. After a march like that to Bloemfontein, would the commanding officer not have been justified in asking for a free issue then?—No, I could not have done it then.

19660. Why?—Because I was not allowed by the clothing regulations.

19661. The regulation of January, 1902, was a new regulation?—Yes, in January, 1902, an order came out that the commanding officers could issue necessaries without payment if they certified that the articles required were worn out from fair wear and tear while on active service.

19662. And that order did not exist before?—No.

19663. So that at the time of the march to Bloemfontein you could not have certified?—I had not the authority to do it.

19664. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Were two pairs of shoes in 12 months the allowance in peace time?—Yes.

19665. Even had those shoes been of good quality, which you say in the early part of the campaign they were not, would two pairs have been sufficient for the men for the work they had to do?—Do you mean during the march?

19666. In the 12 months?—No; I should say that two pairs would not have been sufficient; when we were on trek the life of a pair of shoes was looked on as 120 miles.

19667. And yet under any circumstances they would have had to pay for any additional shoes they required?—Yes, at that time.

19668. (*Chairman.*) The present accoutrements you think want improvement?—Yes, I think the present accoutrements are not very well balanced, and the pouch is not a good one for carrying ammunition in, it is so very liable to drop out and get lost.

19669. You prefer the bandolier?—Yes.

19670. Were the food supplies good?—Yes, except that at the beginning of the campaign the salt, which I think a very important thing, was issued short.

19671. Was that rectified afterwards?—Yes, later on we got ample.

19672. And as to tea, you think they had not as much as they should have had?—Yes, and the men are miserable if they do not have their tea; there is nothing they like so much.

19673. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You look upon that as one of the best stimulants possible during service?—Yes, tea and sugar—sugar is a stimulant—not coffee.

19674. The tea can readily be carried at any rate?—Yes.

19675. But the sugar not so well, perhaps?—No, it is rather harder to carry it.

19676. (*Chairman.*) And of good ammunition you always had plenty?—Excellent; I do not remember any case of missfire—not one.

19677. Are there any other remarks founded on your experience that you would like to make?—With regard to the illness of the men, enteric; I think a great deal can be done to keep enteric away. Of course it means great care and great trouble, but if latrines are dug sufficiently deep, and also urinals, and they are properly filled in, and the drinking water is boiled, and especially the men prevented when on the line of march from filling their flasks wherever they like—if those sort of points are looked after to a great extent enteric fever is kept away from the men.

19678. Who has to look after them—the company officer?—Yes.

19679. Does he require any training in sanitation to enable him to do that work properly?—Well, they must know something about it, but as I say we were an old battalion who had been in India, and we knew all these things; we had practised them in India, and we reaped the benefit in South Africa.

19680. Your officers you think had sufficient knowledge?—Yes.

19681. And they were able to keep the men under control with regard to water supplies?—Yes, the men were very severely punished if they fell out and filled their water-bottles from any puddle or water-hole we came across.

19682. When you halted at night was the water supply taken possession of by an officer and regulated?—The first thing that happened was that there was a guard put over the water supply, and then it was drawn; the company cooks were the first people to fill the camp kettles, and after they had got it the water-carts were filled, and after that the beasts were watered; it depended on whether it was a water-hole or a stream, but there was always a guard over the camp water from the time we got to a place until we left it.

19683. And as much as possible was boiled?—As far as possible it was boiled; we were in a standing camp at Belfast for three months, and I got the General Officer Commanding there to make an extra issue of tea which we had boiled, and the men had it for their dinners in the middle of the day to make them drink boiled water.

19684. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Besides fighting bravely, you say your men marched well?—Yes.

19685. And this you attribute to some extent to their wearing the kilt instead of the trousers?—Yes.

19686. The kilt is far better for marching than the trousers?—Yes.

19687. You are entirely in favour of the kilt being retained?—Yes.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

19688. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have had a good deal of evidence as to the want of initiative shown by junior officers; had you any experience of that?—No, I cannot say I had, at any rate not in the early part of the war; latterly we got a great many very young officers, and they were rather inclined to be stupid, but they knew they had very good non-commissioned officers with them, and they would almost rather take an old colour-sergeant's opinion than develop one of their own. They learnt quickly.

19689. Have you thought out any system by which initiative could be inculcated in young officers better than at present? Is there any practical way of doing it?—One simply comes back to the facilities for training the men. If I had plenty of elbow room, and the country to send the men all over, I would tell a youngster to go away at such and such an hour, or to parade and go away and do such and such things, and he would be bound to learn then; he could not help himself. There are many ways of training these young officers and teaching them initiative if one had the opportunity.

19690. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Your company officers, the captains of companies, habitually drill their men nowadays, do they not?—Yes.

19691. By order?—Yes.

19692. And that you consider the best system?—I do not make them drill the men at every parade, but the system we have gone on in my battalion, and which we have always gone on, is simply that the officer commanding the company is responsible for everything in that company to me, and, of course, if I see that the training of that company is not being done, generally speaking, in a manner I approve of, I find fault with it, but as long as I see everything going on correctly I let him alone. That is the system that has always been followed in my battalion.

19693. And under that system you think you get the best results?—Yes, I think, certainly.

19694. With regard to the payment of men in the field and elsewhere, do you find that the company officer has time to do it?—Yes; of course when we were trekking much the men did not want money, and they would rather the money was kept, but when we got into a standing camp, or went in from the outlying districts to the line, the men wanted their money and they got it, and in standing camp there was plenty of time to pay the men. I never found the slightest difficulty under that head.

19695-6. I ask this question with reference to another: Do you think the system would be improved regimentally if you had regimental paymasters as you used to have in the old days? He is simply there to issue cash to the officers commanding the companies?—No, to relieve the officer in command of the companies.

19697. (*Viscount Esher.*) He would be responsible for the pay sheets?—And he keeps all the company's cash accounts, and the captain practically has very little to do with the payment of his company.

19698. And the pay sergeant would also be relieved?—Yes, I think that would be a very good thing; at present I think the pay sergeant has too much of his time taken up with the preparation of accounts, ledger work and clerking work, and he has no time to be in and out and about his company rooms looking after all these sort of things, and the recruits require so much looking after. The colour-sergeant is always in his bunk looking after accounts, and it would be the greatest blessing to the officer in command of the company to have the colour-sergeant more at his disposal.

19699. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Did you see in South Africa both systems of transport—the regimental system which you started with, and afterwards the general system of transport, introduced by Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts? You started with regimental transport?—Yes.

19700. And then it was made into general transport?—Yes.

19701. Your regimental transport system was taken away?—Yes, it was taken away and re-issued.

19702. As Colonel of a regiment, which of the two systems do you prefer?—May I ask the date when the regimental transport was withdrawn?

19703. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) In January, 1900?—I honestly had no experience of the regimental

system, because we never had any trekking prior to the departure of Lord Roberts from Graspan to Bloemfontein, and by that time it was general transport.

19704. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) If it is fair to go back to India, what did you do in India? Was your system there regimental or general?—When we started for Tirah we marched up country with regimental transport, and I do not know what happened afterwards; I was wounded, and did not go on.

19705. What is your opinion, as the Colonel of a regiment, of the transport regimentally? Is it a good system?—On active service?

19706. Yes?—No, I prefer to have it in general transport.

19707. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is your regiment up to its full strength?—No, we have just sent a draft to India.

19708. How many companies have you now?—Eight companies in the battalion, four at Glasgow and four at Aberdeen.

19709. If you had a system of paymasters for the regiment, that would release 16 men—eight officers and eight non-commissioned officers—to their proper duty?—Yes.

19710. Have you many men taken away from you doing not strictly military duty in the barracks, such as cleaning up barracks, carrying coals, and so on?—No, we are rather well off in that way in Glasgow.

19711. How do you manage that?—I am commanding the troops there, and I do not allow the men to go.

19712. Who does the work?—Instead of having men always on fatigue work, I have one general fatigue on Fridav afternoons, and by that means I keep the men more with their company during the remainder of the week.

19713. So that they are able to drill better?—Yes.

19714. Would it not be possible to entrain, we will say, a company at a time, and send them some little distance out of Glasgow, as there is plenty of open ground in the vicinity of Glasgow where you could train the men?—There is really no place round about Glasgow.

19715. Within 20 miles of Glasgow there is surely open country?—Do you wish the companies to go in the morning and come back in the afternoon?

19716. Yes?—Honestly I do not know where the ground is.

19717. I know ground certainly within 25 miles of Glasgow—moors?—The company would have to be trained there and back, and that is an expense which I doubt if the Scottish District would meet.

19718. (*Sir John Edge.*) And you would have to get the consent of the owner of the moor?—Quite so. In Glasgow we cannot go off the high road; if a scout, or anybody like that, goes off the high road, there are complaints made, and I am written to at once.

19719. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Then Scotland is a bad training ground for troops?—Glasgow is.

19720. (*Viscount Esher.*) Terms would have to be arranged with certain landowners, but, so far as you know, no attempt has been made to come to terms with landowners within 20 miles of Glasgow?—From my own knowledge I cannot say.

19721. There is no want of training ground within 20 miles of Glasgow if terms were arranged?—Quite so.

19722. You know that as a fact?—Yes.

19723. Within half an hour by train?—Within half an hour by train I dare say ground could be got, but I cannot say where; I could not point out any place we could go to.

19724. (*Sir John Edge.*) I suppose a deer forest, for instance, would be an excellent training ground?—Yes.

19725. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is it satisfactory dividing your regiment into two and sending half of it to Aberdeen and half to Glasgow?—From the commanding officer's point of view it is not particularly satisfactory, because his one idea is to have his battalion together always, but Aberdeen is a very much better training place for the men than Glasgow is.

19726. How do you manage? Do you leave the same companies there month after month, or do you change them about?—They only went up last week, but I believe the idea is that the companies are to be there permanently.

19727. You mean that your half battalion will remain there for the summer altogether?—I fancy as long as the battalion remains with the headquarters in Glasgow. I have received no instructions whatever about it yet from Sir Archibald Hunter, but Aberdeen is a better training ground for soldiers than Glasgow, because there are links all along the seashore.

19728. You have seen suggestions probably in the newspapers that an Army Corps should be permanently located in South Africa in time of peace for the purpose of training?—No, I cannot say that I have seen it.

19729. Anyhow, that suggestion has been made. From what you saw of South Africa, do you think it would make a fine training ground in time of peace?—It would make an excellent training ground, but the country in South Africa is so different that the training the men would get in South Africa would not adapt them for fighting in Europe.

19730. That is the point I wanted to put to you; you do not feel confident that the training which you give to the Gordon Highlanders if they were quartered in

South Africa in time of peace would be of much material assistance to them if they came to fight a European enemy?—Oh, no; it is utterly dissimilar.

19731. How many years was your first battalion in India before you went to South Africa?—I cannot be certain, as I was not with the battalion. I was with the second battalion always until 1895, but at any rate the battalion left in 1881-82 and went to Malta, and then to Egypt and back to Malta, and did Mediterranean work, and then went out to Ceylon, I think, in 1891 or so.

19732. They were away 10 or 11 years or more?—Yes.

19733. One of the objections which has been taken to that idea of locating an Army Corps in South Africa is that it might interfere with the recruiting, but I suppose it would practically make no difference, and the men would not mind if they were quartered in South Africa or in India?—I do not see why it should interfere with the recruiting.

19734. (Chairman.) Is there anything else you wish to add?—No, I have nothing else to suggest.

Colonel
Forbes
Macbean, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

(After a short adjournment.)

Colonel E. M. S. CRABBE, C.B., called and examined.

19735. (Chairman.) You were in command of the 3rd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards?—Yes.

19736. And they went out with the First Army Corps, did they?—They went out with the First Division.

19737. You have been good enough to give us a précis of the evidence you proposed to give which perhaps it would be simplest to put in, and you can develop any point in connection with it?—Certainly.

Précis.

In accordance with the desire of the Commission expressed to me by their Secretary, I beg to offer the following *precis* of my evidence on the points mentioned in the Secretary's memorandum. I should, however, like to mention that from Christmas, 1900, to March, 1902, I was away from my battalion, commanding a mounted column in Cape Colony, principally composed for some months of Imperial Yeomanry and Colonials. I returned to my battalion for the months of March and April, while in May I was in command of some 3,000 infantry, covering 200 miles of blockhouse line, from Thebus to Stormberg, and thence south, nearly to Queenstown, and I was in this position when peace was proclaimed.

General Physique and Morale of the Men, and their Intelligence.

The 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, whom I had the honour to command, were a particularly fine body of men. They had been weeded out before going to Gibraltar, in September, 1899, and were further selected when under orders for South Africa, and joined by a draft of about 400 Reservists. The battalion thus composed was naturally exceptionally good material, the men were strong and healthy, and the leaven of Reservists brought up the average of the men, and gave them all confidence, as well as adding to their sense of discipline.

It may not be out of place here if I say a word or two on the subject of the Reservists. Whatever doubts there may have been as to the advantages of the short service system, those doubts must now be thoroughly dispelled, once and for ever, in the minds of all who have seen our Army in South Africa. The Reservists came up almost to a man, rejoined, and fell into their places with a readiness and a discipline which left little to be desired. They were the backbone of the battalion, they maintained its traditions, its discipline, and its fighting capabilities. The percentage of crime among them was very small indeed, they had not forgotten their duties, and their presence was in every way an advantage to the battalion.

On the other hand, the poorest material I had out there, was a draft of 600 who arrived early in 1902. They were nearly all young soldiers of comparatively poor physique, and with but little discipline.

The morale of the battalion was good, they were plucky, and keen soldiers with lots of dash, but thoroughly under discipline. They had, as a whole,

fair intelligence, while in some cases ability as section leaders was conspicuous. I should like here to say that after a considerable experience, both of disciplined and undisciplined troops, I believe that discipline is the mainstay of good troops, and however much we may shake out and expand our training, it must be founded on discipline if we mean to maintain the traditions of our Regular Army.

On arrival in South Africa our troops had not been greatly practised in taking cover individually, but they very soon fell into the ways of the war we were carrying on, and took opportunity of protecting themselves, both by using natural cover as well as hasty entrenchments. It must always be borne in mind that it is much easier to teach men to take cover, as a natural action, rather than to prevent their lingering too long in it, and of this our enemies gave us several instances. They could not be induced to leave their cover to attack, even when they had favourable opportunities.

Future Training.

I think the experience of the war teaches us that we want to give our junior officers initiative and responsibility. They have lots of pluck, and in many cases were fine leaders of men, through, of course, with no experience, while others only required a little of the experience which they could not fail to gain in South Africa to make them thoroughly efficient. As a whole, those who served under me were excellent, and I considered that I was thoroughly well served. Of course, if we can ingrain initiative and responsibility into our younger officers they will carry it on with them into the higher ranks, and thus a general improvement in the regimental officer will be attained, but I should like to make it thoroughly clear that I consider the material under me in the shape of young officers would have satisfied any commanding officer, and went far to ensure the success of the battalion.

The responsibility of young officers and section leaders will naturally be increased by the greater extension of the company in the field, due to the longer range and greater precision of modern firearms and smokeless powder; the more responsibility that can be devolved from the captain, first on to the subalterns as half-company leaders, and then on to the non-commissioned officers as section and sub-section leaders, the greater will be the intelligence and freedom shown by the company as a whole.

Arms.

The .303 Lee-Metford Rifle far exceeded the expectations formed of it by many military experts. It appeared to suffer but little from the sand, and instead of getting out of order its somewhat complicated mechanism withstood the alternate heat and cold, the rain and snow, satisfactorily as a single loader; but the magazine springs soon got weak, and often failed to feed up the cartridges properly. The excessive strain of nearly three years' hard work and constant firing told con-

Colonel
E. M. S.
Crabbe, C.B.

Colonel
E. M. S.
Crabbe, C.B.

18 Mar. 1903.

siderably on the grooves, but this might be expected with any rifled weapon, and, I believe, applies equally to field guns.

Clothing.

The supply of clothing and equipment sent from this country to South Africa appears to have been sufficient for the wants of the Army, and when units failed to receive necessary supplies the failure was due either to continuous marching away from the base, in the early part of the campaign, when the enemy were active against our lines of communication, or to rapid cross country marches, which prevented due warning being given to the ordnance to send to a particular station. The quality of the serge khaki was not as good as the corresponding drill.

Supplies.

Good and plentiful as far as the men were concerned, except between Kroonstadt and Pretoria, when there was an unavoidable shortage. The troops were distinctly better fed than in any previous campaign I have been in.

Transport.

At the commencement of the campaign each unit had its own regimental transport, in which it took great interest, and which was in a thoroughly efficient state. In February, 1900, Lord Kitchener changed the system and made a fresh organisation, by which the transport was all given to units on the march, and taken away from those at rest, and thus the regimental transport, except as regarded the first line, ceased to exist. Although this action was unpopular at the time, its results were far reaching, and the success with which a largely increased force was moved and fed, amply repaid any temporary inconvenience. Mule wagon transport is by far the most efficient to accompany troops. Ox transport is too slow, and can, or rather should, only move late and early, resting through the middle of the day, and this arrangement does not, as a rule, suit the movements of troops. If overworked, the oxen die rapidly. Mule pack transport is very valuable for small columns leaving the roads and traversing mountainous districts, but the number of animals required is much greater in proportion than when in draught, and sore backs are frequent. The obstacles surmounted by the mule wagons and the distance they travelled were truly astonishing.

19738. You were with your battalion for most of the time, I think, in South Africa, but not the whole?—I was with it for just over a year; then I was on column for a year and a quarter, and then I was with it again practically until I left South Africa in July, and during the last time I was with it it was to a great extent nominal—that is to say my second in command was actually in command, because I had a good many other troops under me at that time.

19739. In the first period what service did this battalion see then?—The battalion fought at Belmont, at Modder, Magersfontein, the march to Bloemfontein, including Poplar Grove and Dreifontein; then from Bloemfontein we went down south to Norvals Pont, but we did not see any fighting; we came back at once to Bloemfontein—we went down by train and came back by train. Then they went on the Dewetsdorp expedition, and back to Bloemfontein; then from Bloemfontein to Pretoria. From Pretoria we went to Diamond Hill; we then lay at Donkerhoek for a couple of months; from there we started off on trek to Komati Poort, which we reached on the 23rd of September, 1900. From there we came back at once to Pretoria, and were there for a month, making one small expedition; we saw no enemy, so that really it was of no importance. Then we went down to Springfontein, and remained there three weeks, after which we were sent to guard the drifts of the Orange River; the battalion remained guarding these drifts until De Wet entered the Colony for the first time, and then they were collected partly to me at Petrusville and partly to my second in command at Norvals Point. I then practically became column commander; I took part of the battalion and various other details that were with me.

19740. During the first part up to the taking of Pretoria is the period which comes before us. You were quite satisfied with the behaviour of the men in your battalion?—I consider I had an exceptionally good battalion, due very strongly to the Reservists who were with them.

19741. You think very highly of the Reservists?—I think very highly indeed of the Reservists.

19742. I think you put it that they were the backbone of the battalion?—Exactly so.

19743. Some witnesses have spoken of cases in which there were a very large proportion of Reservists in the battalion, and that there was some little difficulty at first until the men had re-accustomed themselves to the work. Did you see anything of that?—No, I found no difficulty whatever. I found them on board ship at Gibraltar, and when they landed at Cape Town every one of them was ready to take his place in the ranks as well as any other man.

19744. You mention, however, that there was, later in the war, a draft that came out with which you were not so well satisfied?—Yes.

19745. What service had those men?—Those men fulfilled the conditions of active service, which were one year's service in the ranks and 20 years of age, but beyond that, of course, they had done nothing; they had had a year's service, and that was all that could be said for them.

19746. But were they all 20 years of age?—I have every reason to believe so.

19747. I suppose that as a rule a man in the Guards who is 20 years of age and has had a year's service can be expected to be a man of pretty good physique and some discipline?—He should be a man of good physique and of very good discipline.

19748. Then how do you account for that draft being inferior in training?—The numbers at home under instruction with the home battalion, which only had the ordinary staff of a battalion, prevented the men receiving so thorough a training as they would have had under ordinary circumstances.

19749. The numbers of men then were in excess of the ordinary establishment?—Certainly. I am given to understand that there were over 3,000 men on the pay of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards at one time, and 2,500 were actually serving with the colours. This was the only battalion of the regiment which was at home.

19750. These soldiers of this draft of which you speak only arrived early in 1902?—They arrived in January, 1902.

19751. So that I suppose they did not do much service?—They did a great deal of blockhouse work; that was all that they did. They saw no fighting, except what fighting there was on the blockhouse lines—the taking of Kritzingers, and such like.

19752. So that your criticism of them is as regards the appearance of men, not as to any failure that took place in regard to them in South Africa?—My criticism of them is the result of my experience as a commanding officer.

19753. (Sir John Edge.) Your criticism of the draft?—Yes.

19754. (Chairman.) You mention here that you consider that discipline is the mainstay of good troops?—Most distinctly.

19755. And that therefore any system which did not provide for troops at the front coming out as disciplined troops would be unsatisfactory?—Most certainly.

19756. You speak of expanding the training; have you any suggestions to make with regard to that?—I think I have spoken of that future training further on.

19757. That was about officers, though, was it not?—Yes. It applies, I think, very much to officers and men. There is no doubt about it that our training now in the first instance must be on a great deal larger front than it used to be. We must instil intelligence into our sub-leaders. But before we can attempt to do anything of that kind I am perfectly certain that we must have the men disciplined. The idea of obtaining an Army full of intelligence alone does not commend itself to me. It must be an Army which has discipline and intelligence.

19758. But then to get discipline must you have the same sort of training and drill, and so on, as you have had in the past?—You must commence with the same barrack-square drill that we have now.

19759. In order to get the discipline which you think so essential?—Certainly.

19760. And then, having got the men disciplined, you

Colonel
E. M. S.
Crabbe, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

should cultivate their intelligence to enable them to act on their own initiative?—As much as possible.

19761. Can you do it in the time? What sort of time would you require to get a disciplined man, and then to cultivate his intelligence?—You ought to get a very good disciplined man in a year, and with a certain amount of intelligence thrown in. I do not think that you want men who will always rush to the first bit of cover that they see, and there stick. You may notice I have spoken of that in my *précis*. It is exceedingly easy to teach men to take cover, but it is not always so easy to get them out of it. Nobody suffered from that more than the Boers did. They would go into a position, and no power on earth would get them out of it; I mean to advance against us. I put down one or two instances where they might very easily have created great havoc. There was one at Magersfontein. If, when we retired from Magersfontein the Boers had chosen to rush out of their entrenchments and get on to some rising ground, which we had, of course, to vacate as we retired, they would have given us a bad time going back; and they would have been able to get back into their entrenchments if we had made a counter attack, which we should have done, without any difficulty, and they could have inflicted very severe loss. But they were in their trenches, and out of their trenches they would not come. At another time when I was with the column they were very clever; they let my scouts go through them, and then held my scouts. I, having seen them go over the hill and go straight on, of course, thought everything was all right; the scouts did not come back; I thought they were just over the brow of the hill. My advanced guard followed, were close up to the hill, and were met with very heavy fire. If, added to that, the Boers had charged them, I think I should have been in a very awkward place; as a matter of fact, my men formed up and made a flank attack, and in the evening, with 150 men, I had moved out between 400 and 500 Boers. That only shows that it is very difficult indeed, when you have your men safe behind cover, to get them to go out of it into the open to attack the enemy. That last incident was near Steynsburg, in May, 1901.

19762. Your speaking of these incidents leads me to ask you what do you think about the shooting of the Boers?—The shooting of the Boers was good with a small number, but indifferent with a large number. They had a certain number of picked shots who were very good indeed, but the numbers were not nearly on a parallel with the numbers of the men that they brought into the firing line.

19763. How would they compare, then, with the shooting on our side?—I think the shooting of the minority of the Boers was distinctly better than ours, but I do not think that the shooting of the majority of the Boers was any better than ours.

19764. Had we any picked shots to compare with the Boers?—No, we had not adopted the sharpshooting system; that is to say, we had not any particularly picked scouts to go out on their own. I think that is a thing we ought to have.

19765. In the heavy fighting in Lord Methuen's advance for instance, was the Boer fire good on those occasions?—I was not present at the battle of Modder River myself; I was down at Cape Town at the time, wounded, but from what I heard, at the battle of Modder River the Boer fire was not any better than it should have been. If it had been really very good, I think they would have inflicted a great deal more damage on us. And in the battle of Belmont, in the early hours of the morning, the Boer firing was very wild indeed.

19766. Was that in consequence of our fire?—I hardly know. But when the Boer fire first broke out all along the ridge it was, of course, a weak light, and I think that had a great deal to do with it. As the light improved I daresay their fire might have improved, but by the time that the light had got really good we had got on to the top, and the Boers were on the move. They took up other positions afterwards, and I do not know what they did, because I was wounded at the top of the first position.

19767. Then were you not present at Magersfontein?—Yes, I was back at Magersfontein.

19768. What was the case there?—It is the custom on active service always that in a brigade each battalion leads in turn each day, and it so happened that on that

day we were the third battalion, and therefore we were in reserve. The Scots Guards were sent away on to the left, and the two Coldstream battalions were employed in front. The two Coldstream battalions did very fine work, in fact, they saved the battle of Magersfontein; but we were in the rear and really had very little to do. I think I had only three casualties all the time.

19769. Have you reason to believe that the fire of the Boers was good on that occasion?—I have reason to believe it was very fair, very fair indeed. They were all entrenched. Their fire out in the open is not good.

19770. Why?—They want cover. They are all right when they have got it.

19771. (Sir John Edge.) They cannot shoot well, except from cover?—No only from cover.

19772. (Chairman.) And the rifle you think did well?—Our rifle I thought did remarkably well. I was very highly impressed with it. I have been connected with musketry for most of my soldiering, and I was very highly impressed with the results.

19773. We have heard something about some defective sighting. Did you come across anything of that kind?—No, I cannot say that I did.

19774. The clothing and supplies you were satisfied with?—Yes, I think that considering the exigencies of the campaign, there was nothing to complain of in the way in which we got our clothing, or in the quality of it. I have noted that at one time the serge was better than at another. And as regards supplies, undoubtedly they were a wonderful success.

19775. As regards transport, there was a change made on which there are two different opinions, I believe?—Yes.

19776. I understand that though you have a high opinion of regimental transport, you still think that the general transport system was the most effective for the circumstances?—Under the circumstances of the campaign, yes; but please do not take it as my opinion that regimental transport should always be done away with, and that general transport should take its place.

19777. I wanted to bring that out, because I was not quite sure?—No, only with regard to this special campaign in which we started, say, with 50,000 men, and had to expand our transport, which was very difficult to create, into sufficient for 200,000 men. Then the general system of taking all the transport away from any unit that was at rest for a short time, and giving it to the units that were going to move, acted most successfully.

19778. But is not that underlying the whole system of regimental transport; that it may be taken away at any time from a battalion that is in quarters?—Yes, that does underlie it to a certain extent, of course; but, on the other hand, supposing you are going to move, you require to have your transport in good condition, and that is not likely to be the case if you are dependent on what is sent back from other units which have just completed a march.

19779. Then I understand that to mean that for the general system of the Army you prefer to retain regimental transport?—Yes.

19780. With the ordinary arrangements for supply parks and supply columns?—Yes.

19781. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I do not think so. You have, of course, the conditions of service under which the men went out there; that you probably would have had from plenty of other people.

19782. Yes, we have had that?—Unless you want to hear anything about the column, I think for the battalion I have given you all the information I can.

19783. The column you commanded?—Yes.

19784. That was after Pretoria?—Yes.

19785. Of course, so far as the military operations are concerned that is outside our reference; but if there is any question with regard to your experience in command of the column it would be quite competent for us to go into that?—I did not know whether you were taking evidence on the subject of Yeomanry.

19786. Certainly?—I had a good many Yeomanry with me nearly the whole time.

19787. Certainly we shall be glad to hear you if you have anything to say on that point. Which Yeomanry was it?—With my first column I had some of the first Yeomanry, the 65th and the 71st; the 65th were the

Colonel
E. M. S.
Crabbe, C.B.
18 Mar. 1903.

Leicestershires, and the 71st the London Sharpshooters. They were both very fine bodies of men, and they were, for Yeomanry, very well disciplined. They were some of the first Yeomen that went out, and they were troops that any man might be very thankful to have; they were very valuable. Later on, with the second column, I got four companies practically straight out from England of the second Yeomanry; that is to say, they had been for, I think, three weeks at De Aar, fitting out and doing a little training, and the difference was very marked indeed. They were not the same class of man as the first Yeomanry; they were not the same class of officers as the first Yeomanry; they were absolutely ignorant of the rudiments of soldiering. They were the 99th, the 104th, the 105th, and the 111th.

19788. And did they improve?—They improved very much indeed. Some of them turned into very useful soldiers.

19789. Did you have them for some considerable time?—Yes, I had some of them for nine months.

19790. And by the end of that time they had become efficient?—By the end of that time they were quite useful. The 104th and the 105th both did me very good work on several occasions.

19791. And it was more the fact that they had come out without the necessary training than the class of man which was the cause of their being inferior to the first Yeomanry?—The class of man would never have come up to the class of man of the first Yeomanry.

19792. He did not know so much about horses?—He knew nothing about horses, as a rule, nothing at all, and he had not nearly so much intelligence as the first Yeomanry. From the first Yeomanry, you would get, in their own language (it was not military language), a pretty good idea of what they saw going on, and you would not get that from the others.

19793. But would you get as much from the second Yeomanry as you would get from an ordinary soldier?—Oh, no.

19794. Not an ordinary private?—No, not an ordinary private who had been out there any time.

19795. But then, of course, they had not been out there any time?—No, I do not think you would get as much from them as you would get from an ordinary private under any circumstances.

19796. You think they must have been recruited from a lower class than the ordinary soldier?—I think they came out entirely for the 5s. a day, whereas the first Yeomanry came out to serve their country.

19797. I was not comparing them so much with the first Yeomanry as comparing them with the recruit that you get for the Army?—

19798. (Sir John Hopkins.) Say your draft of 600?—I should say they came from the same class as they did, but then, of course, they had not had the advantage of the training that even they had had.

19799. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What has become of that draft of 600; are they incorporated in the battalion now?—Yes, they are incorporated in the regiment now. I cannot say whether they are quite all in the third battalion now. I do not suppose they are.

19800. Can you say how they have turned out?—They improved, because they improved before I left South Africa.

19801. Are they now, do you think, efficient men for such a regiment as the Grenadier Guards?—I should think they might possibly have got up to the average

standard by now. You will understand I left the battalion in South Africa, and therefore, of course, I do not know very much of what has gone on since.

19802. In point of fact, what they wanted was training and discipline?—Yes; but if you want to know more about that draft, 100 of them went to the second battalion, and Colonel Lloyd can tell you his experiences of that 100 if you thought the matter worth pursuing.

19803. (Sir John Hopkins.) We have had some evidence about the company officers paying their men, and also some evidence on the part of some officers that a regimental paymaster attached to a regiment would be a great improvement, especially in the field, in connection with the payments of money to the men when required. Have you any views about that?—I do not think that that quite refers to the Brigade of Guards, because our quartermasters are our acting paymasters.

19804. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Then your captains do not pay the men?—Yes, the captains pay the men, but get their money from the quartermaster.

19805. (Sir John Hopkins.) The quartermaster prepares the pay sheet, I suppose?—The captains of companies prepare their pay lists, and then their pay lists go into the quartermasters, and are checked by them—they have a paymaster-sergeant.

19806. Do you find that that system works well?—Very well indeed.

19807. Your system now, I presume, is that the company officers drill their companies. They get their company as a company, and drill it as a company; that is the case, is it not?—They train it as a company during company training.

19808. Is that under recent regulations?—They have trained their company at company training for a good many years—I should be afraid to say how many. The company training is expanded more or less, and has been expanded a good deal at different times.

19809. And you find that an efficient way of drilling the company?—I think there is no question about it. The captain should have the absolute command of his company.

19810. In respect to drill and all other matters?—In respect to everything.

19811. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Between the time when you arrived in South Africa and the arrival of this draft in 1902, had you other drafts arriving?—Yes.

19812. On two or three occasions?—Yes, we had several.

19813. Can you carry your mind back to the condition of those drafts one after the other as they came?—They were all fairly good drafts; there were a good many Reservists in them all.

19814. And what about those who were not Reservists?—They were a better class than the 1902 men.

19815. But they were as good as those you took out with you, perhaps?—I have nothing to complain of in them.

19816. Had they all had a year's training?—Yes.

19817. And they were all over 20 years of age?—That was the stipulation under which they came.

19818. That is what I wish to know. Was that regulation carried out in the drafts between the time you came there and 1902?—As I understand it, yes.

19819. So far as you could judge of the men's age that seemed to be so?—Yes.

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.

19 Mar. 1903.

FORTY-NINTH DAY.

Thursday, 19th March 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I. G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, *Secretary*.

Major-General R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL, C.B., called and examined.

19820. (*Chairman*.) You have been good enough to prepare a précis of the evidence which you are prepared to give; if you have no objection, we would like to put it in as a preliminary statement, and you can develop any points of the evidence as you go along?—If you please.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION.

The Commission asks to be informed on the following points:

1. What steps were taken before the war to raise, organise, and equip my frontier force. (*See I.*)
2. Preparations for the defence of Mafeking. (*See II.*)
3. Deductions as to the use of artillery, and tactics under modern conditions. (*See III.*)
4. Future training of officers and men. (*See IV.*)
5. Any views regarding organisation of Colonial forces of a similar kind for future wars. (*See V.*)

Duties from which my experiences were gained.

My experiences are derived from the following duties with which I was successively engaged:

1. Organising frontier force from 25th July to 11th October, 1899.
2. Defence of Mafeking, 12th October, 1899, to 17th May, 1900.
3. Independent mixed column in northern Transvaal, 18th May to 21st October, 1900.
4. Organising and directing action of South African Constabulary, 22nd October, 1900, to end of war (and its subsequent administration up to 18th February, 1903).

Instructions.

Preliminary Instructions for Frontier Force: I was sent out to South Africa on special service in July, 1899, with instructions to raise a force of two regiments of mounted rifles for the defence of Rhodesian and Bechuanaland frontier.

In the event of war, to organise the local armed forces of those countries; to keep the natives in order, and, especially, to draw as large a force of Boers as possible from opposing the British on their southern borders.

I was employed by the Colonial Office, lent by the War Office.

I.—NARRATIVE OF ORGANISATION OF FRONTIER FORCE.

On arrival at the Cape I found very little help possible from the Army, and therefore went to Bulawayo, where I obtained from Colonel Nicholson, Commandant-General of the British South African Police, the equipment I required from his reserve stores.

About 20 special service officers were sent out from the Army to join me in South Africa. The seniors were Colonel (now Major-General) Plumer and Colonel Hore, and to these I assigned the command of the two new regiments respectively.

We raised men by sending officers to recruit in the principal towns of Cape Colony.

Equipment we got together from both Army Ordnance and from the British South African Police.

Remounts we got principally through the Army Remount Department.

Transport and supplies mainly by local purchase (before the dealers had made the "corners" which afterwards raised prices).

We made the headquarters of the two regiments at Bulawayo and at Ramatlabama (Bechuanaland Protectorate) respectively. (The latter place was chosen because we were not allowed at Mafeking, that is, within the Cape Colony border.)

We framed our constitution and discipline on the Cape Mounted Rifles Act.

We formed the regiments, 450 strong, into four squadrons, each under Imperial Army officers, the troops under Colonial officers.

Decentralisation of duties and responsibilities was instituted as far as consistent with a standard efficiency. Junior officers were made responsible for the training of their units and for their efficiency in all respects. The simplest possible form of drill was employed.

By these methods satisfactory results were attained in a remarkably short space of time. Both regiments were equipped and trained so as to be effective in the field by the end of September, that is, in a period of two months from first starting to organise.

Efficient farriers were our great difficulty, and had to be drawn to a large extent from the Army. Signallers we trained in the force.

Hospital equipment was improvised with the same difficulty.

As for artillery, we had in Bulawayo several small guns of various calibres, all more or less obsolete in pattern. In Mafeking we had four 7-pounder m.l. guns with a range of 2,500 yards. (We were informed that two 5-inch howitzers would be added to our armament, and framed our scheme of defence on that supposition, but when the guns arrived a few days before hostilities we found that by an error the wrong code-word had been used, and our 5-inch guns were 7-pounders of short range.)

As prospects of hostilities increased arrangements were made by which the two regiments with their staffs became the nuclei of stronger forces to be formed by the addition of local police and volunteers in case of necessity.

As war became imminent I saw that even with these additions to its strength my total force would be too weak to effect anything if scattered over the whole border (500 miles).

I therefore asked for more mounted men and some guns.

As these were not available I decided to concentrate my two forces (of about 600 men each), at Tuli and Mafeking respectively, as being, for various reasons, the most important points to hold.

We also improvised six armoured trains for the protection of the railway between Bulawayo and Mafeking, for which Colonel Nicholson organised a small independent force.

Having served with Colonel Plumer in the Matabele campaign, I knew his exceptional capabilities, and handed over to him complete control of the northern (or Rhodesian) force in the event of my being cut off in Mafeking.

I went to Mafeking myself because I considered it the

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903.

important point on the frontier, for the following reasons :—

1. Mafeking had long been a bone of contention between Boers and British, and was full of stores, and would therefore be an attraction for the Boers.
2. It contained valuable railway works and material (valuing over £130,000) which must be guarded.
3. As the chief town and market, and seat of Government, the large tribes of the north-west considered it to be the hub of the universe, and if we failed to remain in power there our prestige would be lost, and there would be, very probably, a general native rising against us in Bechuanaland and Rhodesia.
4. A mounted force in Mafeking would be strategically well placed for cutting the lines of communication or any Boer moves from the Transvaal against Rhodesia or against Vryburg, or Kimberley; and would threaten Pretoria itself (*à la* Jameson raid), unless watched in force.

II.—PREPARATIONS FOR SIEGE.

Mafeking is an open town, 1,000 yards square, population, 1,000; native town half a mile south-west, population 6,000. Open country all round.

Force about 700 trained men (Protectorate Regiment, British South African Police, Cape Police Volunteers, etc.); 300 Town Guards, railway men, refugees, etc.; 300 native cattle guards.

Armament, rifles, Lee-Metford and Martine Henry in equal proportions; 600 rounds per rifle.

Artillery, four 7-pounder m.l. guns, two 1-pounder Hotchkiss, one 2-inch Nordenfeldt, six 303 Maxims.

Up to within a few days of the war we could not do much preparation openly, owing to fear of the Cape Government; but we got in four months' supplies for men and horses, part locally purchased, part sent up by Colonel Bridge, Army Service Corps, from the Cape.

We had spies and intelligence agents out across the border, and scouts in various directions, and were thus kept well informed of the Boers' doings.

We laid dummy mine fields round the place.

In the middle of September Colonel Vyvyan secretly organised the Town Guard, and stored arms and ammunition ready for use in the town. Spies and suspects were watched.

At the end of September I was transferred with my force to be under the orders of the General Officer Commanding in South Africa.

A few days before the war was declared we sent away 170 women and children to the Cape.

We dug bomb-proof galleries for the remaining 600 women and children who were placed under the management of the Mayor, Mr. Whiteley.

Fortified Cannon Kopje. Laid defence railway line round north-east front of town.

Took over all supplies in the town and all market gardens, and put inhabitants on rations (on payment). Increased hospital accommodation. Instituted Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Dug wells for alternative water supply.

Made a circle of independent earthworks round the town, giving a perimeter of six miles (which was at first considered by some officers to be too large, but which eventually had to be extended to nearly 10 miles before the town was out of enemy's rifle fire).

Siege of Mafeking.

I presume a detailed narrative of the siege is not required.

Its phases were as follows: In October-November Cronje invested the place with 8,000 Boers. He attempted several attacks unsuccessfully, and after a month withdrew nearly 5,000 of his men to Kimberley.

From November to January Snyman pushed his works nearer, but we, on the other hand, pushed out works to counteract this, and in January, February, March gained ground, until we had added four miles to our original perimeter.

On 12th April Eloff made his attack into the middle of the place, and found himself encircled there, and had to surrender.

A week later Plumer and Mahon joined hands and effected our relief. Plumer had, in spite of the enemy, continually in superior numbers, established himself for some weeks past in our neighbourhood. Had the relief failed we had made plans for breaking out of the place when our provisions failed, probably about 10 days later.

Our ration at this period was: $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. horse sausage or meat, 6oz. oat cake, 3 pints sowens, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. tea.

Boer numbers contained on their North-West Frontier.

The total force of Boers against us on the northern frontier for the first six weeks of the war amounted to over 11,000.

I presume there is no need for me to describe the work of the Rhodesian column of my force, of which you will have had General Plumer's evidence.

III.—USE OF ARTILLERY.

Those who have sat under artillery fire are probably as good judges of its effects as the trained artillery officers who direct the fire.

It was calculated that 1,300 rounds from a 94-pounder and over 20,000 other shells were fired into Mafeking.

The Boers had, as a rule, 8 to 10 guns against us in Mafeking, including one 94-pounder Creusot, three 15-pounder h.v. guns, two pom-poms, and some old 9 and 7 pounders.

They used these guns principally in pairs or in groups of three, of various calibres.

The chief fault of their gunnery was want of concentrated or systematic fire on any one point. Generally, when they began to have an effect on one spot they changed their target to some other. Also, they never burst shrapnel over us, which would have been effective. The guns we liked least were the pom-poms, as they opened suddenly from unexpected points; they found their target quickly, and were demoralising; but the actual men-killing effect of the guns was comparatively small.

Our own armament was most inferior, but in spite of this it was wonderful what good effects it achieved through intelligent, non-regulation method of use (such as taking the guns out quietly by night to a prepared masked position, lying low all day until they were in the eye of the setting sun, firing through blankets at night, etc., etc.). (See Heading VI., paragraph d.)

IV.—PRINCIPLES OF FUTURE TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND MEN.

Junior officers should be given responsibility from their first entry into the service. They should be made to really command their unit, however small, and be answerable for its efficiency and success. They will thus be able to command any isolated position, or in crises.

The large majority of officers are keen enough and intelligent enough, but want to be given a real job in which to make their name, and develop their professional interest. The so-called chain of responsibility is too often one of irresponsibility. Resource and cunning in the field should be encouraged, especially at manœuvres. Barrack-square drill, and deadening routine should be reduced as much as possible, and competition introduced to a greater extent into practices tending to perfect men, whether in riding, shooting, skill at arms, detached duties, an increased individual intelligence if essential to work in the field. With officers accustomed to work on their own responsibility, and with men using their own intelligence working under them, senior officers will be able with confidence to give their subordinates a free hand in carrying out their orders for co-operative movements, or for special ventures unhampered by the usual (and so often fatal) tugs on the check strings.

For better economy more attention should be given in the education of junior officers in book-keeping and store accounting, etc., and if some method might be devised by which senior officers had an interest in making out the annual estimates, it is probable much economy would thus be gained.

V.—BEST METHOD OF RAISING, ORGANISING, AND EQUIPPING COLONIAL FORCES OF THE SAME KIND.

Arrangements should be made in peace time by which a commando law or militia or volunteer organisation should ensure the nucleus of a force, with a trained Army officer as adjutant to each unit, and an experienced Army officer as Inspector-General, the whole organisation being capable of extension in time of war. Horses and transport should be registered and reserve equipment should be kept in ordnance stores for the numbers that would require it. Unless some such measures are taken it means a great expense of suddenly raising a force, and training and organising with inadequate means; and the employment of a number of Imperial Army officers, whose services can ill be spared at such a time from their own regiments. Under such circum-

stances a certain proportion of Army officers, practically up to half, is necessary first for moral effect in gaining the confidence of the untrained men and officers; secondly, in the practical fact of saving waste in the systematic care of stores, supply accounts, etc.

The most convenient organisation for rapid training and use in the field is the troop of about 80 to 100 men, subdivided into about 10 combatant squads of a corporal and six men, every man horsed; each troop an independent unit with its transport, medical orderly, farrier, saddler, pay-sergeant, etc. The squad to be the permanent unit in the troop whether for work in the field or in camp, or for patrols, outposts, and other detached duties. These small units, with good men in responsible charge, very rapidly acquire efficiency when the organisation has to be hurried (compare South African Constabulary.).

These troops can be at any time combined to act as squadrons, or can be immediately dispersed to perform independent duties if required.

VI.—DEDUCTIONS AND NOTES.

(a) *Mounted Troops.*—The results of experiences with the mounted irregular forces which I had from Australia, Canada, and South Africa, working both independently and at other times in co-operation with other armies, have generally tended to confirm theories formed before the war rather than to start any widely new ideas, particularly regarding cavalry.

I am not, therefore, regarding the South African War as necessarily providing a law for all future campaigns.

Cavalry are more essential in modern war than they ever were before, both for extended strategical moves, for wide reconnaissance, for distant raids, and for tactical flanking operations beyond those nearer tactical combat duties for which mounted infantry are designed.

(Except the Tugela Heights, no big fight in this war was won without the aid of cavalry.)

In both my forces from want of cavalry we had to try to get cavalry work out of troops which were in reality mounted infantry, and though they worked splendidly to attain the required results, it was not the same thing.

Efficient horsemanship is essential to success for cavalry. This cannot be picked up at once by hastily organised troops. It is a matter of experience and training (which even yet requires developing in the cavalry).

The particular arm with which they appear on the field is not so essential to success as their ability to be there on a sound horse at the right moment. And in any case they must be able to shoot.

The steel arm, whether sword, lance, or bayonet, must be sharp. A really good swordsman is most difficult to train. No amount of the usual barrack-square sword exercises will ever make a swordsman, but an indifferent swordsman with a sharp sword has the advantage over a fair swordsman with a blunt one. Very few of our officers or men knew how to sharpen a sword or how to keep it sharp on service.

(b) *Field Movements and Detached Duties.*—One principle may be applied for all field movements, detached duties, etc., and it is easily picked up by all ranks—namely, the employment of units in an irregular triangle or diamond shape.

This general principle applies equally for all units, from a Division down to the individuals of a patrol, whether in action or on the march, or in the disposition of defence works or of defensive camps or outposts, &c.

Distances and intervals vary according to the strength of a force, the nature of the country, etc.

It fronts in every direction, and automatically supplies supports and reserve.

(c) *Field Works.*—The old regulations teach some rather dangerous principles. Field works should, as a rule, face in all directions (of all the many hundred works so made we had in Mafeking, Rustenburg, and all over the country in the Constabulary, we never lost one work, though they were often held by very small squads and attacked by very large numbers of the enemy).

The so-called Boer trench is a good one in certain positions, but requires a command amongst high grass, etc. It is often useful to leave bush and other cover standing in the immediate neighbourhood of the trench to afford concealment. The Boers pushed their entrenchments against Mafeking close up at the front where we least expected them, because of the open flat ground. They effected this by night, each man carrying a spade and half a dozen sandbags, and by dawn they had erected a very fair fort. The trench used by the Constabulary was a long narrow one shaped in the form of a O or an S, length 6ft. to every man occupying the trench (so that they can sleep in it), 2ft. 6in. wide at base, roofed in with a splinter-proof roof; command usually about 2ft. Reserves of water, food, ammunition in each work. Covered way to kitchens and latrines.

Wide and low loopholes are a necessity for effective shooting, and to prevent a panic inside an enclosed work; 4ft. in place of 4in. recommended as proper width.

(d) *Artillery.*—The want of a light and extremely mobile gun was very much felt. Such is made by Armstrong, namely, the 3-pounder quick-firing gun, with a light carriage capable of being carried on pack-saddle. Range about 4,500 yards, firing shrapnel bursting at 3,000 yards.

It has to be, and has been, realised that the real effect of artillery fire is practically its moral effect, and a mobile quick-firing gun does as much damage as heavier ordnance, but has the merit of being transportable over any kind of ground by night, and it is by night that mounted raids, etc., have to be continually carried out.

(e) *Reserves of Equipment.*—Such reserves of saddlery, arms, ammunition, boots, clothing, bandoliers, etc., should be kept up in the Colonies.

(f) *Local Supplies.*—Arrangements are desirable by which "corners" by "operators" in local supplies of transport, food, forage, etc., can be prevented at the outbreak of war.

(g) *Imperial Forces in Colonies.*—An ordinance is desirable by which Imperial Forces may be raised or located in British Colonies. (Compare difficulties previous to Mafeking.)

(h) *Farriers.*—The want of good shoeing smiths and farriers was much felt in first organising.

(i) *Discipline.*—Adequate deterrent field punishments are much needed.

The powers of officers require increasing for detachments on service.

The officer commanding should have powers of dismissal.

(j) *Recruiting.*—Finger-prints.—It is worth considering a system of finger-print registration which will prevent re-enlistment in other corps of undesirables. In the recruiting for the Constabulary it was found useful in preventing personation and in allowing signatures for illiterates or native employees, for identification purposes, pay receipts, etc.

(k) *Saddlery.*—We have tried most kinds, including regulation cavalry, mounted infantry, Indian cavalry, Lock Elliot, Canadian, Mexican, Austrian, Australian, and Colonial patterns. The latter gave the fewest sore backs, was the most popular, and does not admit of excessive extra kit being carried.

(l) *Firing Mounted.*—Firing mounted was successfully practised in the South African Constabulary, and was very effective in action.

(m) *Transport.*—For the more efficient and economical work I had proposed to try mules three abreast for two-wheeled vehicles, and three or four abreast for four-wheeled vehicles, but had not started the experiments when I left South Africa.

19821. You went out to South Africa, I think, in July, 1899?—Yes.

19822. And the object of your going out was to raise two regiments, was it not?—Yes; originally they told me to raise one, and then when I got out there I got orders to raise a second.

19823. Have you got the precise instructions that you received?—No, they were more or less verbal, especially with regard to the point that I was to raise these regiments for the defence of the border, and to detain as many Boers up there as possible if war came on. That was a verbal instruction from Lord Wolseley.

19824. You had a letter of instructions, I think, which General Plumer saw?—Yes, I had a letter of instructions.

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903

Major-General
E. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
13 Mar. 1903.

19825. Besides that there were these verbal instructions?—Yes, that was impressed upon us more than anything, to contain as many Boers up that way as one could, in addition to defending the frontier, of course, and keeping the natives in order, so that they did not rise in Rhodesia and the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

19826. You were under the Colonial Office?—Yes, lent by the War Office.

19827. And how long did that position continue?—Up to the middle of September; towards the end of September I was handed over to the Army with my force complete.

19828. Then you became part of the force in South Africa?—Yes.

19829. You have given us the headings of the manner in which the frontier force was organised. Are there any points which you would like to develop in that matter?—The difficulties in starting a force like that were that there was no organisation in the country to work upon. One could not get supplies of equipment ready; there were no reserves practically in the country, except by chance. There was nothing regularly and systematically laid down for raising a force like that. There was a great difficulty in getting officers ready made. You had to draw on England, on the Army, for officers to organise the force, because Colonial officers are excellent men for leading troops in the field, but naturally they have had very little experience in raising a force, and especially in training the men carefully in the essential points (and not the minor drill, which is so unnecessary), and in keeping accounts of stores and equipment. That is where we found they were so wasteful; they had no idea of keeping accounts either of stores or supplies or of issuing supplies on any kind of economical system. You had, therefore, to have Imperial officers from the Army just at the time when they were most required for their own regiments.

19830. Had you enough Imperial officers?—We had just enough to go on with, but the officers from the Army only formed from about one-third to one-half our strength.

19831. You had about 20, I think you say?—Yes. Then we had a few sent up afterwards to General Plumer; they could not reach me. I suppose there were 25 in all, and they formed about one-third of our strength of officers. They were very useful as commanders of squadrons, and, of course, for the staff of the regiment.

19832. I suppose you consider it essential to have Imperial officers in those regiments?—Unless you could organise forces in the country beforehand in peace time—a regular standing force, by which they would have practically trained officers available in their own colonies.

19833. Even then would not the experience of a Regular officer be serviceable?—Certainly, for the heads of regiments, and even of squadrons, and I think the Colonial officers certainly then would always prefer themselves to have experienced officers over them, because it gives them much more confidence, and the men too, especially since this war they have got to understand each other so very much better than they ever did in the past. They find they are not of a different breed altogether.

19834. Then there was no organisation at all?—None whatever.

19835. But you had this advantage over others who had to raise regiments of the sort during the war, that you began two months before war broke out?—Yes, and I knew where to go to get things, because I had served out there in 1896-7, and I knew that there was a great deal of material left over from the Matabele War, and up in Matabeleland.

19836.—In what way?—In the way of saddlery, equipment, ammunition, clothing, and that sort of thing, and even old transport and old stores, a supply of tinned meat, and so on, because we had a good lot of it in Mafeking as a reserve, so I went straight up there instead of trying at Cape Town, where I found the stores were at a very low ebb, and even there they could not have been issued without a lot of formalities. I got most of mine in Bulawayo.

19837. And did you have enough?—Yes I had enough for my force, but it would not allow of any reserve for

a further supply; it just fitted it out, and that was all; there was nothing to fall back upon for making good deficiencies and so on afterwards. And the transport and supplies one had to get as best one could on the spot up there.

19838. General Plumer told us that traders filled up their supplies in advance?—Yes, they saw what was coming, and they filled up; they were largely advised to do so, I think, by Colonel Nicholson; he saw what was coming, and they had about eight months' supplies in Bulawayo before the war began.

19839. Which it would have been very difficult to get if that had not been done before the war?—Yes.

19840. Where did you get your men from?—I got my men chiefly from the coast ports and the chief towns, like Grahamstown and King William's Town in Cape Colony, East London, Port Elizabeth, and those places.

19841. And on what conditions did they enlist?—On a three months' service engagement, and the retention of their services in the event of war—that they could be kept on to any extent for the duration of the war.

19842. At what pay?—At 5s. a day.

19843. Did you have any difficulty in getting them?—No, no great difficulty. We could not get entirely good men, because there was an uncertainty at that time whether war was coming on or not, and the men did not care about leaving their employment. We really got a good percentage of loafers amongst those, to such an extent that in Bulawayo I deferred taking on men a good deal until we could see whether the war was really coming on or not. But I organised in the meantime a great many of the young respectable fellows in employment there, who said they would come out directly war was certain; we organised one squadron entirely of those fellows; they used to come out to drill when they could get leave from their employers, and we had the horses, transport, and everything organised ready for them, so that when war did come they came out as a squadron complete, and joined General Plumer's force. They were first-rate.

19844. Were you satisfied with the others?—They were a very mixed lot. They did very well on service; they would never have done in peace time.

19845. And as regards the horses?—The horses we bought through the Army Remount Department chiefly. For the first three days we were not allowed to buy them, and then afterwards they joined in and let us have them.

19846. You were not allowed to do so?—The General seemed doubtful about war coming on, and he said there was no hurry about it, so I started to buy them myself; then when he saw that I was anxious to get them, he allowed the Army Remount Department to help us.

19847. The General at the Cape you mean?—Yes.

19848. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Was that Sir William Butler or Sir Forestier-Walker?—Sir William Butler. It was only a matter of two days.

19849. (Chairman.) Had the Remount Department a war establishment at the Cape at that time, or was it the ordinary peace establishment?—A war establishment; Colonel Stevenson had been sent out previously to my arrival.

19850. To buy horses in the country?—Yes, to buy horses in the country and send them up to me at Kimberley.

19851. So that you had South African horses?—Yes.

19852. Were you satisfied with them?—Very satisfied.

19853. You say that you framed your constitution and discipline on the Cape Mounted Rifles Act. What is the meaning of that?—That is an Act which exists for raising an armed force by which the High Commissioner is allowed to raise armed forces, but though it is supposed to apply to Cape Colony only, that is the only place where we were not allowed to use it. But we applied similar rules to our raising which were extended to suit our circumstances in the north.

19854. How do you mean that you were not allowed to use it in Cape Colony?—We were not allowed to raise an armed force in the Cape Colony; we were obliged to raise it outside.

19855. That was under the regulations of the local Government at the time?—Yes; therefore we could not use Mafeking really as a base during peace time. We had to raise our force outside the boundary, which was

18 miles north of Mafeking, in the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

19856. Were you positively prohibited?—Yes, and it is only because we had large stores in Mafeking, and there was danger of their being set fire to by the enemy's agents, that I was then allowed to send a guard down to protect them.

19857. You could accumulate the stores in Mafeking?—Yes, there was no objection to that.

19858. Have you anything else to say with regard to the raising of these regiments?—They had to be raised very rapidly, and the training had to be carried out very rapidly, and in order to do that we had to reduce our drill to a very simple form. We decentralised authority therefore as far as possible, so that we put responsibility on the younger officers each for his little unit, and trusted him to get it into good order as quickly as possible. And that was quite successful; they were in good order and trained ready for the field by the time the war broke out; that is to say, in a little over two months from the time they first started to organise. The officers worked day and night, and got things into shape somehow. And the men were certainly very good in the field. I inspected them all just before war broke out. We used to have field days, but it was more of a practical training; there was not much drill about it, but they were training in the field continually, and had sham fights against each other, the man getting handled by his officers the whole time, and each individual group under his non-commissioned officer.

19859. I suppose it was exactly the sort of work that your men had to do afterwards?—Exactly.

19860. But could you get enough discipline instilled into them by that amount of training?—Yes, because they had to use their own intelligence so much, and worked a great deal by that. In a spread out formation each man had to keep his eyes open and see what his officer wanted out of him. It was more like playing a game than doing any special ornamental drill.

19861. With regard to hospital equipment, there was some difficulty about that, was there not?—Hospital equipment was very difficult to get at first, because we relied rather on finding it on the spot, and there was not much in that way in the chemists' shops. We had to buy up all the stuff we could.

19862. What medical staff had you?—Medical officers were very hard to get. We had to get doctors from the town to join us as Volunteers, which they naturally did not care about doing without very large pay. We eventually got one Army Medical Officer sent up to each column, Colonel Plumer's and Colonel Hore's; but in each case we had to use local physicians a great deal, and they demanded pretty high pay for it, which was granted by special order.

19863. Was the hospital work satisfactory?—It was efficiently carried out in the end, but we had to make our own ambulances out of wagons, fit them up, and put extra springs on, and so on, and manufacture stretchers, and that sort of thing.

19864. With regard to artillery, you were short of that?—We had a good number of odds and ends of small guns, but they were nearly all obsolete—small weapons, and with very small range, and generally firing smoky powder.

19865. They were 7-pounders, as a rule, were they not?—7-pounders.

19866. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Had you any mountain guns?—We had four mountain guns in Bulawayo, two of which were rather played out, having gone through one campaign at least before, and a very mixed lot; we had a one-pounder Hotchkiss, a Gardner gun, a Gatling, and six Maxims (two of them Martini-Henry Maxims), and a great mixture of ammunition.

19867. (Chairman.) That mixed ammunition must have increased your difficulties?—Yes, greatly. They had only been kept there by the police for arming forts in different outlying districts. They were never intended for a mobile field force.

19868. Was nothing sent up for you?—No, except two 7-pounders, which were sent up to Mafeking.

19869. Which you had been informed were two 5-inch howitzers?—Yes.

19870. That was a mistake in the telegram?—Yes, they used the wrong word in the telegram in the code, saying that they were sending up 5-inch howitzers. In

planning our scheme of defence for Mafeking these two 5-inch howitzers would have covered the whole of the defence, and we put our two forts on each flank of the town, and when they did arrive they were two 7-pounders that would not fire as far as the town from those forts; they were no use at all, and were without sights, or wheels, or proper ammunition.

19871. As the war became imminent you found it necessary to divide your force?—Yes. We had to protect 500 miles of border, and it was impossible, of course, to hold that with 2,000 men, which we amounted to altogether; so we divided into two columns, one in the north on the road between Bulawayo and the Transvaal, the main road, at Tuli, which I handed over to Colonel Plumer; and the other was concentrated at Mafeking, as being the most vulnerable point of the Transvaal to threaten. And in order to draw Boers up into that part of the world which we had been ordered to do, I also pretended that we had a third force in between the two, and that drew a fair force of Boers up there, 1,200 men stationed there waiting for this force which never came—it did not exist.

19872. It did not exist?—No, but they thought it did.

19873. What was your special object in holding Mafeking itself?—Mafeking was such an important point up there, in the eyes of the natives especially. "Who holds Mafeking," they used to say, "holds the world," because it had always been a bone of contention between Boers, British, and natives for generations past, and whoever held on there had the prestige amongst all the natives. If we lost our prestige there natives of the Protectorate would probably have gone over, and naturally the Rhodesian natives would have followed suit; they would have risen and had the whole country up north. Apart from that, the Boers were always very anxious to get it; they had always had an eye on it, and it was also full of stores and supplies, and things which would have been useful to them which we had been collecting for months, and it was very near the starting place of the Raid; so that they naturally expected that another raid from that direction would be possible into Pretoria. Therefore, they would have had to watch it in any case with a pretty strong force if we kept mounted men there. That is why I kept mounted men there, both as a threat and because if they did go away we could actually make a raid and dash in if necessary. It was a very convenient jumping off place. Then it had large railway shops, and a good number of locomotives and rolling stock valued at about £130,000, belonging to the railway, which also wanted protection. On all these accounts I settled upon it as a place that ought to be held at all risks, at first at any rate.

19874. What force had you to hold it?—I had about 700 trained men. I did not give you the exact number there, but I have them if you like to have them. The Protectorate Regiment, 469; British South Africa Police, 72; Cape Police, 92; and Bechuanaland Rifles, 83; that makes about 700 trained men. And a Town Guard of shopkeepers, people who had never handled a rifle, railway men, and refugee farmers, of about 300; and, in addition to those, we armed 300 natives to look after cattle, and prevent their being looted when they were out grazing, and so on.

19875. But you did not use the natives in military operations?—No, we tried to make them defend their own town, but on the first attack on the town they all ran away, so we did not rely upon them at all.

19876. When you say you had 700 trained men, they would have been trained in the way that you have been describing?—Yes, they had only had two months' training. Then the police force was good, they amounted to 160 men; they had all been drilled; but then again some of those we could not rely on, about 45 of those were Cape Dutchmen, and we were not quite sure of them.

19877. You had no Regulars at all?—No; excepting about a dozen farriers.

19878. Not to work the artillery?—No, that was done by the police.

19879. I do not know that it is necessary for our purposes to take you through the incidents of the siege?—No I suppose not.

19880. They are very well known. You say that before the beginning of the siege you had spies and intelligence agents out across the border?—Yes; the Intelligence Department had one officer, and he had several agents under him in the Transvaal. And I sent

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903.

Major-General
R. S. S. Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903.

in another officer to Pietersburg, because he was able to get a lot of information there, having lived there himself before, and that was where some of the meetings of the Boers took place, about going up against Rhodesia; so that we knew they were going to go against Rhodesia; and we got information from these agents, and a lot of their sub-agents about the country, who were very well-informed as to what was going on, so that we could tell exactly the number coming against us, and everything, and what their intentions were.

19881. Does the Intelligence Department mean your Intelligence Department?—No, the Army had one officer up there.

19882. From the Intelligence branch of the Army?—Yes, he was called away just before we were shut in; but up to that time he had been giving us very full information, and had prepared maps of the country in the Transvaal, if we wanted to make a forward movement to Pretoria.

19883. When did he come up?—He was out there before I was; some time in June I fancy.

19884. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Who was he?—His name was Read.

19885. (Chairman.) He was an officer of the Intelligence branch of the Army?—Yes.

19886. And he had an organisation there?—Yes, he worked with local traders and people, and had his agents about.

19887. Had you an Intelligence branch and an Intelligence officer?—I had an officer for Intelligence, and he used to collect all he could from Read, and from one or two other men we employed ourselves.

19888. When you say you employed them, that means you had funds available?—Yes, we paid two of them, took them on the strength of our regiment and paid them out of the funds of it, out of the pay for the regiment.

19889. Had you any discretion given you to spend money in that particular way?—Yes. I had a certain sum allowed me, and given me on imprest to expend on the estimate I had sent in previously as to what the regiment would cost, and the cost of food, forage, and so on.

19890. That was for the regiment?—Yes, there was no special secret service fund.

19891. All the information that you got was outside any secret service work?—Yes.

19892. But you think you got as much as you required?—Yes, we were quite well informed of what was going on. And we had maps made. I sent down another officer to Pietersburg to make a map of the road that way, and we had all that mapped out and printed on canvas, and issued to the officers.

19893. Then in your paper you mention a certain outstanding incident; is there anything you would like to say with regard to that part of it?—During the siege, do you mean?

19894. Yes, during the siege?—No; it has sometimes been asked whether we were very hard up at the end, and why we should not have held out much longer, or could not have gone on much longer, and the facts have been rather misrepresented about the supplies that we had there, because we supplied Bulawayo the moment we were relieved. That looks as if we had a lot of supplies there. As a matter of fact, we had about 10 days' supplies left at our then ration, which was very small; and I doubt if the men would have had much strength after another 10 days, so that we could not very well have reduced on that ration. The ration was three-quarters of a pound of meat (generally horse sausage), six ounces of oatcake that was made out of the horses' oats, three pints of sowens, a sort of porridge made of these oats also—the same oats had to go through both operations—and half an ounce of tea. That just kept the men fit; it did not leave much strength in them, and if we had reduced it I think the men would have so broken down that they could not have got out at all. My intention was, therefore, supposing the relief had failed on the 18th of May, which was the day when I expected it, to have broken out somewhere in the next 10 days, and joined hands with Plumer, who was brought down into our neighbourhood for that special purpose if Mahon's force had failed to relieve. But I did not want to do it, on account of the prestige of the place with the natives.

19895. And how long had you been on that reduced ration?—For about two months. When the relief actually took place I called for returns of the number of men capable of marching five miles, because we wanted to go out and join in the fight when the relief came on, and we had only 180 available for that.

19896. The others were too weak?—The others were too weak.

19897. Was there any grumbling about the ration?—None whatever. They saw it was necessary. I used to publish a lot of information every day, which I found was much the best thing for keeping people satisfied. I published, in fact, everything we knew, and the fact that we had such a lot of rations to hand over was due to the fact that the moment we did get relieved—we were relieved at two o'clock in the morning, say—we went out at seven, at daybreak, and attacked the Boers still in their commandoes. They were not aware of the relief force having got in; they were still waiting for it on the east side, but the relief got in on the west side in the night, and we dashed out on the east side and captured their laager and followed them up the next three or four days into the Transvaal, perhaps for moral effect. We went to Snyman's farm, a late commandant of the Boers, then, and captured all his sheep and cattle, and brought them away. Those I put into the relief train that came down with food from Bulawayo for us, and sent them up as a present in return, as we could not do anything with them. That was how it came about that we had all those things in Mafeking.

19898. They were really captured?—Yes; we dashed out, and captured them before the Boers could get them away. We got about 2,000 sheep.

19899. You calculated that there were about 11,000 Boers against you in the early part of the time?—Yes; that is the lowest. There were 1,700 against General Plumer, 8,000 at least—some put it at 9,000—at Mafeking, and 1,200 against this imaginary force at Sefatimis. I had written a letter to a man who I knew was dead, in the Transvaal, to say this force was coming down, and the Boers opened this letter and read it, and so sent this force up.

19900. That is 11,000 along the whole stretch of the frontier?—Yes; along the whole north-western frontier.

19901. Of 500 miles?—Yes.

19902. The next head on the paper is "Use of Artillery"?—We had a good taste of artillery fire in the place, and we could judge very well the effect of it; when sitting under fire you can judge the effect, I think, better than when you are using the guns. We found that mostly the effect of it was moral; the artillery fire did very little man-killing, as a matter of fact. However, they made very good shooting; they had some German gunners, and they made some very good shooting direct on to the target, but it had very little effect beyond the moral effect; therefore, we found that the big guns were much less terrifying than the small mobile guns which they used to take about, suddenly coming upon us from some unexpected quarter, and pouring a rapid fire into a certain spot, and before we had become accustomed to it they had gone somewhere else, and poured in another rapid fire from some other point with smokeless powder. That was much more effective than the big shells which you knew were coming, and you knew exactly where they would fall.

19903. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Were their fuses good?—No; the shells never burst in the air.

19904. You would have found their fire much more effective if they had had good fuses?—Yes, the small guns burst shrapnel, but the big gun never did. They used to fire shrapnel with percussion fuse.

19905. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What range had the big gun?—They were firing at about 5,000 to 6,000 yards as a rule. They shifted about a good deal.

19906. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Would you say that the effect was moral only with good and well-timed fuses?—Yes, to a great extent. In the field we met them afterwards many times with 15-pounders, and they never seemed to do any damage. You could see clouds of dust all round the men they were firing at, and smoke, but they never got hit. At times it varied, too. Sometimes you would find a gun that could not hit at all; it could not burst its shell in the least.

19907. (Chairman.) We have had some evidence that

when they were fired at excessive ranges the Boer shells were very ineffective?—Yes; that is quite true. The pom-poms were really as effective as anything, because they poured in such a lot, and so quickly.

19908. But they did not do material damage?—No damage whatever; I had two men killed by pom-poms, and a good many thousand men fired at.

19909. (*Sir John Edge.*) Were they killed by the burst of the pom-pom shell, or from being struck by it?—From being struck by it.

19910. (*Chairman.*) The bursting of the pom-pom does not do any damage?—No; but the moral effect is good, and they find their range so quickly with it, too.

19911. Your armament was very inefficient, of course, as compared with the Boers, from what you have been saying already?—Yes, very. I think the best gun we had was the 1-pounder Hotchkiss that we used to go at the Boer big gun with; and we had a 2-inch Nordenfeldt, which was no good, but by digging a hole, and hiding it behind a bush, we could every now and again get some very effective shooting in, as long as they did not know where we were. We had to do it all by ambush. We manufactured one gun, and we dug up an old naval gun there, which was the best gun we had for distance.

19912. (*Sir John Jackson.*) As regards the moral effect of the pom-poms, the men very soon learnt, I suppose, that they were not effective?—Yes; the men did not mind them a bit after a time; in fact, they did not mind anything. They did not mind the big guns at all, but still it used to annoy them.

19913. But in that case they would not have much moral effect, would they, after a time?—No.

19914. (*Chairman.*) What do you mean when you say that you used to fire through blankets at night?—When the enemy fired at us we could always see the flash of their guns, and so we knew that it was coming. Accordingly, when we fired at them we put blankets in front of the guns, so that they could not see the flash, and we let them have it suddenly and unexpectedly. We always had to do dodging in firing like that; we had to creep the guns round at night, and hide them during the day.

19915. Then we pass on to the training of officers and men in the future?—I did not quite know whether that question applied to the general principles in the Army, or merely as to the raising of irregular forces, but really the same principle applies in a great measure to either case. I think the junior officers want more responsibility given to them. From the very first they should be accustomed to taking responsibility on their own shoulders. It does not matter how small a unit you give them, as long as they are actually responsible for it. At present they are so much shifted about from one unit to another that they never have any real job of their own, as it were. In the Navy a midshipman has his boat to look after; he is responsible for it, and is accustomed to responsibility from the very beginning. I am sure that our junior officers would take much more professional interest in their work if, from the very first, they were inoculated with responsibility in that way.

19916. In your paper you state what, in your opinion, is the most convenient organisation for rapid training and use in the field; would you mind reading that paragraph again?—"The most convenient organisation for rapid training and use in the field is the troop of about 80 to 100 men sub-divided into about 10 combatant squads of a corporal and six men, every man horsed; each troop an independent unit with its transport, medical orderly, farrier, saddler, pay sergeant, etc. The squad to be the permanent unit in the troop whether for work in the field or in camp or for patrols, outposts, and other detached duties. These small units with good men in responsible charge very rapidly acquire efficiency when the organisation has to be hurried." This is rather my deduction from the Constabulary quite as much as from the first force, because in the case of the Constabulary we had to raise 10,000 men and put them in the field as rapidly as could possibly be done with practically no assistance from anybody; that is to say, the Army could not spare the good officers that we wanted, and they could not spare non-commissioned officers and men, so that we had to raise men in England and send them out to Africa and train them as best we could, and that was the organisation that I found was the best, namely, to put them into small units of from

80 to 100 men under a good officer who was responsible for training them and using them in the field; and the squad was the unit. We put six men into a squad under a corporal, a selected man, and he was expected to do everything with that squad, to teach them to ride and to shoot, and his squad was to be the best in the troop. There was always competition between all the different squads as to which was the best. The corporal in charge in the field watched what the signals were, and brought his squad up to the right place, and worked it entirely. The squad had only to produce four men for duty out of the six, so that that left a margin always for one or two men being sick or kept for duty as cooks and other duties, but you always had four men in the field working effectively, and they lived together, so that if you wanted a sentry you simply said such and such a squad will find a sentry, and they arranged amongst themselves who was to do it.

19917. What number of men did a subaltern command?—It began with a captain and a subaltern commanding a troop, but latterly we found they could work very well with just a captain in charge of a group of troops, practically a squadron (that is three troops), and a subaltern in charge of each troop. But at first, when there was so much work in hand, it was just as well to have two, a captain and a subaltern.

19918. I think you attach considerable importance to the training of junior officers in finance and supply duties?—Yes, that is where we found them fail a good deal, and it is what I have gone in for a great deal in the Constabulary; that is to say, they all go through a course in the Accounts Branch, the Supply Branch, and in the Ordnance Branch, and account for all their different stores; and then when they first come to be in charge of stores they do not lose money over it. They understand proper bookkeeping, and they see to it themselves instead of leaving it in the hands of a non-commissioned officer who may defraud them.

19919. And would you apply that to the Army generally?—Yes, I think so certainly. The account keeping is too much left in the hands of non-commissioned officers, and it is rather tempting them to be left with money in their hands, as often happens.

19920. I asked the question because there has been a good deal of criticism of the fact that the company officer has to do so much accounting in the Army?—Yes. I think that is because he is rather too much of a gentleman. I think it is much better for him. I quite agree to his having it taken out of his hands if possible, because he has really more than he can do in training his men, and he will have especially nowadays if it is to be shorter service.

19921. It has been suggested that there should be a regimental paymaster instead?—I certainly would prefer that.

19922. Then where does your training of junior officers in accounts come in?—If they will not allow them to have paymasters I certainly would have the younger officers who are to be in charge of accounts trained in that special work, because now it is left to them to learn it as best they can, and some learn it and some do not.

19923. But if you were to have a regimental paymaster there would be no opportunity of training junior officers in accounts?—But there would be no necessity for it then.

19924. They would not want it in the Army, but you would not get officers trained in accounts for use with irregular forces?—I think certainly that with irregular forces the officers ought to do that work.

19925. I mean that then the Army officer would not be trained for that purpose?—No, he would not.

19926. Then that does not mean what you say here, that there ought to be some arrangement in time of peace for the organisation of these Volunteer forces in time of war?—Yes, it does, and that they should be trained to look after their own accounts, and issues of clothing, stores, supplies, equipment, and money.

19927. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But there are always a certain number of officers and any number of men who will take to accounts or anything else that they are put to?—As clerks, do you mean?

19928. No, I am talking of the difficulty of getting men suddenly appointed to irregular forces to do accounts. There is always a certain proportion of men

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C. B.
19 Mar. 1903.

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.

19 Mar. 1903.

who can do whatever they are put to?—You can always find men who are willing to do it, but who have not an idea how to do it.

19929. But I mean men who are competent to do it. I have known men who have never seen an account before in their lives, and when they have been put to it they have done the accounts just as well as any clerk could do them?—Certainly, I agree with that. I think it is wonderful what they do in that way. I know we had 100 troops in the South African Constabulary, and in each of those we were able to find good accountants for supplies and stores and such things; but, even so, there was an enormous amount of waste; they had no idea of any good system right through the corps. Each man has his own little system, and they mean well, but a lot of them do not work at all well for the ultimate end of saving expenditure, and stores, and waste of supplies—that always went on.

19930. My question was whether, if there was a regimental paymaster for every regiment, which was the old system, of course, it would be necessary to train the officers of the Army as a whole as accountants, provided a few good men were ready to work with irregular forces?—No, it would not, if they were going to have a regimental paymaster again.

19931. (Chairman.) But in order that you might have officers of the class that you want, and also the organisation necessary for the irregular forces, it would be desirable, would it not, to have a scheme drawn out beforehand?—Yes.

19932. Are you aware whether anything of that sort is being prepared as the result of the experience of the war?—No, I have not heard of anything of the kind.

19933. I have no doubt that you, from your experience in raising these regiments, would be able to give information?—I should be very glad to do so.

19934. Some officers have said that there ought to be a manual which could be put into the hands of any officer who was sent out, as you were, to raise a regiment which would be of great assistance to him in the matter?—Certainly it would, and there are similar forms in the Army Pay Department for working with an irregular force, but practically we had to adopt our own plan. We had our own idea of pay lists, and so on, and we have in the Constabulary quite a different system, which I think is much simpler and more understandable. A lot of officers never get to understand their pay accounts at all, and they could not keep them themselves, so they have to rely on their sergeants doing it.

19935. But in the case of some regiments that were raised (I do not think it occurred in your case, because, as you say, the rate of 5s. a day was fixed at the beginning) there were doubts as to the rate of pay; and conditions of that kind might be laid down in a manual, might they not?—Yes. I think in raising a corps like that standing orders are the first thing you have to get out, which I did at once; in fact, I wrote them on the voyage out, going into pay, and all that sort of question, so that I handed them to each officer and each non-commissioned officer, and he knew exactly what they were.

19936. And those could all be in print and ready to be handed out in that way?—Exactly; if there was a standard book of that kind, standing orders for raising irregular forces, it would be a great help, and, in fact, when they started raising other forces in Natal, Colonel Chisholme, who was the first to do so, with the Imperial Light Horse, sent to me, and I sent the whole thing down to him, and the Imperial Light Horse was started on the same principle. And other corps, Bethune's and others, took up the same sort of thing, so that there was a fair amount of uniformity about them. But that was only by chance.

19937. It was in the case of one of the Natal forces, Colonel Thorneycroft's Horse, that we heard that there was a doubt even as to the rate of pay?—Yes, it was just a chance matter whether they took it up or not.

19938. Then you have formed some deductions from your experience, which you have stated in your papers?—Yes, perhaps more from the working of Colonel Plumer's force and of my combined force after the relief when one was a flying column in the north of the Transvaal and afterwards again with the constabulary, working for nearly a year and a half, as we were, all over the country. We were all mounted infantry, but every day it was impressed upon us how necessary

it was that there should be cavalry; that cavalry are the most essential arm in modern warfare.

19939. Cavalry as distinct from mounted infantry, do you mean?—Yes, cavalry as distinct from mounted infantry. I am a great advocate for mounted infantry, too; I am a great believer in them, but I found the great necessity for good cavalry on almost every occasion.

19940. Would you explain that?—To begin with, the key to the whole of cavalry work is good horsemanship. I do not think it matters what the cavalry are armed with as long as they can bring their horses to the required spot at the critical moment. And the cavalry work is so distinct from mounted infantry work as they have to do the wide strategical moves rather than tactical moves. They have to undertake wide-ranging raids, much larger matters than the mounted infantry do, all of which demand perfect horsemanship; and that is not to be got by a roughly trained force in a couple of months; it is a matter of real experience and training. I do not say that we do it sufficiently yet in the cavalry, but it is in everybody's mind now; so far as I have been able to see the officers all recognise that now, and their main ideas are directed to getting their men trained in really practical efficient horsemanship. If you have a temporary trained force of mounted infantry, you can never train it to that amount of knowledge which is so absolutely necessary. And the work of mounted infantry is of a different kind; it is more for rapid tactical moves.

19941. The work of mounted infantry is to transport infantry at a rapid pace to the spot where it is required in battle?—Yes, whereas the cavalry have to make large turning movements to get round to the rear as it were, and take off the flanks of the foe. But, of course, in this war there were no cavalry opposed to us. In many another war it might be a different matter with the cavalry of the enemy coming down and stopping the mounted infantry doing their proper work. You must have a cavalry force capable of going long distances, so as to counteract the enemy's cavalry.

19942. So that it is necessary to be careful in the deductions which you draw from this war?—Yes, this war does not apply really; it only confirms a great many theories, which I formed before in that way. Only one sees now with the extended front that a battlefield can spread out to, what an enormous advantage it will be in the end to the force that has the best cavalry.

19943. You say that it does not matter what arm they have. I suppose you mean that they must shoot in any case?—They must shoot, and be able to hold their own, because the modern fight now differs very much from the old defensive attack. You have to grasp a position and hold it, and then another and another and another. You must keep on holding those positions as you go along creeping round the enemy, and you must be able to shoot as well as ride.

19944. You say that the steel arm, whether sword, lance, or bayonet must be sharp; do you mean that besides the rifle they ought to carry another arm?—I do not care much about that. I do not think it matters what they have.

19945. But do you think they ought to have one arm of offence, as it is called?—No, I think that a good sword bayonet, which you can use as a sword or as a bayonet, is as good a thing as anything. The present sword is a perfectly useless weapon to my mind, whether as a sword or anything else. I have been in two attacks now, and I have known of others where we have used the bayonet, not having any other weapon.

19946. The bayonet on the end of the rifle?—Yes, and it does perfectly well, because cavalry are very like artillery. They think they do much more harm than they really do, but it is the moral effect of cavalry with any kind of steel weapon which is what does the damage, and if it is a bayonet on a rifle, which you can balance as well as a lance (which is not the case at present), there is no reason why it should not be a very effective weapon.

19947. We were told by one witness that it would be almost impossible to get a sufficient balance to make a bayonet on a rifle an effective weapon, while others have said that it would be possible?—It depends upon the sort of weapon that you put on the end. And I do not think you want such very good balance. Using a lance in action is not a fine art; it is in drill and for competitions, and that sort of thing.

19948. (Viscount Esher.) I should have thought that

*Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.*
19 Mar. 1903

if it is a question of moral effect, a lance or sword would have increased the moral effect of cavalry?—Well, I found that the best moral effect was shooting as you went along; that made the enemy turn and run before anything else. But as long as they know that you have some sort of steel in your hand ready for them, that is enough. As I say, a sword that you can use as a sword or fix as a bayonet is a thing I have in my mind. I have never tried anything else, because I found the ordinary bayonet fixed on the end of the rifle do very well.

19949. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What length should it be?—I should have a very short sword—longer than the present bayonet—double the length.

19950. (*Viscount Esher.*) Like the old Roman sword?—Yes.

19951. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) One witness said that he would rather carry a revolver than anything; would you agree with that?—No; I have tried a revolver, too, but a repeating rifle is better.

19952. I mean in addition to the rifle, in lieu of having a weapon of offence, carrying a revolver in your holster?—Yes, I have done that, too. I have expended all my ammunition out of the rifle and thrown it away, and then taken the revolver. Of course, it is very dangerous to everybody, but I cannot help thinking that if it is worked out (and it will be worked out in the cavalry) we shall find that a short sword with the rifle will do instead of the lance.

19953. (*Chairman.*) But it must be sharp?—Yes, it must be sharp; the present sword is not.

19954. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Would there not be a danger of losing the rifle if you used it as a lance; would there not be a danger of its being forced out of your hand?—No, I think not—not more than with the lance.

19955. But a lance has a sling on the arm?—You could put a sling on the rifle. You do not use the sling on the lance; it really comes out of itself.

19956. But you can drop the lance with it?—Yes, and so you could the rifle in the same way; it is only a matter of taking it round and bringing it up afterwards. But that matter of the weapon being sharp is a thing that really wants more attention in the Army. There are Ordnance objections to it, though I do not quite know what they are. In India I went into that with my regiment; we had so many men trained to sharpen their swords, trained by natives, because in India they are apt to keep their swords very sharp indeed; in fact, the Sikhs have a saying that a thing is "as disgraceful as having a blunt sword." I had one squadron which I always kept ready for service at two hours' notice in India, who sharpened their swords in that way, but the Ordnance came down and said I should have to blunt them again at my own expense. It is a high art, as it is with the razor, first to sharpen your sword and then to keep it sharp. The way to sharpen your sword is to grind it on various stones, and the way to keep it sharp is to keep it wrapped up in oiled muslin, and that sort of thing; but no soldier has any conception how to sharpen his sword or how to keep it sharp, and the whole success in a fight depends upon that. It is not that these Indians are such excellent swordsmen, but the fact is that when they hit you anyhow, the sword goes clean through what it touches, and so they disable you quickly, even with a half-cut or with a badly-delivered cut.

19957. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What is the objection to having the sword sharpened and kept sharp?—It wears them out too soon, before their proper life; it is a more expensive job.

19958. (*Chairman.*) One witness told us that in some of the frontier wars the regulation sword would not cut a poshteen?—No, it certainly would not as it is sharpened by us.

19959. You think that the cavalry sword ought to be able to do so?—Yes.

19960. (*Viscount Esher.*) Are you in favour of a cutting sword for the cavalry, not merely a rapier?—I think it ought to be able to cut, certainly. It ought to be very light and to be used with smacks. A smack may be anything; it depends upon how fast the man is coming at you, or you are going at the man; it may turn into a cut or a guard—it is the same thing really. I hope that will be the whole sword exercise in future; just to hold the sword properly and smack.

19961. But it should have an edge to it?—Yes.

19962. It should not be merely a rapier?—No, not entirely a rapier, but a light sabre.

19963. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to say anything about field movements or field works?—Field works, I think, is rather an important point. We adopted a kind of field work of our own invention in Mafeking, which was evolved out of our experiences there when we first took up the defence of Mafeking. The usual way to see how much perimeter you are to hold according to the book is to take your garrison and see how many you have, and how many yards there are per man. Our perimeter would then have given, say, 700 yards per man. Our perimeter was, as a matter of fact, about six miles. We put little dots of forts all round the place, a circle of them completely round, and then an inner line of defence round the town itself, so that if the enemy took one of those forts or came within the circle, if he got between the forts and came in, he was in a much worse position than he was outside, because all these forts could fire inwards as well as outwards. Our book generally lays it down that field works should be made to face the proper front, wherever the enemy is supposed to come from; but nowadays nine times out of ten the enemy does not come from the proper front, so that you are apt to be taken in reverse, and I think that when a great many of those fortified camps were captured it was due to that—that the works were facing outwards in one particular direction, instead of in every direction. With field works made to face all round, the enemy have to take every single work if they want to hold the camp; if they take one it is no good to them, because the others are facing them and are turned on them. We practised that all the way through. We evolved a certain front called the "common sense" one, because it was either in the shape of a C or an S, facing in every direction back and front. And when we dug a trench we always dug it in the shape of an S or a C, and then you could fire in every direction, either front or rear, and the enemy never knew how to approach it. And it is very easily done; each man digs his 6ft. of trench, and then he can lie down in it and go to sleep in it, so that they can live in it, and then if they cover it in, it makes it absolutely impregnable, nobody can take it.

19964. What would they cover it with?—Any roofing material, poles or planks, or corrugated iron; and then a couple of feet of earth on the top of that. We found in practice also that it was a great protection against artillery, because, of course, it was very hard to hit. The trench is only standing about 3ft. above the ground, and if a shell strikes anywhere it may hit a man standing there, but it does not damage the rest. And then, again, the enemy coming up in the night cannot get in because you block up the door.

19965. How can you see out of it?—You put a long row of loopholes. We generally had them about 4ft. wide. The book lays down 4in., but I used to impress upon the men that that was a misprint for 4ft., because the bullets do not come in sideways; they are all dropping down at a distance. The only thing is to have a good wide parapet, so that the bullets do not come through and to have a narrow slit 6in high and 4ft. wide.

19966. Then is the ground outside at a lower level?—Yes; if there is grass or stuff that is likely to come up high, you must build the trench above it, and you must be guided by the nature of the ground for digging out—it may be soft ground or hard ground. I had a great argument with Lord Kitchener over the loopholes. The Army says they are to be small, and he asked me why we had these long narrow ones. I pointed out to him that if you are inside one of these forts when men are firing out of these little narrow loopholes you can just see out of them, so that each man can see a certain little bit of ground, but he sees no enemy; he hears his friends firing right and left of him all the way round, he does not know why and he gets frightened; it is like hearing an unexpected noise in a theatre; they all get startled, and a panic begins, and the men fire off their ammunition at nothing at all, and you have to surrender; but with those long loopholes they can see out in all directions, they can see what the enemy are doing, and, if necessary, if one part of the enemy are coming up against one fort, and another part are coming up against another fort, you can crowd a lot of men into one. I have had four firing out of one loophole instead of one.

19967. But does not that increase the danger?—Not if the loophole is low: the lower it is the better, because

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.

19968. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) 500 or 600 yards?—About 200 or 300, so that they could not miss him.

19969. (Chairman.) Do you think that the Boer trench was a good one?—A very good one indeed. There were several kinds of Boer trenches; those they brought up against us were not dug, as a rule, they were built up with sand bags; they were partly dug, but more built up than not. The men used to come out in the night, and they got up to Mafeking on the side where we least expected them, because there was one bit of perfectly flat, open, level ground where the racecourse was, and we thought they would never dare to come up over that. But that is just where they did come up nearest to us. But they came up in the night, each man carrying a spade and half a dozen empty bags. Then each man filled his six bags with sand, and in the morning there was a big trench up against us, made very much on our principle, too, long and narrow, but having very small loopholes, and we got at them in that way in the end. But it was a very effective way of pushing up nearer and nearer each night, by carrying empty sand bags, and they used to make very often a chain of little chambers, a little square box to hold two men. They would put half a dozen of those joining on to each other, so that if one went to rush one of those trenches and took a part of it, you had not got the whole trench, you had only got into one chamber, or if a shell went into one chamber it did not damage the rest of the trench.

19970. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Who do you suppose devised those?—There was one German officer there certainly, whom we killed, directing all their parallels and zigzags. I think he had a hand in most of those forts—they were forts really. We had about 50 or 60 German officers against Mafeking.

19971. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What branch of the Service did that German officer belong to in his own Service?—I do not know. We killed him, not by a chance shot, because we laid for him, and got him. He was in khaki with silver fittings. I do not know whether it was an imaginary uniform of his own, or whether it was a German uniform. We only imagined that he was a German; he was a foreigner, because he was talking through an interpreter. We were so close up that we could hear him giving his instructions to an interpreter, who repeated them in Dutch to the Boers.

19972. I asked the question, because the infantry officers in Germany are all thoroughly trained in field entrenching?—Yes, he was very good at it, and very plucky, too.

19973. (Chairman.) You would like to have a light and extremely mobile gun?—Yes, that is what we felt the want of. I felt the want of it at manoeuvres long ago, and I had written in 1887 about it. I think I first suggested it to General Keith-Fraser, and he was very anxious to have it made then. I made out the working drawings of it all, and now Armstrongs have just made one of these guns, and I was going to try it with the Constabulary, namely, a 3-pounder gun on a light galloping carriage, that can always go on horseback or muleback, because cavalry work now is, and was even in all these raids, carried out chiefly by night, and you cannot take guns by night without letting it be known where you are going.

19974. This is to go on a pack saddle?—Yes, to accompany these rapid moves at night.

19975. With a range of 4,500 yards?—Yes, and it bursts shrapnel at 3,000 yards; it is very small shrapnel, of course, but it is effective.

19976. Has a gun of that kind been used at all?—They had some on the armoured trains, but I never heard with what result; they were not used in the field; they were naval guns, I think, on solid mountings. But I think that would be better than the pom-pom. The pom-pom is a very heavy gun, almost as heavy as the field gun to get round, and this one would be so very mobile, and it would be as effective, as far as fire goes, as the pom-pom, and rather more so, because it fires shrapnel, and you can get the shots in very quickly; it is light ammunition.

19976*. Had you any difficulties about discipline?—

No, nothing very bad. We found, for instance, sleeping at the post, which is a very serious crime, and we had no adequate punishment for it; it was rather unpleasant to have to shoot a man for it, but it was very nearly coming to that once when it began to get rather common. You can only give them a little field imprisonment, and that had no effect.

19977. You think that officers in these forces ought to have the power of dismissal?—Most certainly they ought to have power in that way.

19978. Did you have it yourself?—Yes.

19979. And did you exercise it?—Yes.

19980. During the siege?—Not then, but before the siege, and afterwards, if we enlisted a man we often dismissed him instantly; but that is no great punishment to a man; because he goes and joins some other corps if he wants to get money and so on.

19981. Have you any suggestion to make about punishment?—No, I cannot say that I have. We never devised any great punishments; we simply deducted something out of the men's pay, and paid them so much less at the end of their time. But that did not hurt them at the time, because we only paid them once a month, and money was no use to them in the field. We simply put up a bill of fines against a man and deducted them at the end, but there was no deterrent about it at all.

19982. That is a real difficulty in the case of service?—Yes.

19983. I see you would like to have a system of finger-prints registration, to prevent re-enlistment of undesirables in other corps?—Yes, we have been using that in a modified way in the South African Constabulary, and it is very useful; and I thought there might be some such system for the Army generally. We are adopting it now in our own Criminal Investigation Department out there, registering every criminal in the country, so that we know him now, and he cannot come up without being identified at once. I thought perhaps something of the kind might be done at the Central Registry for all recruits. I hear now that that has been gone into, since I made out this report, by a committee, because I suggested it to Lord Roberts when I was at home before.

19984. I suppose in those Irregular corps it would be very useful?—Yes, it would be a very desirable thing there, I think, if you were raising a corps in a hurry, but for ordinary army work it would prevent fraudulent re-enlistment through having people turned out of one regiment coming to another; it would be just as good as branding them, I think.

19985. With regard to saddlery, what was your experience?—We tried almost every kind of saddlery that was out there, I think, and we preferred the Colonial pattern, which is a very comfortable saddle, and gives very few sore backs compared with most kinds.

19986. The regulation saddle is too heavy, is it not?—It is heavy, and it gives a great many sore backs, too, and it is cumbersome, and carries a tremendous lot of kit; a man can strap all sorts of things on, and weigh himself down.

19987. It is a great thing with modern cavalry to reduce the weight on the horse?—Yes. The only drawback that I know in the Colonial saddle is that, buying them in bulk, you have to be careful in inspection, or you may get a lot of rubbish shot in upon you, because it takes a long time to inspect. It does not take to pieces like the military saddle, which you can see in parts in a moment. I had some saddles offered to me at one time by some maker, who opened each case and said "Just look in and see if they are all right." I took up the two top ones, and they were excellent. I took up the lower ones, and they were all shoddy, so I did not take any.

19988. Are there any other points that you have not touched upon, which you wish to mention?—There is one little point which I think I have omitted, viz., about the disposition for tactical work which it might be a useful thing for people to know. In teaching these men to work in the field it was very difficult to teach them proper formations for working in, because our drill book contains so many different kinds. If you are on an advance guard you have one kind of formation; if you are on rear guard you have another kind of formation, and if you are on outpost you have a third kind. There is no one principle guiding the whole lot. But I found it roughly effective to work always with units in a triangle or a diamond shape. If I had three units,

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903.

which was the usual way, I put one in front, one at the left rear, and one at the right rear, a little further back, so that I always had a triangle in every direction. The enemy might suddenly appear on the right, and then there was always a part of the formation there to meet them, and the other two parts took their places in support and reserve; and in the same way with a regiment, or even with three individual men; in that way you never got into trouble. The Boers would come and attack one of these forces, and the other two were ready to back it up. Very often we used to do it on purpose; we would put one part forward, and keep the other two out of sight in support and reserve. The Boers would make an attack on the leading force, and get all round it, and then the other two would come up and sandwich the Boers and catch them.

19989. Did that require more discipline in the men?—No, they knew of it, and it gave them much more confidence.

19990. But in order to keep their distances they would have to be well disciplined?—They get to understand it very quickly, and they knew it was the same right through for individual men or for squadrons, or for a troop. You could put an Army Corps in the same way, and move them seven miles apart, so that one part would attack and the others be ready to come up in a moment. And it answers well, too, if you want to put a few works out. We used to do it to stop the Boers coming through. In the South African Constabulary we never put a single line of forts (like the blockhouses), but we put a triangle of forts so that if they came past one fort they found themselves in a worse plight between two more, and it always worked most efficiently. And the same in camping your men; it is a great mistake to camp them all in one lump together, where they are liable to get rushed. If you camp them in three different places, then if one gets rushed the other two are awake by that time, and open fire on the first. It is a simple form where you have not the time to train them to all these other formations. Whether it is superior to those I do not say, I leave it to wiser people to judge, but I know it worked very well with us all the time. That was how I always used to do in peace before; but I was confirmed in it by its use in war.

19991. Is there any other point which you wish to mention?—I do not know whether you care to hear about our system of cornets, probationary officers, which we have been using in the Constabulary.

19992. If you please?—We have adopted a system there of promoting officers from the ranks, many from corporals, on a year's probation, as officers who become what we call cornets; that is to say, they receive a low rate of pay, and are to all intents and purposes officers, but they have the advantage of a year's probation as such, and during that year they have to pass all the different kinds of courses of instruction that we have. In our case they pass in Police law to begin with, then in pay accounts, veterinary work, drill, tactics, signalling, and, in fact, they go through all their courses while they are probationary officers. And then they are attached to different units during that time to be reported on by different officers as to their capabilities, and we have about half a dozen confidential reports on the same probationer from different officers.

19993. These are in the Constabulary?—Yes.

19994. They are not Army officers?—No. This is the way we recruit our officers there; but I thought it might be a good principle to apply, to give so many commissions in the year to rankers in the Army who pass a similar test, and at the end of the year you know exactly what the man is. He ought never to have to go back to any further courses. He passes an examination at the end of his year, and then becomes a second lieutenant.

19995. These men are men that serve in the ranks?—They have to serve in the ranks in the first year to know what they are like, and to become non-commissioned officers in that time—corporals. That shows that they are fairly good. Then, if they fail in the first examination, they go back for another six months' probation, when they have another examination, and then, if they fail again, they have to leave or go back and be sergeants again, which some of them do. But it worked very well with us. And also we grade the rank and file of the men, which I think is a thing worth considering at the same time; that is to say, a private, when he joins, is only a recruit; he is no use for practical purposes, so we put him on a low rate of pay until he has passed his recruit drills, when he becomes a third-class trooper; then he is a passed soldier, and

is just fit to take his place in the ranks. Then, if he chooses to qualify in signalling and various other things, learning Dutch and police law, he becomes a second class trooper, and draws extra pay; and if he further qualifies himself by doing so much tactics and drill, he becomes a first class trooper, with still further increased pay. That leads up again to corporal, and there again he becomes, in succession, third, second, and first corporal, and in the same way, third, second, and first sergeant, so that a man no sooner gets into one grade than he finds there is another just worth working for. I find that better than giving them extra pay. They might take the musketry course one year, or they might pass the signalling test another year. It is more on the principle that they work on in the Navy, I think, grading them like that.

Then there are details as to improvising armoured trains, but I should think that is not worth my going into, because there are so many ways of forming armoured trains now. We improvised them at the very beginning, long before the war broke out, out of improvised materials, sleepers, rails, and such things, and we used a good acetylene gas signalling lamp in Mafeking. We had no limelight to use, but we got hold of the acetylene. There was a traveller in acetylene who happened to be shut up in the place, and we got him to work with his sample of acetylene, and we found it worked the signalling lamp exceedingly well. We devised a little carrier for taking it on a horse, and we made up a lot of searchlights, too, with acetylene burners, which worked very well. They were nothing like so powerful as electric light, of course, but when you could get out in the field it was very portable.

19996. You could carry these burners?—Yes, we could carry them everywhere. We could put it up at night, and take a search round the country, and turn it out and turn it on again whenever there was an alarm. There are a great many of those small experiences that crop up from time to time, and one cannot remember them all; various dodges and ambushes and other things. Those, I think, are the points that I have down, but if there are any others that I could give, I should be only too pleased to offer them.

19997. (*Sir John Jackson.*) With regard to the secret service, do you think that at headquarters they made sufficient expenditure in that direction; would it not have been a great benefit if they had laid out more money in secret service?—Yes, I think so, long before the war.

19998. Not so much so immediately preceding the war?—We had fair information just preceding as to what movements the Boers were making, but as to what the total number of Boers was going to be we had no idea, nor what guns they had.

19999. I think you said that practically you had no funds for secret service?—No, we had not. We had practically tactical intelligence, and a little more than that. We heard all that went on at their meetings, that they proposed to blow up the bridges and the line, and attack Mafeking and take it, and part go down to take Kimberley, and so on.

20000. You think that there was an inclination on the part of the Government to spend too little money in secret service, perhaps?—I know from personal experience that it is so in a small way; but really I am not capable of speaking of that, because I do not know what they do spend. I can only judge by results; but we knew very little of what the Boer armament really was.

20001. You got the book, I suppose?—Yes, we got the book, which showed it to a certain extent.

20002. If more money had been expended in that direction, probably you would have had much better information?—Possibly; but I have been employed myself by the Intelligence Department on various jobs, and I know they do not bring forward much money to help you. They let you pay half your expenses and they pay the other half, which some people can afford to do; but it would be a great thing, and encourage people more, if they would pay all the expenses, and they would get a lot more information, I think, about foreign armies, foreign forts, and that sort of thing.

20003. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) What is the composition of the South African Constabulary; are there many Boers in it and many over-sea Colonials?—We have about 400 Boers, about 1,400 Canadians, and I should think about 400 to 500 Australians and New Zealanders. The Canadians, you know, were specially enlisted in Canada, but the Aus-

Major-General
R. S. S.
Baden-Powell, C.B.
19 Mar. 1903.

tralian Colonies declined to let men be enlisted in their Colonies.

20004. 10,000 was the original establishment, was it not?—Yes, 10,000; 6,000 our normal establishment, and 4,000 extra were ordered by Lord Roberts for the war and for the troublous times that would probably come just after the war, which we expected (but which really did not come) from bushrangers, cattle thieves, and people of that sort. There were a good number of them about, but we got them by their legs very soon.

20005. Are the Constabulary under ordinary military discipline?—It is not quite the same.

20006. They are trained as soldiers?—They are trained as soldiers, but act as policemen. They were all trained, of course, during the war, and took part in the war, but as soon as peace came they at once took up their duties as police, and now they are more trained as police than as soldiers. They have all the organisation of soldiers, so that at any moment they can turn into soldiers; but they are actually doing police work in small detachments all over the country.

20007. You consider them a good defensive force?—Very good, because they can at any moment be concentrated at any point, and they go through an annual course of military training, and their actual work fits them as much as any work for mounted independent work, because individual intelligence is developed to the utmost amongst them.

20008. It is not quite such a favourite service now with a good many of those who enlisted, I daresay, as it was when they had a chance of meeting the enemy in the field?—A certain class came there for fighting purposes only, I think; but the large majority are more of the class we desire, who want to settle down to be policemen and do police work. They like the life.

20009. But they are a very good body of men?—Very good indeed.

20010. Had you any over-sea Colonials with you at Mafeking?—Not during the siege; but directly after we were relieved a Canadian battery joined us, a capital

battery, and they continued with me all through the Transvaal.

20011. But they were not with you during the siege?—No. We had some New Zealanders and Australian bushmen in the Transvaal. I had three regiments of them. The Canadian battery were excellent. I had a British battery as well, but I liked the Canadian battery best; for one reason, they had not got any range-finders, and they found the range much quicker without them.

20012. You found them resourceful under the circumstances?—Exactly; that is what they were. They were much better than the South Africans in one way, namely, that they had never had native labour under them, and so they used to put their own shoulders to the wheel; they were the fellows to work.

20013. They had more individuality?—Yes.

20014. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Did you find the Australians resourceful in the same way?—Very much so. We used to have a lot of them missing always after a fight, and after the first fight I was very anxious, but very soon got out of that, because they always turned up again, perhaps after two or three days, and very often with a lot of prisoners. They used to hide away in the grass, and always found their way back.

20015. In regard to Sir John Jackson's question, were you not furnished with the list of guns that the Boers were supposed to have had, and which they had, in point of fact?—Yes.

20016. Before the war?—Yes; but we did not know much about the pom-poms.

20017. They were down on the list?—They were down on the list, but we had had no practical experience of what they were till we saw them.

20018. But they were on the list?—Yes.

20019. So that really there was pretty full information as to the position that the Boers were in before the war?—Yes; we were quite well informed in that way.

20020. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you wish to add?—I cannot think of anything at the moment.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. GODLEY, Irish Guards, called and examined.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J.
Godley.

20021. (*Chairman.*) You have been good enough to prepare a précis of the evidence you will give which you will put in in the first instance?—Yes.

(A.) USE OF MOUNTED INFANTRY UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS.

Their rôle should be to support and form points of appui for the cavalry, or, in the absence of cavalry to take its place, in wide-reaching enveloping movements against the enemy's flanks and lines of communication, destruction of his railways, magazines, telegraphs, etc. To follow up vigorously any advantage gained by a rapid onslaught of the cavalry, to make good points of vantage and to form rallying points in case of reverse. To move rapidly to seize defiles, hold bridges, and forestall the enemy in commanding positions in front of the slower moving infantry.

In a rear-guard action they should be, and proved to be in the war, specially useful, using their fire-power and mobility to delay the enemy till the last moment.

They can be most usefully employed as escorts to artillery.

They should be trained as far as possible in the cavalry duties of scouting, patrolling and reconnaissance in order that they may be able to take the place of cavalry when the latter are not available, as was the case in the war.

(B.) THE FUTURE TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND MEN.

It should be done at schools of instruction, through which as many officers and men of the infantry as are at all suited for the work should be passed.

1. *Officers.*—For command at these centres, only small permanent staffs are necessary, and as many officers as possible should be passed through; as many young field officers as possible should be trained to command battalions of mounted infantry, captains to command companies, and subalterns to command sections—very young subalterns should not be taken. They

should be lieutenants who know their infantry work thoroughly, and show an aptitude for mounted infantry work. Training is much delayed now by young officers being sometimes sent who not only have no aptitude for the particular work, but have to be taught purely infantry work, which they should know before they come.

No captain should command and train a mounted infantry company till he has been attached for instruction first to a company of mounted infantry. Similarly, no field officer should command a battalion of mounted infantry unless he has commanded a company first, and commanded it particularly well, and the selection of officers commanding battalions should be in the hands of the mounted infantry authorities.

Some infantry commanding officers seem to think it necessary to select only light-weight officers for mounted infantry. This is a mistake. Weight is no bar to an officer if he has aptitude for the work.

2. *Selection of Men.*—Men selected for mounted infantry should be efficient infantry soldiers, active, good shots, and as light as possible, but a good comparatively heavy man, who knows his infantry work, is better than an indifferent light one. Very often a tallish man of 5ft. 10in. is no heavier than a little "butty" one of 5ft. 5in., or 5ft. 6in., and he will probably ride better.

In selecting men for mounted infantry, steadiness, good character, intelligence, and good shooting are of far more importance than weight (within reason).

3. *Period and Duration of Training.*—Men as long as they are serving should, if possible, come up for mounted infantry training once annually for a period of three months. This in the case of three years' men, will mean that a man, if he is to do more than one training, must come up after he has done only nine months' or one year's service, i.e., probably before he is an efficient infantry soldier, and after his second training he may go to the Reserve at once, but this does not matter, as, on mobilisation, he will join mounted infantry if required to complete the quota to be furnished by the infantry battalion.

4. *Reservists.*—If possible, a scheme for calling out mounted infantry Reservists for training would be an advantage, though not so necessary as may be thought, as a man well trained during his service will never forget the teaching.

5. *Farriers and Saddlers.*—Men must be trained in large numbers for these duties. There was a great dearth of them in the war.

6. *Shooting.*—Time should be found during the training for musketry, and extra ammunition allowed for it. A man may be a good shot ordinarily, but even riding to the range may put him off, and there should be as much practice as possible with the men galloping on the range, dismounting quickly to fire, mounting again to go to the next range, and so on.

No man should be given a mounted infantry certificate unless he has proved himself during the mounted infantry course able to combine good shooting with riding.

7. *Horsemanship.*—The idea that a mounted infantryman should only be able to ride well enough to get from place to place without accidents is a bad one. He should be able to ride as well as any mounted man. To ride in extended order and in a rearguard action really good riding is a necessity.

8. *Horsemastership.*—Requires more training of both officers and men, not only in stable management but in the care of horses in the field, the studying of the different constitutions of the horses and the best methods of feeding them with different kinds of forage. Veterinary officers should treat minor ailments in troop stables. Only those cases which are very serious or infectious should be taken to sick lines or special veterinary establishments, so that all officers and non-commissioned officers should get a knowledge of how to treat ordinary ailments and of the ordinary remedies.

9. *Open Training Ground.*—For proper training really open ground is most necessary, and a large extent of it, where men can ride at a gallop in large bodies in extended order over rough ground.

10. *Uniformity of System.*—A uniformity of system of training at the various centres is most necessary, and should be ensured by inter-communication and occasional, not necessarily frequent, visits of inspection by an Inspector-General, or the senior of the commandants of the schools, with inspecting powers.

11. *Miscellaneous.*—Satisfactory methods of carrying the rifle and of disposing of the led horses so as to get 100 per cent. of rifles into the firing line require a great deal of attention.

(C.) THE BEST ORGANISATION AND EQUIPMENT OF MOUNTED INFANTRY.

Various Systems of Creating a Mounted Infantry Force.

1. *Permanent Battalions.*

Advantages:—

- (a) Men possibly better trained.
- (b) Commanding officers of Infantry battalions do not have to part with any of their officers and men, either for peace training or on mobilisation.

Disadvantages:—

- (a) The creation of a special arm.
- (b) There can only be comparatively few, on account of the expense.
- (c) The danger of the men losing their Infantry characteristics and becoming indifferent Cavalry.
- (d) The burden to the State of keeping up a large permanent mounted force for the use of which the opportunity may never come; when results perhaps just as good, and a far larger mounted force, can be obtained by training as many of the Infantry of the Army as possible as Mounted Infantry, ready for use as such when the occasion arises.

2. *Training of Officers and Men with their Infantry Battalions.*

Advantages:—

- (a) Separate accommodation not required for the men.
- (b) Commanding Officer of Infantry battalion does not have to part with his officers and men.

Disadvantages:—

(a) Infantry Commanding Officer may have no knowledge of Mounted Infantry work or care of horses, nor may the officers selected by him to train the men, and he has already plenty to do in command of his battalion. Possibly, therefore, bad Mounted Infantry instruction and bad horsemastership.

(b) No uniformity of system.

(c) Smallness of the Mounted Infantry unit trained; at most each Infantry battalion could only have cobs for one company, and the expense of building stabling for these to each Infantry barrack would be enormous.

(d) Scattered stables, rendering proper supervision by higher Mounted Infantry Commanders impossible.

(e) Want of enough open ground for mounted work at all Infantry stations.

3. *Collection of Officers and Men to be Trained at Central Stations or Schools of Instruction.*

Advantages:—

(a) Uniform system of training under Mounted Infantry commandants of proved experience.

(b) Training carried out in large bodies.

(c) Officers trained to command large bodies.

(d) Less expense to the public by building all stabling together.

(e) The majority of the Infantry of the Army are passed through the schools and trained in Mounted Infantry work, riding, and the care of horses.

(f) The men returned to their battalions better Infantry soldiers.

(g) The number of the Infantry of the Army is not lessened, but as many as are trained in Mounted Infantry work are thereby made more useful and ready to be mounted when occasion arises. On mobilisation the strength of the available Infantry remains the same, those used as Mounted Infantry being so many extra.

Disadvantages:—

(a) Officers and men taken away from Infantry battalions for peace training.

(b) It is said that on mobilisation the Infantry battalion loses 143 (the strength of a Mounted Infantry company) of its best men, but this is not so, as many of these men will be Mounted Infantry Reservists, and the remainder will be replaced by calling up enough extra Reservists (possibly better men) to make up the battalion to its war strength.

Organisation.—One-eighth of the infantry of the Army should be mounted infantry.

They should be mounted on cobs, not horses.

Peace Training.—This system of training schools to which every infantry battalion sends a certain number of officers and men—a section (one subaltern and 35 men) at a time—to be trained for three months is the best. These are grouped into companies and battalions for training. On completion of training this section is replaced by another; therefore at the end of a year the infantry battalion has a company of mounted infantry trained.

Mobilisation.—On mobilisation, this company of mounted infantry, consisting of officers and men from the same infantry battalion, would be called up. During the war mounted infantry battalions were often composed of detachments from 16 or 18 infantry battalions, and infantry battalions had to furnish detachments to more than one mounted infantry unit, and it was found by experience that the officers and men of a mounted infantry company should all come from the same infantry battalion. This, in an Army Corps, of 24 infantry battalions (three divisions, each of two brigades, each of four battalions) would give 24 mounted infantry companies.

Four of such companies make a mounted infantry battalion, which gives six mounted infantry battalions. These should be organised in two mounted infantry brigades, each of three battalions. One of these battalions should form part of a cavalry brigade in the same way that the battery of Horse Artillery does; the remainder to be at the disposal of the Army Corps.

Lieut.-
Colonel A. J.
Godley.

19 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
Colonel A. J.
Godley.

Mar. 1903.

commander for use as a large independent body of mounted men, as he may require them, perhaps in conjunction with a cavalry brigade, perhaps with the infantry divisions. They should not be distributed to infantry divisions or brigades, nor used as orderlies, scouts, etc., nor for the protection of infantry brigades or battalions.

It was always very difficult and often impossible to move mounted men during an engagement from one part of the field to another under long range gun and rifle fire, which disposes of the theory of placing mounted infantry at the disposal of the officers commanding infantry attacks, to move quickly to reinforce and support threatened points, drive home attacks, make local flank attacks, etc.

This will give a force, according to the present establishments of mounted infantry, of 3,500 mounted infantry (a mounted infantry battalion is nearly 600) to each Army Corps, which means that each infantry division has over 1,100 men taken from it and mounted, for use by the Army Corps commander independently of it. Of this 1,100 it must be remembered a proportion would be Reservists, and the remainder would be replaced by calling out enough more Reservists to make the divisions up to war strength.

Guns.—Pom-poms for use in advanced guard actions, and Maxims for defensive positions and points of appui should be attached to all bodies of mounted infantry, and brigades will require Horse Artillery.

The War Establishments.

Of (1) a battalion, (2) a company of mounted infantry require to be laid down. A higher establishment than that now laid down for peace training is desirable in both cases.

Equipment.

On the Man.—Should be as light and simple as possible. The rifle should be carried slung on the man. His breeches should be loose. Putties are preferable to leggings. Beyond his rifle and clothing, he should only carry ammunition, bandolier, and belt, with bayonet, haversack (one day's food), and water-bottle.

On the Horse.—Bridle complete (one rein.); head rope; well-made Colonial pattern saddle, with girths, irons, and leathers (no breast-plate, wallets, surcingle, or shoe case; blanket under saddle (for man's use).

On Saddle.—Cloak, wire-cutters, mess-tin, iron picketing peg, nose-bag (one day's forage),

Everything else in some form of light-wheeled transport.

20022. You served in South Africa, I think?—Yes.

20023. Would you say what service you saw there?—First in assisting to raise, train, and equip a regiment of Colonial mounted infantry, the Protectorate regiment—one of the regiments that General Baden-Powell raised before the war; secondly, in command of the western defences of Mafeking during the siege; afterwards as General Baden-Powell's and General Plumer's staff officer successively; and, lastly, in command of a brigade of mounted infantry which was made up of these regiments that had been raised before the siege and of the British South African Police.

20024. And what position do you hold now?—I am commanding the mounted infantry of the First Army Corps.

20025. At Aldershot?—At Aldershot.

20026. Then it is with regard to mounted infantry in particular that you can speak from large experience, both in the war and since?—Yes.

20027. I suppose you draw a distinction between cavalry and mounted infantry?—Yes, a very marked distinction. I think that all mounted infantry officers who have studied the subject do.

20028. Could you give any distinction?—I only ask the question because in your notes here you say that, "Their rôle should be to support and form points of appui for the cavalry, or, in the absence of cavalry, to take its place." That does not mean, I suppose, that they should be able to act as cavalry?—No, but you have that number of mounted men, and if, as may so often happen, and did happen in the war, the cavalry are not available, it must be a great advantage to have these mounted men, trained as far as it is possible to train them, to take the place of cavalry as a screen in front of an army or for reconnoitring. Of course, they could not in any way use an *arme blanche*, because they would not be armed with one, but in the duties of pro-

tection for an army marching, the mounted infantry should, as far as possible, be trained to take the place of cavalry when the cavalry are not available.

20029. Oh, yes; I wanted to make it quite clear that you did not want the mounted infantry to have cavalry training?—Most certainly not.

20030. Or a cavalry arm, if the cavalry is to have a sword or a lance?—No.

20031. Do you not want the mounted infantry to have any arm but the rifle?—And the infantry accessory, the bayonet.

20032. A bayonet so made as to act as a spear, do you mean?—No, as purely infantry equipment.

20033. Only to be used when the man is acting as an infantryman?—Yes.

20034. Not to be used on his horse?—No.

20035. You do not think that is necessary for mounted infantry?—No, though I believe in Matabeleland in 1896, upon one occasion the mounted infantry did fix bayonets on horseback, and made a kind of charge, which had great effect in frightening the natives.

20036. We have had some evidence that at the later stages of the war the Boers came to closer quarters because they found that our mounted men had no arms but the rifle, and could not charge. Did you see anything of that?—No, I did not.

20037. But anyhow, a mounted infantryman, in your opinion, should not be trained for anything like a charge or shock tactics?—No.

20038. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Could not the bayonet be contrived so as to be useful in either case, by mounted infantry when mounted, or when acting on foot as infantry?—I think it would be very difficult, because at the end of a rifle it is a very clumsy weapon to hold in any way like a lance. If you have a rifle and a bayonet, you require both hands to hold it. You could not take it in one hand and use it as a lance, it would be too heavy, and if you made it long enough for use as a sword I think it would cease to be a bayonet; practically it would become a sword.

20039. I think the bayonet has been proposed by some for the cavalry as preferable to the sword?—Then it would be something of that nature, I presume.

20040. (Viscount Esher.) Then I suppose you would lay special stress upon not altering the infantry equipment merely because you are using the infantryman as a mounted man; that is your point?—Yes, that is my point.

20041. Whatever arm may be in future selected for cavalry, it would not affect your opinion?—No; that would not affect my opinion at all. The mounted infantryman should be an infantryman first, and be equipped as such.

20042. (Sir Frederick Darley.) But with a horse to bring him to his position with rapidity?—Yes.

20043. (Chairman.) Is there anything you wish to add to the note (B) in this paper as regards the future training of officers and men?—In the third paragraph, "Period and Duration of Training," I say there, "This, in the case of three years' men, will mean that a man, if he is to do more than one training, must come up after he has done only nine months' or one year's service, i.e., probably before he is an efficient Infantry soldier." If you compare that with the second line of the paragraph above that, paragraph 2, they appear rather contradictory, because I say there that "men selected for Mounted Infantry should be efficient Infantry soldiers," and it is most important that they should be; but with three years' men we have to face the alternative of either waiting so long for them to be efficient Infantry soldiers that then there is practically no time to train them properly as Mounted Infantry, or else we must take them before they really are efficient Infantry soldiers. We could not afford to lose the three years' man as a Mounted Infantryman; we must take him, and do the best we can with him; and therefore, I think a solution would be to take him after he has only done one year's service as an Infantry soldier, so as to give him two Mounted Infantry trainings before he goes to the Reserve.

20044. (Viscount Esher.) Then your idea is not to pass a very large number of men per battalion through a Mounted Infantry course, but, as I understand, your suggestion is to take the same men two years in succession. Is not that so? I did not quite understand

that paragraph No. 3. Is that what you mean?—Yes, that is what I mean. There again, the alternatives are either of passing a very large proportion of the Infantry of the Army through with a very slight and short Mounted Infantry experience—that is only one training if you did not allow them to come up again—or training a fewer number, and, by bringing them out annually, like a Militia training, having that number kept in practice for Mounted Infantry work, and therefore more efficient.

20045. Which do you think is the better system?—I think to bring them out as far as possible annually for training.

20046. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) No matter what the size of the man is, you prefer having them not more than 11 stone or so—not heavy men?—Not really heavy men; but, as I have said, I would rather have “a good comparatively heavy man than an indifferent light one.”

20047. (*Chairman.*) Does that mean that when you select your infantryman for mounted infantry work he is to come up in each of his three years for three months' training?—I think in the case of the three years' man he certainly ought to come at least twice during his three years before he goes to the Reserve. I do not think once would be sufficient, and in the case of a man who re-engages for longer it would certainly be advantageous if he came up regularly every year after his three years were up. A system might be worked out by which he should then come up perhaps every alternate year, but I certainly think he ought to keep on coming up. He ought not to do only one mounted infantry training and then go away and not come again. It requires practice. A man should be brought up for practice in the work as often as he can be consistently with training a sufficiently large number.

20048. That would mean that the mounted infantryman in the battalion would never be more than nine months with his battalion in any year?—Yes.

20049. (*Viscount Esher.*) Can you be sure of getting again for this year's annual training the men that you got last year?—You cannot ensure getting them at home, but then you can ensure getting them in some part of the world. A man you train this year at Aldershot may next year have gone to India, but if the system is made universal throughout all our dominions and mounted infantry training goes on everywhere, then it does not matter whether a man is trained in India or at Aldershot.

20050. (*Sir John Edge.*) He would only get three months each year?—Yes.

20051. In your course is horsemastership included?—Yes.

20052. (*Chairman.*) And you would wish to bring out Reservists too?—It would be a very great thing, and for the same reason that it would keep them in practice for riding and looking after their horses. But that would be a very large question of principle, and a man who gets a good grounding in riding and looking after horses never forgets it. With regard to the Reservists that had previous mounted infantry training, and were used as mounted infantry during the war, I never heard any complaint of their failing in any way either in riding or in looking after their horses. They had remembered what had been taught them.

20053. It would be a new principle to bring out the Reservists?—Yes.

20054. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You would have him as a horseman to approach in efficiency a cavalry man?—As a horseman he cannot ride too well. I think it is a most dangerous theory that he “should only be able to ride well enough to get from place to place without accidents.”

20055. Then he would be useful with an army where there were no cavalry present to support it?—Yes.

20056. Then he would act as cavalry to a certain extent?—Yes, under those circumstances.

20057. (*Chairman.*) It requires also some training in the matter of musketry in your opinion?—Yes. A man who is unaccustomed to horses may be a very good shot when he is perfectly steady after he has walked quietly down to a range to shoot in peace time, or even in time of war as long as he is on foot, but if he has to gallop up to the position from which he has to fire, and is

consequently excited and his nerves perhaps shaken, his shooting may possibly be very different.

20058. It is not that you want him to fire from the saddle?—No; but I think as regards that, it might be useful in exceptional circumstances to train a certain proportion of men to do it—men who are particularly good shots, and for whom particularly steady horses can be found. There are times when I believe it might be valuable.

20059. (*Viscount Esher.*) Have you ever tried training any of your own men to shoot from the saddle?—Yes, we have tried it, but not to any large extent. I have tried it with a certain number of men.

20060. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Have you found any considerable proportion capable of doing that?—Not very many. It is a thing that would require a great deal of training, and I think it depends almost more upon the horses. At home, with a corn-fed horse that is very much above himself, it is very difficult; but if you get a quiet South African shooting pony that is accustomed to firing from his back it can be done. But it is very often said to be rather the refuge of an undisciplined man to fire off from his horse's back, and consequently it needs to be approached with caution.

20061. I do not quite understand. What is the “refuge of an undisciplined man”?—To fire off his horse instead of dismounting to take up a proper position from which he can lie down and fire steadily. If you train all your men to fire off their horses it is possible (I do not say it would happen) that instead of dismounting from their horses to take up a proper position to fire steadily, the men might lose their heads and begin firing off their horses at random.

20062. (*Chairman.*) Do you give a certificate to a mounted infantryman now?—Yes, every man who proves suitable for the work gets a certificate.

20063. Was that in force before the war?—Yes, it has been since 1888.

20064. Of course, there were a good many mounted infantrymen in the war who had not had a certificate?—A very large number. I think a large proportion.

20065. Is that a certificate that they are good in horsemastership?—Yes.

20066. That is an important point?—Very.

20067. Was not that defective during the war?—Yes, very, at the beginning, and I think in the case of the mounted infantry chiefly, as you have said, because so many of the men had no previous mounted infantry training or certificate.

20068. Does it not depend a good deal upon the officers?—In my opinion, the proper training of the men in horsemastership depends entirely on the officers. I think it is entirely a question of the superintendence of the officers—in fact, you might say, of discipline almost, and the proper teaching of the men. If you get it thoroughly imbued into the men by very careful superintendence by the officers, and very careful training of them as regards the horsemastership, it may then become second nature to the men to do what is right.

20069. All through the officers would have to keep up a careful superintendence?—Yes, certainly. I do not mean that they should relax their superintendence, but, still, when the occasions do arise, in which officers may not be able to exercise a constant superintendence, I hope that then it may have become second nature to a man to do what is right in looking after his horse.

20070. But during the war I suppose the officers, as well as the men, were in many cases deficient in that knowledge?—At the commencement, very.

20071. Are the officers now being trained sufficiently to meet that point?—So far as mounted infantry training is being carried out at all now, they are, but really the only mounted infantry training going on to any extent now is at Aldershot.

20072. (*Viscount Esher.*) What means have you there of giving your young officers or men any idea of veterinary knowledge?—There are no really satisfactory methods, at present. I make a suggestion here that, if possible, veterinary officers should treat ordinary and minor ailments in the troop stables, so that the officers and men would see what they were doing. I think that would be a very great advantage. As it is, an animal that has anything the matter with it is taken away to sick lines, or to a special veterinary establishment,

*Lieut.-
Colonel A. J.
Godley.*

19 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
Colonel A. J.
Godley.

19 Mar. 1903.

to which I encourage my officers to go and see the treatment that is being given to the animal. But it is a little bit difficult sometimes; there is the possibility of interference with the veterinary officer's management of his veterinary establishment. I do not think it is likely to produce such good results as if the more ordinary minor ailments, which it is really essential that an officer should know how to treat, were treated under his eye in his own stable.

20073. Then somebody must teach the untrained infantry officers even to cope with those minor ailments?—Yes.

20074. You have not a veterinary officer, have you, attached to your mounted infantry lines at Aldershot?—There will be.

20075. But had you one last year?—We have always had a veterinary officer looking after our cobs, but owing to scarcity of veterinary officers, he has had to look after other animals as well. That is only because of the scarcity. Previously there was always a veterinary officer with the mounted infantry, and there always will be for the future.

20076. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) If it were distinctly understood that it was one of the duties of officers to become acquainted with what horsemanship was, and it were included in the regulations of the Army, there could be no difficulty?—No, I think it is understood. Certainly all my officers are encouraged and told to endeavour to learn all they can about horsemanship, but my contention is that it is more easily said than done at present, and my suggestion to meet it is that more treatments should take place in troop stables, under the officer's eye, of the ordinary minor ailments of the horses, so that he may get to learn the ordinary and simple remedies.

20077. You would have it become an obligation that it should be so?—Yes.

20078. (*Chairman.*) Do you confine that to the officers told off for mounted infantry work, or would you like it throughout the Army?—I think, throughout the Army.

20079. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are officers taught to shoe, how a shoe ought to be put on?—Yes, the same thing applies to that. At present there is no very satisfactory system laid down for their doing it (I speak, of course, of the mounted infantry), but I hope, when we get my particular training school into the larger dimensions that it is going to assume, we shall get some more satisfactory system for the actual teaching of the officers.

20080. (*Viscount Esher.*) It is quite within your competence, is it not, to order all your young officers who come to you for training to be instructed in, say, shoeing horses?—Yes.

20081. You can give that instruction, if you please?—Yes.

20082. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Nothing is more important in horsemanship than knowing how a horse ought to be shod?—Nothing.

20083. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) No officer could have equal influence with his men in making them good horsemasters unless he were acquainted with it himself?—Exactly.

20084. (*Chairman.*) Then you want a uniformity of system?—Yes, I think that is extremely important; not so much in the case of peace training, but because it may conceivably happen that if a large number of mounted infantry were required in time of war, on mobilisation, they might come from different training centres and be put to work together, and if they had been trained on different systems at the different centres, the results, when they were amalgamated, would not be so good as if they had all been trained on a uniform system.

20085. Has there not been uniformity hitherto?—No, not in all cases.

20086. How far can there be differences?—Well, they are differences of standard almost more than anything. The standard at one school may be very much higher than at another.

20087. The standard of efficiency?—The standard of efficiency, and also the methods of mounted infantry tactics. The commandant of one training centre or training school may hold rather different views upon certain points from the commandant of another one.

20088. But we have had a good deal of evidence as to

the value of initiative of the individual officer; is there not something of that in the training of mounted infantry?—Yes, I would not wish in any way to fetter that, but there are certain principles of mounted infantry training which, from what I have seen myself at out stations which I have been sent to visit, have not been carried out (certainly it was during the war), because the officers who were responsible for the training had not had a proper training themselves to begin with. But even now I think that in the broad principles of mounted infantry training uniformity of system is very necessary.

20089. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Has no handbook been issued?—There was a Provisional Handbook published in 1899, but there has been nothing since.

20090. (*Viscount Esher.*) But the way you deal with that, I suppose, is by inspection?—Yes.

20091. Your suggestion is that the various outlying training camps, and so on, should be properly inspected by some one officer, whose business it should be to do it?—Yes.

20092. Do you know whether in the Second or Third Army Corps they have mounted infantry schools?—The Second Army Corps will have a mounted infantry school on Salisbury Plain, and the Third Army Corps at Kilworth, in the south of Ireland.

20093. Are they established yet?—No.

20094. Not the Salisbury Plain one, but the Irish one?—No, neither.

20095. Then yours is the only mounted infantry school on anything like a large scale?—Yes. The others are, I believe, to be established as soon as possible this summer.

20096. Then, what were you referring to just now, when you said you visited other mounted infantry establishments?—During the war there were men trained at Shorncliffe, Colchester, and Manchester.

20097. But they have dispersed now?—Yes.

20098. (*Chairman.*) Then, as to the organisation, there is more than one method of doing that?—Yes.

20099. I understand from this statement that you do not contemplate a permanent battalion?—No.

20100. You think that is an unnecessary burden in the meantime?—Yes, that is one of the reasons.

20101. What other reasons are there?—I think, perhaps, the most important of all is the creation of a special arm, a fourth arm, which that would mean. You would have cavalry, infantry, and artillery, and then you would have another arm altogether—mounted infantry.

20102. And that would be a disadvantage?—I think so.

20103. Then if that is not to be done, there is the alternative of training men with their battalions or in schools of instruction?—Yes.

20104. Which alternative do you advocate there?—The collection at central stations or schools of instruction.

20105. Would you just say shortly what is the main reason for that?—First of all, the uniformity of system and of standard which you would get under mounted infantry commandants who proved to be capable of training men. Then the training would be carried out in large bodies of mounted infantry; you could train officers to command large bodies. The majority of the Infantry of the Army would be passed through the schools and trained to look after horses, and in mounted infantry work generally. The men are undoubtedly better as infantry soldiers for the mounted infantry training. And it really gives more infantry in the Army, of which a certain number would be mounted, because the men called up on mobilisation for training as mounted infantry would be in excess of the infantry establishment. The place of the men that were taken away from the battalion for mounted infantry would be filled by calling up so many more reservists to make the battalion up to its war strength, and similarly other units.

20106. For peace training it diminishes the establishment of the battalion?—Yes.

20107. And that is the main objection, I suppose?—That is the main objection; that officers commanding infantry battalions have to part with a certain number of the men for their peace training as mounted infantry.

20108. (*Viscount Esher.*) But only for three months in the year?—No, all the year round.

20109. You propose to train mounted infantry, do you, in winter as well as summer?—Yes.

20110. (*Chairman.*) You would have them by instalments from the regiments?—Yes, a section—that is, a subaltern officer and 35 men—at a time. Every infantry battalion would always have away from it a subaltern officer and 35 men undergoing training as mounted infantry; they would always be that number short of men, the alternative being to call out a whole company from a battalion for training as mounted infantry for only three months; instead of calling out a quarter of the company the whole year round, to call one company for three months. But I think the majority of opinions are that it would be harder upon the commanding officer of an infantry battalion to take away so many as 140 men for three months than to always have 35 men away the whole year round. And it would not work equally. The commanding officer who had to send his 140 men in the winter months would have no objection at all, but the commanding officer who had to send his men from April to June, or during manœuvre time, from July to September, would look upon it in a very different light when he had to go to manœuvres with his battalion denuded by 140 who were away for mounted infantry training.

20111. (*Viscount Esher.*) At manœuvres do you propose that the mounted infantry should be used as they would be in war time? Under your scheme for forming battalions of mounted infantry, would you propose that they should be formed for the purposes of manœuvres as well?—They would be in existence.

20112. And used as such?—Yes.

20113. They never have been, have they?—Yes, occasionally on manœuvres.

20114. (*Chairman.*) And the result would be that one-eighth of the infantry of the Army would be mounted infantry?—Yes, on mobilisation, but only one-thirty-second (*i.e.*, the training-battalions) for peace training or manœuvres.

20115. Or 3,500 men to each Army Corps?—Yes, on mobilisation.

20116. (*Viscount Esher.*) This autumn, if you have your Army Corps manœuvres at Aldershot, do you suppose you will then have your 3,500 mounted infantry?—No, we shall only have a peace training nucleus; we shall have only 1,000 men.

20117. That is exactly what I meant. Then you would not be able to organise for the purposes of manœuvres that full mounted infantry force which you are referring to here?—No, because that is entirely a mobilisation scheme; but there will be two training-battalions of mounted infantry in both the First and Second Army Corps available for use as mounted infantry.

20118. Two battalions in each?—Two in each Army Corps.

20119. (*Chairman.*) And the war establishment will be the whole number taken from all the regiments?—Yes.

20120. And you maintain that number on mobilisation would be made up to the regiment from the Reserve?—Yes, from the Reserve.

20121. And if you have to supply casualties or want more mounted infantry during the war what is to happen? Would you draw upon the regiments?—Yes, because there would probably be left in the regiment (I hope there would be) a certain number of mounted infantry reservists. Of all the reservists that came up a certain number would have been trained as mounted infantry, and the mounted infantry reservists, so far as they would be required, would go to the mounted infantry. But among the reservists of the infantry battalions there would still be left men who had been trained as mounted infantry.

20122. And you would consider that you had the first call upon them?—Yes.

20123. Would that not be rather hard upon the regiment?—Not appreciably, as there would be still more reservists to call upon. As casualties were to be replaced reservists would keep on being called out, and of these we should expect to get to the mounted infantry those who had been trained as mounted infantry.

20124. Was it not the experience of the war that some regiments, at any rate, had very heavy calls for their best men to be taken away from them for mounted infantry work?—Yes, it was, but the scheme had not then been elaborated in the way it has been now, and I do not think that any battalion would find it so hard to send one company of mounted infantry to the mounted infantry organisation and to replace casualties in that company to keep it up to its proper strength, as to send detachments, as it was called upon to do during the war, not only to its own company with the mounted infantry battalion, but to various other mounted infantry organisations and units. An infantry battalion was called upon to send mounted infantry in small detachments of a section or larger detachments of a company to many mounted infantry units and organisations instead of only to one as it would be under this scheme.

20125. That was the practice during the war, was it?—It obtained to a very great extent; of necessity infantry battalions were called upon to send men for use as mounted infantry.

20126. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And that necessity might arise again even under your system?—It would not arise if the numbers were kept to the numbers which are laid down in this system; you would know then exactly how many men would be wanted, and what the force of mounted infantry was going to be. It could not arise unless it was decided to increase the mounted infantry.

20127. (*Viscount Esher.*) There was no system, I suppose, before?—There was no system on any large scale.

20128. It was perfectly haphazard as to the numbers of mounted infantry which were selected?—I think as the war went on and the requirement of mounted infantry was found, so the authorities kept on calling upon infantry battalions to furnish men to be mounted.

20129. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) And that might happen again?—Except that you would have this large force to start with.

20130. What do you allow for the percentage of wastage of war in one year? Have you calculated that?—No.

20131. We have had evidence on that point?—

20132. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) And those men that were called upon were passed through as mounted infantry in their regiments?—Yes.

20133. So that they were liable to be called up in that direction? What I mean by that is that if you call upon a regiment to supply a certain number of men—say it had trained 300 of its men as mounted men—they were all liable to be called upon?—To replace casualties as they occur. But under this scheme the infantry battalion knows that it starts at the commencement of the war with having to supply 143 men, and it knows that throughout the war it has to keep that 143 up to strength—it has to replace the casualties in that 143 and no more.

20134. But before the training might have extended to 300 men?—Yes.

20135. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) What is the complement of an infantry regiment at present on war strength?—1,012.

20136. And what is proposed to be the complement of a mounted infantry regiment?—600—a little under 600. With an infantry battalion of 1,012 its contribution to the mounted infantry is 143.

20137. Out of the 1,012?—Not exactly out of it, because it furnishes the 143, but the place of those 143 is taken by calling out extra Reservists to make up the infantry battalion again to its 1,012.

20138. (*Viscount Esher.*) You never have, in point of fact, at Aldershot seen mounted infantry brigaded with cavalry, have you?—Yes, and in 1898, at the Salisbury Plain manœuvres I commanded a battalion of mounted infantry which belonged to Sir John French's cavalry brigade.

20139. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) The point I wished to ask was: Have you made your calculations on the basis of mounted infantry being required to the number required during the South African War?—Yes.

20140. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point that

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Godley.

19 Mar. 1903.

Lieut.-
Colonel A. J.
Godley.
19 Mar. 1903.

you wish to mention?—I should like to mention with regard to the strength of the force of 3,500 mounted infantry that it means, of course, that that number of horses has to be provided for—not only provided for their use, but they have to be fed, and provision has to be made for their replacement, which might entail a great extension of remount depôts in the general question of the provision of horses. And it must not be forgotten also that those 3,500 mounted infantry cobs or ponies which are required in an Army Corps would be in addition to all the riding horses required for a cavalry brigade which would probably be working with the Army Corps, or it might possibly be even a cavalry division. It means the provision, feeding, and replacement of casualties for that extra number of mounted men.

20141. And with a special class of horse?—Preferably. I may say with regard to that that in my experience of raising a regiment of Colonial mounted infantry, we got horses for it which were, many of them, quite untrained and very unfit; but the fact of our having them two months before the war was of immense value, and by the time the war commenced those horses were quite fit for work. They were quite trained enough for the men, who began by not being able to ride at all; they were quite fit for those men to ride, and they became quite fit, or comparatively quite fit, in their constitutions, and many of those horses lasted for a very long time into the campaign.

20142. (Chairman.) Two months' preparation is a great matter?—It proved invaluable.

20143. (Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.) Those were South African horses?—Yes.

20144. (Viscount Esher.) What provision of horses have you now at Aldershot?—We get them only as we require them from the remount depôts. We shall have a fixed establishment at Aldershot. In each of the first three Army Corps there will be a fixed establishment of mounted infantry cobs—an establishment sufficient to train the battalions as they come for training.

20145. But you have not got that establishment yet?—Not yet.

20146. How did you manage last year?—We got cobs from the Remount Department as we required them, according to the number of men to be trained.

20147. And is the number of men to be trained this year in excess of the number trained last year?—Yes. It will be more than double at Aldershot; if the new scheme attains its full proportions.

20148. (Sir Frederick Darley.) What will be the number?—About 1,100 men.

20149. (Viscount Esher.) Not at one time?—Yes.

20150. At one time you will have 1,100 men?—There will be 1,100 men training at one time at Aldershot; 1,100 approximately at one time training on Salisbury Plain; and 600 training at Kilworth, in the South of Ireland.

20151. Do you expect to have your 1,100 men training, in the month of June this year?—Perhaps not quite all, because some of the infantry battalions which will furnish mounted infantry men for training are only just arriving home from South Africa, and their men will be going on furlough, so they may not be able to supply them; but the scheme would have commenced, and we shall hope to have the majority of that 1,100 men.

20152. Then is the system under which you obtain horses satisfactory? Do you find you get what you want?—Absolutely; in the last two years we have had exactly what we wanted.

20153. And the right type of horse?—Yes.

20154. Do you return them at the end of the season to the depôt or do you keep them through the winter at Aldershot?—There have been various systems. Originally the mounted infantry cobs which we used at Aldershot were sold by auction in London. Then that was replaced by a system of keeping only a very small establishment of cobs at Aldershot, sufficient for the training of one company, and then when two companies were trained, as they used to be, under canvas in summer time, cavalry horses were borrowed to mount them on. Latterly we have still had the system of a small permanent establishment of cobs at Aldershot, and when the remount depôt that was at Aldershot was in existence we drew upon it

when we required more, and returned the cobs to the remount depôt after we had done with them.

20155. Then with regard to your staff. Have you a sufficiently large staff under you?—Arrangements are being made for the provision of a proper staff for these training schools.

20156. You had no instructors and you have none now, have you?—No, the principle is that the officers train their men.

20157. What I mean is this, that you take untrained infantry soldiers from infantry battalions, and you take with them untrained infantry officers. Who trains them?—The officers are not all untrained. The principle is that the captain of a company should train his own men, which is a far preferable one to having instructors and drill sergeants.

20158. But then he must know something about it?—Yes.

20159. How do you propose to meet that?—I suggest that no captain of a company should ever command and train a company of mounted infantry until he has first been through a course of instruction in mounted infantry duties himself.

20160. That is all very well when you have the system in thorough working order, but when you are beginning (as you are practically) to organise this force, do you not find it is very difficult?—No. We have all the officers who have had a mounted infantry training in South Africa to fall back upon. We hope to get them to come to command battalions, to command companies, and to train the young officers and men. And there will always be a small permanent staff.

20161. I know, but it was the staff I was specially thinking of. You have an adjutant, for instance. Is he a trained mounted infantry officer?—Yes.

20162. And will one be sufficient for such a large force as you mention, 1,100 men?—Well, there has been a great deal of correspondence about it.

20163. What is your own feeling about it? What is it you want?—My own feeling is that on the whole I have got what I want. There are one or two small details which we differed about—for instance, the authorities do not consider both an adjutant and a quartermaster necessary.

20164. Have you convinced them on that point?—No, I have not.

20165. You are hoping still to do that?—Yes.

20166. What was the opinion you formed of the mounted infantry during the war? Did you come across your own mounted infantry at all?—No, I was with Colonial mounted infantry.

20167. Then you never had an opportunity really of seeing how the mounted infantry that you yourself had trained worked?—I did not actually see them, but I met them after I came from Mafeking with General Baden-Powell's column, and I heard from the mounted infantry officers who had brought them out—from General Alderson and Colonel De Lisle and others—that the Aldershot training system had worked satisfactorily, and they had found that the Aldershot trained men were the only mounted infantry—I will not say quite the only, because there were a few who were trained in South Africa itself—who were really useful at the commencement of the war; they proved that their Aldershot training had been very valuable.

20168. You mentioned Colonel De Lisle. Did he speak well of the mounted infantry as a whole?—Yes, and especially of the Aldershot trained men. He said that the two Aldershot mounted infantry regiments that went out were particularly good—that it took those who began in the country three or four months of active service to equal them. That was his opinion, and it was also General Alderson's opinion. He quoted me an instance—that at Colesberg 150 of his men successfully engaged 500 Boers—150 of these Aldershot trained mounted infantry, those that had come out first from this country—and that afterwards in the following year he had been told that their fire had been extremely good, and had inflicted seventy casualties upon the 500 Boers that were opposed to them, who were astonished to find that the English shot so well.

20169. So you think that the impression of the officers commanding columns who had to use mounted infantry in South Africa was, on the whole, favourable to those who had training at Aldershot?—Yes, very, and any complaints of inefficiency made against mounted

infantry in the early stages of the war were with regard to those who were hurriedly raised with no previous mounted infantry training.

20170. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) When you speak of Colonial mounted infantry, do you mean those raised in South Africa?—Those were the particular ones I was with.

20171. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) How many battalions do you break up for the 1,100?—Two battalions; the strength is something under 600.

20172. How many officers have you with each battalion?—22.

20173. They are all regimental officers—infantry officers?—Yes.

20174. You have no cavalry officers, no cavalry instructors?—No. The training is an infantry training, and quite different.

20175. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) The complement was higher in South Africa, was it not, than 22 officers?—No, five officers per company; a captain and four subaltern officers to each company, and the commanding officer, the adjutant and the quartermaster. I should have said 23.

20176. In some of the over-sea Colonial corps, they had three or four more, had they not?—Yes, they had.

20177. They had four or five officers?—Yes.

20178. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You speak of equipment on the man, on the horse, and on the saddle; taken altogether, what does the horse carry?—I think, with the man, 17st. 6lb.; it should be cut down to from 15st. 7lb. to 16st.

20179. Do you think what you provide here would be about 15st. 7lb.?—Yes, between 15st. and 16st. I do not think it should be more than that.

20180. And are these cobs that you speak of up to carrying that weight for a march, say, of 30 miles a day?—Yes; the class of cob we have at Aldershot now is well up to that.

20181. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to add?—There is one point, that is the war establishment. Mounted infantry officers during the war were of opinion that the establishment should be raised, both of a battalion and of a company. Under the system by which one man of four holds the horses of the other three when they dismount to fire, the present establishment only gives 18 rifles to a section; that is a subaltern officer's command, and, with casualties, that may reduce the number of men that he has under his control at the time they are dismounted to perhaps only about a dozen. The officers in South Africa thought that anything under

20 was not effective; that each subaltern officer's command should be at least 20 dismounted rifles; and, in order to ensure giving that, the establishment, as at present laid down, would require to be raised.

20182. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) By how much?—By 34 privates in each company—34 rank and file.

20183. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) That would be 200 odd for the regiment?—No; 120 odd—four times 34. That would make the establishment of the mounted infantry battalion over 700, instead of under 600.

20184. (*Chairman.*) That you approve of?—Yes, for the reason that, working it down to the lowest command, the subaltern officer should for dismounted work have at least 20 men.

20185. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Does that imply an increase of non-commissioned officers?—No.

20186. Lance-corporals and corporals?—No, the real rank and file; they would all be privates in the ranks.

20187. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Do you increase the 3,500, or do you break up the 3,500 into five battalions?—No, it would increase the number and keep the battalions the same.

20188. (*Chairman.*) Would it increase the number taken from each regiment from 143?—It would increase the 143 to 175.

20189. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) 177—you said 34?—I should have said 32.

20190. I thought it must be 32, because that divides by four?—That is one of the objects, to make the numbers properly divisible by four, so as to avoid broken groups of fours.

20191. Then you take 175 from each regiment?—Yes.

20192. (*Chairman.*) Does that increase the number of 30 odd that you take at a time from a regiment? You said 35, I think; it was for peace training; you said you would take a subaltern and 35 men; does that increase the number from 35?—Yes, it will increase it by eight.

20193. (*Viscount Esher.*) Then that would be more than your 143 men?—Yes, it would be 175 instead of 143.

20194. (*Chairman.*) It increases it all round?—Yes.

20195. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Nearly two companies—175 men?—Nearly a company and a half of infantry.

20196. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything more to say?—No, thank you.

(After a short adjournment.)

Major-General J. TALBOT COKE, called and examined.

20197. (*Chairman.*) You went out to South Africa in 1899, I think?—Yes, in November, 1899.

20198. And you were in command of the 10th Brigade?—Yes.

20199. Was that in Natal at that time?—It was first of all ordered to go to the Cape, and two battalions started up as far as De Aar, and got up to De Aar. I went from Mauritius myself, and I was stopped at Port Elizabeth, and was sent up country by the direct line to De Aar, where I joined those two battalions. I no sooner got there than I was told that my brigade was to be broken up, and the two battalions were to go round to Natal, and I was to go down to Cape Town and go back by sea to Durban, where I had been nearly three weeks before. I accordingly did that, and my brigade was entirely broken up; the two battalions remained at De Aar, and the remainder went to Natal.

20200. And you went to Natal?—Yes. I never saw the whole of my brigade; it was broken up at the very beginning.

20201. You were in command of the rest of your brigade?—Yes.

20202. And any addition to it?—I eventually got one battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry and a Colonial corps, the Imperial Light Infantry.

20203. That is a corps of South African Colonials?—Yes.

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20204. You commanded the brigade throughout?—Yes, not always the same brigade, they were constantly changed.

20205. You mean the regiments were changed?—Constantly.

20206. But you were in command of the 10th Brigade?—Yes; I got the Dublin Fusiliers and two or three Colonial corps at various times. My regiments were always being changed. I lost the Somerset Light Infantry and the Imperial Light Infantry.

20207. You commanded that brigade throughout the operations for the relief of Ladysmith, and afterwards under Sir Redvers Buller on the Natal side?—Yes.

20208. I understand that you desire to put in a statement on your personal position, which you have sent to us?—Yes, I do.

20209. We will not enter into that in detail, but it will be recorded?—I understand. I also put in a memorandum upon Spion Kop, which I think has, perhaps, got some details of public interest. It is not personal at all.

20210. That is the memorandum I was referring to?—The end of it, perhaps, is personal, but I think the great portion of it is of public interest and unpublished.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. Godley.

19 Mar. 1903.

Major-General J. Talbot Coke.

MEMORANDUM UPON SPION KOP.

Major-General J. Talbot Coke.

19 Mar. 1903.

Many accounts have been written of the action of Spion Kop, yet there is much that has not so far come to light, and it is with reference only to such that I will touch in this statement.

Sir C. Warren's nine days' operations after he crossed the Tugela on January 17th, 1900, have in a measure been merged under the name "Spion Kop," and it is common now to hear that name given to the attempt to turn the Boers' right by Acton Homes, and to somewhat lose sight of the fact that the fighting on Spion Kop Mountain took place on January 24th.

The 10th Brigade under my command was employed in a reconnaissance at Shiet Drift, on the right flank of Sir R. Buller's position at Spearman's Hill, when Sir C. Warren crossed the Tugela at Trichard's Drift. It was not until January 22nd that my brigade was sent to reinforce him.

January 22nd.—We made a night march, leaving Spearman's Hill soon after 2 a.m., having, besides the 10th Brigade, two ammunition columns and some artillery. Halting my brigade at Ventner's Spruit, I reported myself to Sir C. Warren before noon. He decided to divide his force into two halves, the right and left attack, and he appointed me to the command of the former, and to be responsible for the safety of the right flank.

Colonel A. W. Morris was the only staff officer I received to help me with this large command, but I retained my two staff officers of the 10th Brigade, handing over the command of that brigade to Colonel Hill, and directing him to appoint his own staff. Here was another of our many cases of "organisation disorganised;" officers being appointed to command large units without any proper staff; everyone doing someone else's work; whilst Sir R. Buller, with a complete staff, was exercising no real command only a few miles in rear at Spearman's Hill.

During the afternoon of January 22nd I went to the front with Sir C. Warren to reconnoitre the enemy's position in front of Three Tree Hill, but we were soon driven back by the Boers' fire. A conference was then held, at which Sir C. Clery demurred to the contemplated attack of the enemy's right; in this he was supported by General Hildyard. The attack on that flank was therefore given up, and instead I was ordered to, that night, occupy Spion Kop with two battalions of the 10th Brigade.

It will be noticed that this brigade, after a night march, was halted at Ventner's Spruit, three miles west of the front, and were entirely ignorant of the Spion Kop or how to get up it, whilst four other brigades had been for six days fighting, more or less, under that mountain.

It was after 5 p.m. before any written orders were issued on the subject, and I at once saw that it would be quite impossible to make any reconnaissance of the approaches to Spion Kop, to get the two battalions up to the place of assembly, and to issue the necessary orders, ammunition, and rations before darkness set in. I had already asked for a guide, and was told there was no one who knew the way up. On representing these facts to Sir C. Warren, and after we had ridden to the foot of the mountain and hastily looked at the approaches, he said that I might countermand the orders if I thought they could not be safely carried out. About this I had no doubt, and Lieut.-Colonel Thorneycroft, who was ordered to accompany the attacking force with details of his mounted infantry, and who had some knowledge of the difficulties of the ground, entirely concurred in my views.

It was by this time 7 o'clock, and getting dark. I well knew the position of my own bivouac, not two miles in rear, but it was so dark that I failed to reach it, and had to sleep out. I merely mention this fact to prove the great difficulties of night operations in rough country in South Africa. Even the Boers, we now know, frequently lost their way. Had the two battalions, under the circumstances I have described, attempted to seize Spion Kop, the result must have ended in a terrible disaster; where they would have got to I do not know, but they were just as likely to have reached the strongest part of the Boer position as the summit of Spion Kop. I consider that no operation of the whole war could have been undertaken with less favourable conditions. Personally, I was concerned only as regards the success of our arms, for I had, as previously stated, handed over the com-

mand of the 10th Brigade to Colonel Hill, and, having a very large command (an infantry division, artillery, cavalry, Royal Engineers, and various details), I never contemplated leading the attack of such a small portion of my force; such would have been a gross disregard of my higher duties, and entirely at variance with the custom of war and the orders of our Army.

January 23rd.—On January 23rd I met Sir C. Warren at 5 a.m., and rode many miles with him and other officers, observing Spion Kop from various points. The result of this reconnaissance was almost an unanimous opinion that the best way to ascend the mountain was by the south-western slopes from a rendezvous in the valley by the Royal Engineer bivouac.

During the day I received orders from Sir C. Warren for the attack on Spion Kop; Major-General Woodgate to command. I issued the following orders:—

Attack Orders—Issued by Major-General Coke,
Commanding Right Attack.
January 23rd, 1900.

1. The General Officer Commanding has decided to seize Spion Kop.

2. The operation will be conducted by Major-General Woodgate, who will detail two battalions of his own brigade, to which will be attached about 100 men of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry and half company of Royal Engineers.

3. Rendezvous just east of the encampment Royal Engineers, at 7 p.m. Men must be kept concealed from the front.

4. One hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition will be carried by the men. The General Officer Commanding 11th Brigade will attach three mules to each battalion, and the officer commanding 10th Brigade three mules, this afternoon. Ammunition for these mules will be furnished by the battalions concerned. One day's complete ration to be carried by the men. All horses to be left at the Royal Engineer bivouac. The mules will follow in rear of the column. Men will carry entrenching tools in stretchers.

5. The Officer commanding the Royal Dragoons will arrange to picquet all native kraals on the line of advance, and also Wright's Farm. All inhabitants should be confined to the buildings.

6. Men will, of course, carry filled water bottles, and should be cautioned that a refill may be difficult. Battalions will endeavour to make some arrangement, by fastening biscuit boxes on to mules, or in some other manner, to carry extra water.

7. The General Officer Commanding 11th Brigade will arrange that the volunteer ambulance and the bearer company of the brigade send detachments. No ambulances to be nearer than the Royal Engineer bivouac till daylight.

J. TALBOT COKE, Major-General.

These orders were well thought out. Of course, they could not have been made had the attack been attempted on the night of the 22nd. After the issue of them, Major-General Woodgate made a request that the rendezvous might be changed to Wright's Farm, and later (5.30 p.m.) asked that it might be, as first ordered, at Royal Engineer bivouac; so that his indecision caused a good deal of unnecessary confusion in orders. He appeared to be in bad health at the time. His column made a bad start when it did march off, and lost its way before it had gone a mile. I sent Captain Phillips to lead them back and to give them a good start in the right direction. I moved for the night into the front trenches of the Connaught Rangers, our nearest position to Spion Kop, and from which I should be able to see what was going on.

January 24th.—My report on the attack has been printed (White Book, Cd. 968, 1902, South Africa, the Spion Kop despatches, pages 29, 30, 31), but my signal messages during the day have been omitted, and perhaps the Royal Commission may think a few further details of interest:—

Sir C. Warren came up to me as soon as he received the heliogram, "Reinforce at once, or all lost; General dead," ordered me to reinforce, and to proceed to the mountain. He told me that the position was to be held at all cost, his final words being, "Mind, no surrender." I assured him that the position would be held.

My first message to Sir C. Warren was despatched at 12.50 p.m. :—

"I am now on the plateau of Spion Kop slopes. The top of the hill is reported crowded with men, and as these are exposed to shell fire and suffering, but holding out well, I have stopped further reinforcements beyond this point, but the troops engaged know that help is close at hand. Ammunition is being pushed up."

At 3 p.m. I made a report :—

"I have ordered the Scottish Rifles and the King's Royal Rifles up to reinforce. The Middlesex Regiment, Dorset Regiment, and Imperial Light Infantry have also gone up. Bethune's Mounted Infantry (120 strong) also reinforced. We appear to be holding our own at present."

At 3.50 p.m., after I had reached the summit, I reported :—

"We are suffering much from shrapnel fire from our left front, bearing magnetic north apparently from Three Tree Hill. The hill is being cleared of Boers. The necessary reinforcements have been ordered up. Scottish Rifles have just reached top of hill. Casualties heavy. More doctors, food, and especially water wanted."

On examining the position from our left flank I soon saw that although our men were badly posted, the fire was so intense that it was quite impossible to occupy better posts till darkness set in. I accordingly approved of Colonel Hill's proposal to hold on until dark and then intrench.

By 3.50 p.m. all reinforcements had reached their positions. Large numbers of men were held in reserve out of fire; many more employed in helping wounded comrades down the hill, others in carrying empty water bottles to be filled, so that generally there were not more men in the trenches than were required to keep back the Boers; but in some cases the trenches, which were badly constructed, were far too crowded. The chief losses from shrapnel fire were, I believe, caused by the 15-pounder British guns which were left for the Boers after Colenso. Certainly (after they had expended our ammunition) no subsequent Boer artillery fire proved to be anything like so effective.

In the selection of position from which to hold the summit of Spion Kop there was the choice of "the forward position," which would have swept most of the ground in front by fire, but still have been enfiladed by the Boers on the Twin Peaks, and of "the backward position," which, I believe, was advocated by Sir C. Warren, and from which the mountain could certainly have been held with the minimum of loss, but it had the disadvantage of reserves being close up to the firing line, and any second position impossible. These were really the only two possible positions, but that taken by our troops in the darkness and mist was an intermediate position, anything worse than which was impossible.

Passing on to the extreme right flank I found Colonel Hill, commanding the 10th Brigade, and who, in my mind (without any doubt), was senior officer in command of the summit. No word had reached me of Lieut.-Colonel Thorneycroft's appointment to command, and I regarded him simply as a junior brevet lieutenant-colonel in command of a small unit. There were many officers senior to him on the mountain.

I heard Colonel Hill's opinion on the situation, and more fully his proposals to hold on, entrench, and otherwise strengthen the position so far as possible during the night. I then, in the presence of Colonel Hill, wrote the following report to Sir C. Warren, despatching it by Colonel Morris about 6 p.m., and handing a duplicate to my signalling officer to be signalled :—

"Top of Spion Kop,
"5.50 p.m., 24-1-1900.

"The situation is as follows :—The original troops are still in position, have suffered severely, and many dead and wounded are still in the trenches. The shell fire is and has been very severe. If I hold on to the position all night is there any guarantee that our artillery can silence the enemy's guns, otherwise to-day's experience will be repeated, and the men will not stand another complete day's shelling. I have in hand Bethune's Mounted Infantry and the Dorset Regiment intact to cover a withdrawal. If I remain I will endeavour

to utilise these units to carry food and water up to the firing line. The situation is extremely critical. If I charge and take the kopje in front the advance is several hundred yards in the face of the entrenched enemy in strength, and my position as regards the quick-firing guns is much worse. Please give orders, and should you wish me to withdraw cover retirement from Connaught's Hill.

"J. TALBOT COKE, Major-General."

Colonel Morris, who had been with me all day, thoroughly knew the whole state of affairs, and I directed him to report fully to Sir C. Warren as well as to hand him my message.

Leaving Colonel Hill, I moved by the dressing station to the upper plateau, where I posted the Dorset Regiment and Bethune's Mounted Infantry to check any possible downward rush and to cover the withdrawal if such was ordered. Passing on to the signal station, I there received, at 9 p.m., a message from Sir C. Warren to report myself to him at once. I handed the following message to the signallers in reply :—

"Night so dark and country so rough that the whole night would be taken up in journey. Is it not possible to give orders without my presence?"

But the oil in the signaller's lamp failed, the message could not be sent, and there remained nothing but for me to obey the order. I may here mention that although I sent several messages to Sir C. Warren during the day, I got none from him except the above-mentioned.

After great difficulty in finding Sir C. Warren's bivouac, which he had changed during the day, I reported myself to him about 2 a.m. Lieut.-Colonel Thorneycroft came in within a few minutes of me and reported that he had evacuated the position.

I maintain that I did all that was possible to improve the state of affairs after I reached Spion Kop. Over the original state of affairs I had had no control, and I found a scene of considerable confusion when I reached the mountain. After that I regulated the reinforcements according to the requirements, got a plentiful supply of ammunition up to summit, added to the water supply, established a signalling station, and, without taking the command of the summit out of Colonel Hill's hands, I generally improved matters. Sir C. Warren appeared to be quite satisfied with what I had done and requested that there might be an inquiry into the unauthorised evacuation. But Sir R. Buller's conduct was certainly most extraordinary. He neither saw me nor said one word to me regarding the action, though I met him daily.

Lord Roberts, in his report of February 13th, 1900, on the Spion Kop operations, whilst freely blaming many of the officers concerned, passed no censure on the part I took. Sir R. Buller subsequently three times favourably mentioned me in despatches, and personally thanked me in the field for my action in holding on to the position of Van Wyk (June 6th, 1900), and the capture by my brigade of the strong position of Alleman's Nek (June 11th, 1900), by which the Boers were driven out of Natal. Yet after his return to England he most unaccountably made an adverse report on me, especially as regards Spion Kop. This report he in no way communicated to me (contrary to the Provisions of His Majesty's Regulations).

I respectfully urge that if fault is to be found with an officer's conduct in the field some disapproval should at the time be shown, but that the practice of making adverse reports after the lapse of many months, and after favourably mentioning services in despatches, is contrary to the best traditions of our Army, and, if allowed to form a precedent, will strike deeply at the honour and good understanding existing amongst officers, the maintenance of which is essential to the success of our arms in future wars.

The way in which I have been treated is entirely at variance with the public statement made by the Secretary of State for War to the House of Commons, to the effect that no officer could suffer without a full inquiry into his case, for I have had no such inquiry, in spite of my many appeals for justice, and I have so far been denied any opportunity of replying to and disproving what has been alleged against me by Sir R. Buller.

20211. I think you are willing to give us some evidence with regard to the training of the Army from your experience not only in the war, but also before the war?—Yes.

20212. Before the war you were Chief Staff Officer

Major-General J. Talbot Coke.
19 Mar. 1903.

Major-
General J.
Talbot Coke.

19 Mar. 1903.

at the Curragh Camp of Instruction and at Aldershot?

—Yes.

20213. And you were also present at the German and French manœuvres of 1897?—Yes.

20214. We shall be very glad to hear what you have to say on that subject?—I thought it might help matters if I wrote out a short memorandum. I thought it might perhaps be more deliberate, and it is founded on my notes which I took at the time, and which I have here.

20215. If you will give us the memorandum I think it will be helpful to us?—I maintain that there was not much wrong with our peace training, but that many of our officers failed in modifying conditions which were taught them for meeting regular European troops, and which conditions required modification to meet irregular troops in a country like South Africa.

The peace training of our Army has of late years allowed ample latitude, so that our men were taught styles of warfare suitable for the many different countries in which they might have to fight. For instance, in the company training of our infantry the men, if properly instructed, were taught to manœuvre over rough ground, through woods, etc., with the broadest possible front and in the loosest possible formation. The battalion drill which followed the company also allowed most extensive and loose formations. Next came the brigade, and even in this both loose formations were practised as well as the closest, the latter being required for savage warfare. But when we passed on to the instruction of large forces and big manœuvres naturally we had to restrict the area of operations, and it became necessary to preach against the error of dissemination of troops by undue extension of front. It became necessary to limit turning operations so that the distance covered in these movements did not too severely tax the strength of the troops, and so that the flank march could be completed within a reasonable time allowed for the day's operations.

It must be remembered that there is great danger in too closely applying the lessons of the Boer war, for the Boers never made a counter attack, and were we to disregard the necessary Reserves required to meet such (as we often did in South Africa), we should be inviting a great disaster were we to meet a foe ready to take advantage of false formations.

To return to our peace training, the first great principle which was instilled was "The importance of effective reconnaissance before committing troops to the attack"; had that lesson been remembered by all our Commanders, how many disasters would have been averted in South Africa?

Our troops were carefully trained to take cover, yet a Britisher is so regardless of fire, that the greatest difficulty was often found in preventing men from exposing themselves. I fear that so long as this characteristic exists, no amount of peace training will produce a better result in war.

All arms were instructed in night operations, as well as day, and large forces of all arms were constantly practised in combined night operations—a most useful part of our instruction.

When we come to compare our peace training of large forces with the system of that adopted on the Continent, we have first to remember that we all have these large numbers of horse, guns, and infantry to put on the ground. It is folly to so extend the front to that extent, that no umpire staff can follow the manœuvres; all nations, therefore, have in large manœuvres to work in closer formations than would be possible under modern conditions of war. They have to instruct their masses as best they can. If the large masses are not brought together, the General Officers get no practice in handling such; but it is a mistake to think that the actual troops get the most useful lessons when assembled in large forces, for on those occasions one always sees many of the most impossible situations. The men are really best taught in smaller operations. Take, for instance, the employment of artillery; the effective shrapnel fire of field guns has lately been greatly increased, and the heavy batteries, which are being introduced, have a range only limited by our power of vision; would it be any real instruction at peace manœuvres to keep guns at this distance? Would anybody know when and at what target the guns were firing? And with smokeless powder, would the guns ever be observed at

all? We know that in South Africa we were often days in finding the positions of Boer guns, which only showed their existence by dropping shell amongst us. So, for any useful instruction in peace manœuvres, guns have to be kept within a range which they would not keep at war. In a similar manner, opposing infantry has to be kept for purposes of instruction at closer distances between forces than would be possible in war. This is not only the case with our Army, but in all Continental armies also. An intelligent officer realises this, and immediately modifies formations, so as to be best able to meet his foe, when he becomes engaged in war.

As regards cavalry training, in my opinion, this has not been so well carried out as that of other arms; the result has been that they did not have great successes in South Africa. One sees similar faults in Continental cavalry training.

Generally speaking, the great fault of our manœuvres is hurry. Our officers allow firing lines to rush forward without having established a superiority of fire, and an attack on a strong position, which would take hours to carry out in actual war, is, owing to the impetuosity of our officers, often over in a few minutes. We require more patience in carrying manœuvres through, and our General Officers are too ready to sound the "cease fire." The Germans are much more deliberate than we are, and the French operations were very prolonged—one good day's work of theirs would make three of ours.

In the German Army the proper proportion of entrenching tools is always carried by the troops, and field entrenchments are made by the defence. In our Army we have been much handicapped by the orders forbidding to break ground, and no practical spade-work is carried out during manœuvres. This has had a very bad effect on our Army, and there were many instances in South Africa of entrenchments not having been made, when such should have been constructed. The sections, showing the various dimensions for shelter trenches for infantry, as given in our text books, were also terribly faulty. Much of our loss at Spion Kop might have been avoided had our men then possessed any knowledge of the principles on which entrenchments should be made, which they afterwards practically learnt from the Boers. The "Infantry Drill," 1896, laid down that the trench should be 5ft. wide, and 1ft. 6in. deep. We found the right construction should not be more than 2ft. wide and 2ft. 6in. deep, with soil thrown up in front and rear.

The small entrenching tool carried by the men was absolutely useless. Full-sized picks, shovels, and crowbars should be carried on mules and in carts for about half of the force—not more than this proportion would be likely to be employed digging at one time.

20216. Do the foreign armies carry entrenching tools in the way you have described?—They carry better tools now than we do, but still I think there was some fault to be found with them, and they are reforming that I believe. There is no doubt that they should be carried of the full size; there is no such thing as a half-size in a military tool, and what we want really are navvies' tools, picks and shovels.

20217. Do the foreign armies carry navvies' tools?—Not the infantry, but the artillery do, and they carry them on their limbers.

20218. Do the infantry carry them themselves?—No, they only carry those small entrenching tools, the same as we did.

20219. And the experience of the war has clearly shown that that is insufficient?—Entirely.

20220. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Does that apply to both the French and German armies?—Yes, they both had small tools.

20221. Corresponding to our Wallace spade?—Yes; but I think they have got rid of them by this time; I am talking of 1897.

20222. (Sir John Jackson.) What would you do with the picks?—They must be carried on mules or carts.

20223. You would carry the ordinary shovel and pick?—Yes, and a certain number of crowbars. I worked out the exact proportion of the number of mules that would be required, and the number of carts for a brigade reserve. I made a report upon that while in South Africa, and, as a matter of fact, we really did rectify that during the war, and we had our full-sized tools.

20224. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did it make a serious increase to the transport?—Not so very much. We had an ox waggon for each brigade, and a certain number of mules. They were handed over to the am-

munition officer, and they were brought up always into the line when wanted, and had the most useful effect, our entrenching work being very much better after that.

20225. You have spoken on the subject of manœuvres. Of course, you have followed the new system of staff rides?—Yes.

20226. As far as training officers is concerned, do you think that fulfils all the requirements?—I think it is a very useful adjunct, but I think the practical training of troops on the ground is always necessary.

20227. I rather gathered that you said that the manœuvres on a smaller scale were more useful?—More useful for the men.

20228. You would not say that large manœuvring countries are needed for troops?—For instruction of our officers, certainly they are, but I do not think for the men.

20229. Cannot that instruction be given by staff rides?—I think not.

20230. We have had some evidence to that effect?—I think it is impossible to arrive at that result by staff rides; there is a great deal of supposition, and if you are told an Army Corps is in a certain place, and a division in a certain place, it is very hard to realise if you do not see the troops.

20231. But everything is carried out on a staff ride as it is in a campaign?—So far as the orders are concerned, but the orders to the units are entirely imaginary.

20232. But you receive your instructions from the director?—Yes.

20233. And then you issue your orders exactly as in a campaign?—Yes, it is a very good practice for issuing orders, but I do not think it is any practice in commanding troops.

20234. Could that be got in small manœuvres?—No, I think not. I think it necessary to have these large manœuvres and to put these large numbers of troops on the ground, but what I do maintain is that our system of training before the war was not so faulty as our critics would make us believe, because it is simply necessary to crowd so many men to the acre, and you must have them on the ground if you are to teach your officers. The Germans have generally on the ground about eight men to a yard, one man to a yard front and eight deep—of course, extending many yards back, but about eight men to a yard was about the German calculation. I do not think our forces have ever been assembled in that strength.

20235. That would not be the system in actual warfare?—Not at all.

20236. Where do they get their real training for war, then?—I am afraid when the fire commences. That is their training now.

20237. Before the Franco-German War they must have had similar training?—Entirely.

20238. Yet when the war began the Germans were ready?—The officers were good, and they accepted the changed conditions. They very soon saw when they came under fire that it was impossible even in those days with the rifle the French had—the old chassepot—to advance in a solid formation, and the officers very wisely opened out.

20239. Does it not perhaps come to this, that as long as the men can march and shoot the chief point is that the officers should know their work?—Yes; but I think the officers to get really good training must have large manœuvres.

20240. Although under different conditions from war?—I am afraid that is necessary.

20241. What I want to get at is, that I do not quite see how training officers to work with men eight deep could train them to a condition of warfare where the men would be extended in lines at considerable distances from each other?—I do not mean that the men are eight deep in a solid formation, but that is covering a depth of perhaps a mile and a half.

20242. Eight men to a yard?—Yes, about a mile and a half in depth.

20243. Which is almost the inverse really of war, where each man has eight yards laterally?—Yes, but with these large forces they have on the Continent they must get their men on to the ground, and what are they to do with them?

20244. Then where is the training for the officer?—I am afraid the training is faulty for that reason, but it teaches the commanders their work. It teaches staff work, and when it comes to the time, if the officers are properly instructed, they can easily apply the modern conditions and extend their men.

20245. Do you think that a very extended system of staff rides and a great deal of training of the troops, the men themselves, in companies, battalions, and brigades—the smaller units—would carry out practically all that is needed?—I think, as far as we are concerned, it might help; but, of course, our forces are not quite so big as the French and German armies, and we have not got as many men to the acre.

20246. I speak of our own Army?—Yes, I certainly advocate, as far as possible, the training of units in small forces, and not in big forces.

20247. And, if so, the question of huge manœuvring grounds would not come in?—Except that a change of ground is a great matter?

20248. Do you know Ireland at all?—Very well.

20249. The West of Ireland?—Yes.

20250. Do you think large manœuvring grounds could be got there for occasional periods?—I think so. The whole of Ireland produces the most beautiful training grounds. I have manœuvred over a great part of county Kildare, parts of Queen's County, and county Kilkenny, and a great many other counties.

20251. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is the Curragh a good training ground?—We were manœuvring from the Curragh, but the Curragh itself is too small.

20252. (*Chairman.*) There was one other point, I think, on which you said you would give us some evidence, with regard to the Colonial troops?—Yes, I have prepared a statement on that subject. My experience is chiefly based on the Imperial Light Infantry, a battalion raised in Natal on the outbreak of the war, and which joined my brigade at the end of December, 1899, at Estcourt, when they were recruited up to full strength. This was an infantry corps, composed in a large measure of refugees from Johannesburg. In South Africa the best men go to mounted corps, for the Colonial has a horror of marching. The men were in physique very unequal, as were they also in age, but they were of a better class than the Colonials who formed the bearer companies. There were but two Regular officers attached to the battalion, the commandant and the adjutant (a young subaltern). The Colonial officers were about the weakest part of the regiment. With few exceptions the officers knew nothing of their work, and seemed to take little interest in learning it. Many of them were not to be trusted on detached duties, and many of them (if they got an opportunity) would get drunk. The whole of our force in South Africa was short of officers, but certainly it would have been better to have sent more officers out from home when these Colonial corps were raised.

It was a severe test on a battalion of this sort to be brought into action at Spion Kop (24th January) for its baptism of fire, just at a critical moment, when our men could hardly hold their own, and when they were being exposed to the most terrible shrapnel fire of the war. The companies had also in a large measure to be broken up, as reinforcements were only sent in small numbers to any particular spot. Those who went into the firing line behaved with the greatest gallantry, but a large proportion of their comrades never fired off their rifles on that day.

20253. (*Sir John Jackson.*) From what part of the Colonies did those men come?—Chiefly from Johannesburg. There were many refugees, and there were a few men from down country.

20254. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There were no oversea Colonials among them at all?—No, none at all.

20255. (*Chairman.*) Will you please proceed?—A comparison of the expenditure of ammunition during that day and the casualties in the 2nd Middlesex Regiment and in the Imperial Light Infantry is, I think, a practical proof of what I state:—

	Casualties.	Ammunition expended.
2nd Battalion Middlesex	103	69,012
Imperial Light Infantry	125	14,300

The Imperial Light Infantry had twenty-two more casualties and yet fired only about a fifth of the num-

Major
General J.
Talbot Coke.
19 Mar. 1903.

Major-General J. Talbot Coke.
19 Mar. 1902.

ber of shots that the Regular battalion did. That is the point, I think, that a great number of men did not go to the front and did not do their duty, but those who did go to the front behaved with great gallantry and lost their lives.

20256. Might it not be that they chose their opportunities of shooting more than the British troops?—I do not think to that extent; they could not have had better cover, and they lost more men than the British troops did.

20257. But in the actual shooting, does not the British soldier perhaps not choose his mark so deliberately as the Colonial?—Yes, I think that is the case if the Colonial is well trained—in fact, I am sure it is; but these men were not well trained; they were not of the shooting Colonial stamp at all.

20258. That would not have applied to them?—No, it would not have applied to them—to a few of them certainly, but not to the majority.

20259. (Sir John Jackson.) What class were they from mainly?—They were chiefly Johannesburg men from the gold mines. They were a good class of men as far as education and that sort of thing went.

20260. And townsmen more or less?—Townsmen, most of them.

20261. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Who commanded them?—There were two commanding officers during the period. I forget what regiments they belonged to, but two of our regular majors commanded them.

20262. (Chairman.) What class of men were they—clerks and that sort of thing?—Clerks largely. The men could not be said to be wanting in intelligence, but they were lazy, did not, as a rule, care to learn soldier's work, and were always longing to be back in Johannesburg. Such were not to be trusted in the outpost line.

The South African Light Horse (Byng's) were with me for some time later in the war. These I found to be a very different class. They were intelligent, dashing, and could be thoroughly relied upon. They had been more carefully selected than the infantry (many of them came from overseas, from our outside Colonies, New Zealand, Australia, and all parts of

the Colonies, and they were carefully recruited), and were a very useful body of men. They had a large proportion of Regular officers, and this also helped them. I preferred having the South African Light Horse to work with me to any cavalry regiment I had in South Africa. I got better results out of the South African Light Horse.

20263. The South African Light Horse were mounted infantry?—Yes.

20264. They would not perform like cavalry?—No, they were entirely mounted infantry, and were not trained as cavalry.

20265. What happened to the Imperial Light Infantry after that? Did they go through the war?—Yes, they were not disbanded until the end of the war.

20266. And under what conditions were they enlisted—the same as the mounted corps?—Yes, they were enlisted for the war generally.

20267. Were they paid the 5s. a day?—Yes.

20268. But they would not compare with an ordinary British regiment?—Certainly not; they were not the class of men to make soldiers.

20269. You did not have anything to do with the oversea Colonials?—No, I had nothing to do with them.

20270. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I brought all my correspondence with the War Office. It is rather a personal matter, but I should rather like to remark that I have addressed this file of papers to the War Office and I have entirely failed in getting the very slightest injury. I saw the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, and he was very polite and told me he could not in any way listen to anything; that is all I got out of him, and so far I have not had the slightest inquiry.

20271. That is raised in the paper you have handed in?—Yes, I have said so, but I did not quote the letters.

20272. But you have raised the question about the inquiry you demanded in this paper?—Yes.

20273. And, as I have said, what we propose to do is to record that?—

Major The Marquis of TULLIBARDINE, M.V.O., D.S.O., Royal Horse Guards, called and examined.

20274. (Chairman.) You served in South Africa?—Yes, I went out in 1899.

20275. In what capacity?—I went attached to the Royal Dragoons as a subaltern.

20276. The evidence which you have been good enough to give us is with regard to the raising of the Scottish Horse?—Yes, it deals practically entirely with Irregular corps.

20277. That was in December, 1900?—Yes.

20278. In this paper which you have handed to us you have detailed the steps that were taken to raise the Scottish Horse?—Yes, I have put them very fully.

20279. If you have no objection, we will record that as your evidence?—Very well.

20280. There is appended a report by the Duke of Atholl with regard to the steps taken in this country?—Yes.

20281. And that also you put in?—Yes.

I.—STEPS TAKEN TO RAISE.

During the last week in November, 1900, I heard Lord Kitchener had sanctioned the raising of a force, to be known as "Scottish Horse," as a kind of town guard in Johannesburg. I wrote and told him that I was sure this scheme could be enlarged if he wished, but that he must appoint a good Scots officer to take command, and not certain officers whom I had heard mentioned as being likely to be appointed, if the movement was to be a success from a national point of view. I stated that, knowing nearly every Scotsman in Natal, I would be glad to recruit among them and send them on to whoever was appointed to command. As at that time I had a good staff appointment in Natal, I had no idea of joining myself. However, on December 15th, General Hildyard, commanding in Natal, received

orders to send me up to Johannesburg to command and raise the regiment, which was to have a strength of four squadrons, or 500 men. I secured the services of Captain Blair, King's Own Scottish Borderers, and Sir William Dick-Cunyngham, Black Watch, to act as second in command and adjutant respectively. Captain Blair was immediately sent to Cape Town and Sir William Dick-Cunyngham to Durban to organise recruiting. I proceeded to Johannesburg, and there was received by the Johannesburg Caledonian Society, at least, such members as were in the place, and they gave me their whole support. Johannesburg being at that time very sparsely populated, I was only able to get about 30 men, but they were nearly all Scotsmen, and very good men who had seen service during the war. Meanwhile I had written to the Caledonian Societies at Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town, all of which did their best to assist me, especially that at Durban. The result of this was that I was able to take the field with three full squadrons by February 4th, and had a fourth one ready by the middle of February. Most of the men had seen service. As I wished to command a Scots corps I had asked Lord Kitchener to wait six weeks to allow me to get good men from home, but he said he wished the corps raised at once and that I could enlist them for a short time only in the meantime. At the time there were upwards of fifteen regiments, I think, recruiting in Natal and along the coast, and the competition was very keen between regiments. The result, however, was deterioration of class. Of those I enlisted at that time I should say about half were Scotsmen or of Scots descent, the other half being from anywhere, but my rule was that no foreigner should be admitted, under any pretext, at that time. (Later on I took three Swedes, but they were all three settled in South Africa, or intending to settle, and were taken for special reasons.) A great

Major The Marquis of Tullibardine
M.V.O., D.S.O.

many foreigners of doubtful class were being enlisted at this time in some of the other corps, though not returned as such. I also refused to take any Dutch or half-castes (later on a few were taken as special scouts). Captain Blair raised about a squadron and a-half while at Cape Town in a very short period. About twenty of these, however, I sent back, as they were not up to the standard of character, etc., required. I also refused about 80 of those who came up for final approval in Natal (having been passed by the recruiting doctor and the recruiting authorities), as not being up to moral standard required. Speaking generally, some of the very best men I had in South Africa among South African enlisted men were among the lot recruited at this time, and they stayed with me, re-enlisting as their period of six months expired, to the end of the war. The general run of these men, however, was moderate compared with the men I got later from Australia and home, and from South Africa itself when the regiment's name got better known. The men, however, did extraordinarily well, and better than I had expected they would. I found that I had not been strict enough with medical examination, especially with regard to teeth, and after this was always more particular in this respect, as, before accepting a recruit, he had to pass my test, as well as that of the doctor at the coast. This finishes South African recruits, all of whom at this time were raised for six months, though later I signed them on for "one year or less." I must here point out that the men obtainable in South Africa were much inferior to those originally raised for the Imperial Light Horse, South African Light Horse, etc., though these at this time were also descending in class, and were accepting recruits even inferior to those accepted by me. In the above class, i.e., South African recruits, as they joined under the same conditions, should be included about 200 men I got from the various Scots Volunteer Service Companies. Whenever I heard that any of these companies were time-expired, having finished their year in South Africa, I used to go down and interview them, and get any of those who wished to stay on to see the end of the war, or to get experience of mounted work, or to settle in the country. Owing to their having learned habits of obedience and discipline, and having a good knowledge of drill and being excellent shots, they were, taken as a body, the 200 best men I ever had in the regiment. The first hundred of them, whom I got from the first Volunteer Service Companies that went out to the war, were the best body of men in every way that I saw in South Africa. This particular squadron had a reputation which extended far beyond the column with which it was trekking.

Yeomanry from Home.—In the meantime I had also got permission to get men from home under Yeomanry conditions, and had wired to the Caledonian Society in London. This society was instrumental in raising me three squadrons, which left Great Britain about February and March, 1901. Before these arrived, Lord Kitchener told me to go on raising men for a second regiment, so I wrote to my father, the Duke of Atholl, who raised these extra men as required, by squadrons, and, being freed from the control of the Yeomanry authorities at Aldershot, the men came out better equipped, and in regular drafts, as required. From first to last he sent me out 1,250 men (including the three squadrons raised by the London Highland Society). These were the best lot of men, on an average, I ever had in the regiment. My summary (*vide page 455 post*) gives their numbers, date of leaving, and whence principally recruited. My complaints against the first two squadrons were that they would not wait until the Scottish Horse were arranged in squadrons, and send them out as proper units, but sent them out by ones and twos, as they were recruited with any draft of Yeomanry which happened to be coming out. For example, having had their names privately sent to me, I boarded the ships containing drafts from home. On one ship, containing about two or three hundred of the Duke of Cambridge's Yeomanry, I picked out 11 of my men, and on another ship containing Yeomanry, four. These men were included on the strength of the Yeomanry squadrons to which they were attached, and were shown as part of these units, and not supernumerary to them. I never had one roll or statement of any kind, or copy of accounts from the Yeomanry authorities at any time with regard to these first three squadrons, and was unable to extricate it out of them. This caused a great deal of difficulty with regard to their accounts, etc. The only

condition I made when I offered to raise the above men from home was that they should be directly under me in South Africa, and not subject to the Imperial Yeomanry authorities, as it was impossible for me to be under the Assistant Adjutant General, Imperial Yeomanry, and the Assistant Adjutant General Colonial forces at the same time.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.
19 Mar. 1903.

Australians.—When I first got orders to raise the regiment, I had an idea that I should be able to get Scotsmen from Australia and Canada, who had emigrated from our part of the world. Lord Kitchener gave me leave to wire to Australia, so in January I wired to the Caledonian Society in Melbourne, who immediately took it up, and about 300 men joined me by the 8th March. These men were a splendid draft, very fine riders, and all Victorians. They were all sent to the second regiment and kept together, and did very excellent service. I kept up the strength of these Australians by subsequent drafts, who came out from Sydney. The first draft was got under the direct knowledge of the Australian Government, but were brought over and raised at the expense of the Imperial Government, and were not part of the recognised Australian contingents. Other Irregular corps, finding I had got this draft, immediately tried to do likewise, and spoiled the market, trying to obtain men by all sorts of means in Australia, with the result that the Australian Government put their foot down, and refused to allow any men to be recruited officially. For my second draft I got over this difficulty by getting the men under the heading of men who had already served in Australian regiments, and who wished to come out to South Africa again. The Australian Government allowed a limited number of these men to come out in August, 1901, and, by arrangement with Lord Kitchener these men who signed on in Australia for the Scottish Horse were allowed to come to me. This got the Australian Governments out of the difficulty of having to break through their rule. Had the war continued, I had made arrangements for about 300 more to come out on somewhat similar lines. My first draft of Australians was enlisted for six months, but all subsequent men from oversea were enlisted for a year, or until the end of the war, if the war ended sooner. I also recruited many Australians at the coast ports. The majority of these were not so good as those I got direct from Australia, and were enlisted under South African rules as South African Colonials. (See notes on pay and enlistment.) The majority of the first draft of Australians were Scots, or of Scots descent, a considerable number being descendants of men who had emigrated from my part of the world. The men that I got from Australia direct were easier to manage and better disciplined than those I got as time-expired from Australian corps, and who re-enlisted in preference to going home. This I put down to having been under officers in their original corps who did not know how to keep discipline.

Canadians.—Towards the end of the war, Lord Kitchener authorised me to apply for 400 Canadians. These were authorised by Mr. Brodrick, but the Canadian Government were against the scheme, and preferred to send a contingent of their own, distinct from the Scottish Horse. I had made private arrangements in Canada for recruiting these men, and understood that the men were all available before I made the proposition to Lord Kitchener. As it was, the contingent sent out by the Canadian Government arrived too late, which caused considerable grumbling among the men, as their war gratuity was refused, also their medals; so, in view of any future affiliation of corps, as hereafter proposed by me, there will be no feeling against me with regard to this point, as there would have been had they come for the Scottish Horse.

The men in the regiment were classed as follows for pay:—

(1) South African Irregulars.—These men were enlisted in South Africa, and were paid at South African rates, and were not entitled to free passage home, but went home at indulgence rates if they wished to.

(2) Specially Enlisted Australians.—Under this heading came those men who were raised in Australia and attested in South Africa. These men were entitled to 40 days' voyage pay, and a free passage home, the same as other Australians, but were not entitled to special bounties, etc., given by Australian Government.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

(3) Imperial Yeomanry.—These served under usual Imperial Yeomanry conditions, and were recruited in Scotland.

19 Mar. 1903. These different conditions and rates of pay caused a certain amount of grumbling, but were in most cases pretty fair, and the only ones that could be arrived at without making other regiments jealous. The only case in which it did not work was that of the South African enlisted recruits, whom I got from the Scots Volunteer Service Companies when time expired. I am of opinion that these men ought to have been enlisted under Imperial Yeomanry rules, as they were picked men from the Volunteer Service Companies, and had all seen service in South Africa for one year with their regiments, and, as a rule, had no intention of remaining in the country after the war, simply remaining on as they wished to see the finish of the war, and thus felt that they had been less well treated than the raw material arriving out from home, which, of course, was a fact, though they never complained officially, having been warned of the terms before they joined.

II.—ORGANISATION.

Only one regiment of Scottish Horse was raised at first, four squadrons strong. This I commanded personally in the field, with the usual establishment allowed in South Africa for Irregular corps. As the drafts increased the second regiment was formed, and eventually the Scottish Horse consisted of a first regiment of six squadrons under a Lieut.-Colonel and a Major as Second-in-Command, and a second regiment of five squadrons, under the command of a Major with no Second-in-Command. As the regiments were working apart, I found it necessary to form a headquarters office at Johannesburg, where I remained, going out occasionally in turns from one regiment to the other. The whole of the interior economy of the regiment was worked from this office, with the exception of food supplies. All Ordnance vouchers, with the exception of ammunition supplies, were sent to me by the quartermasters of either regiment, and I arranged for drawing and supplying the articles required. I also arranged the horse supply of the regiments from this office, and all the pay and regimental correspondence outside the regiment emanated from here; also the supply of recruits, and all that was necessary for keeping the regiment going. At Johannesburg I also formed a dépôt. Every recruit had to pass through this dépôt before being posted, and, if necessary, received training. All men also had to come through this dépôt for discharge, and all men, after undergoing imprisonment, etc., before being re-posted; also all men on discharge from hospital. This latter was found to be very useful, as whenever a man was sent to the hospital, the same was reported to me by the regiment, and the hospitals had a fixed place to deal with instead of the regiment, which might be trekking anywhere. The result was that I was always able to get men quickly out of hospital as soon as convalescent, and there was no chance of their being detained in hospital as servants, grooms, orderlies, etc., as sometimes was apt to occur. In connection with this, I held a concert in Johannesburg, and, collecting about £200, was able to set up a convalescent camp, which was under the control of a medical officer, who was responsible to me for everything that went on in it. The average number of men in this camp was about 60, and, having the above funds to work with, I was able to get the men out in the field again much quicker than the ordinary convalescent camp did, especially as I was able to give them better food than regulations authorised; also, by supplying footballs and cricket sets, etc., the men got themselves fit, unconsciously, much quicker than they would have, had they been doing nothing in a convalescent camp; also, having a knowledge of the men, I was able to detect shirkers. One of my troopers was a qualified dentist, and was kept permanently on the convalescent camp establishment. I found him of great use, as the want of dentists is one of the great drawbacks in the medical organisation of the Army. The camp was always directly in charge of an officer who had been ill and was not fit for trek, and he saw that discipline was properly kept. In addition to the large dépôt at Johannesburg, I had two small advanced moveable dépôts, which kept as near the regiments as possible on the line, and when a regiment came in it usually camped near the dépôt, picked up new horses, recruits, transport, sup-

plies, etc., leaving trekwork horses, sick men, men for discharge, etc. As soon as the regiment moved off, the men were sent either into the main dépôt for discharge or to hospital, etc., and the horses to remount farms, as hereafter described. The dépôt immediately prepared for the next time the regiment came in. The regiment, in consequence of this, was far better supplied than any other irregular corps. In the advance dépôt of each regiment, I had an officer in charge, who was convalescent or unfit for trek; also two non-commissioned officers, one of whom acted as quartermaster-sergeant. These two men were also convalescents, if possible. At the main dépôt at Johannesburg I had a permanent dépôt officer for each regiment, one squadron quartermaster-sergeant, one provost-sergeant, and one storeman for the whole dépôt, and one sergeant and one corporal for each regiment for the clerical work, etc., etc. All the above, with the exception of the two officers and the squadron quartermaster-sergeant were taken from among the convalescents. Towards the end of the war, when large drafts were arriving from home who were unable to ride, I formed another camp outside Johannesburg for training recruits in horsemanship, and, to take charge of this, I secured the services of one of the Yeomanry riding masters, who did excellent work. I had especially asked the Duke of Atholl to send me men who could shoot, and not to bother about riding, as I could soon teach them enough of the latter, and I found I got better class men from Scotland this way.

Transport.—This was according to South African scale, as laid down from time to time, the only difference between Regular regiments and ourselves being that I had professional South African transport men as officers, one to each regiment, in charge of the transport. These men were chosen from the best conductors in the Army, and did invaluable work, having far better knowledge of the work required than any British officer could ever possess. Each one had a picked transport sergeant under him, picked for former knowledge in a civilian capacity, the best one I had having been an engine driver, thus having a knowledge of keeping waggons in order, wheels properly greased, etc. In addition to this, I had two sub-conductors from the transport to assist generally, but I found the sergeant much more useful and of less trouble than the conductors, who, however, were necessary on account of their knowledge of the language; but their honesty with regard to stores and mules, etc., was never above suspicion. The sergeant was especially valuable with regard to seeing the waggons properly loaded, stores taken care of, and general discipline in the transport. It is most important that this sergeant be of very sober habits, as temptations with the transport are very great.

Pay Department.—The regiment was paid at the usual South African rates as a general basis, but these were somewhat modified in special instances—i.e., Yeomanry men. The pay of these men was practically the same as the South African rates, with the exception that they got a free voyage home on full pay and £5 extra Yeomanry gratuity, which latter to my mind was unnecessary and unfair to other men in the Service. Men enlisted in South Africa got the usual rates of South African pay and the war gratuity only. Men enlisted in Australia for the corps were paid at South African rates and got a free passage back to Australia on full pay. The number of days' pay allowed for voyage home was fixed the same as for other Australians in the Australian regiments at forty days, so as to cover their expenses from the coast in Australia to their homes. All officers were paid at South African rates. When my Yeomanry officers first came out they were paid less than any other officers in the corps. This being, of course, an impossible condition of things, Lord Kitchener had them transferred to South African Irregular corps, the same as in the case of a Regular officer, from the date of landing in South Africa, so they drew the same amount as other officers in the regiment and Colonial allowance. The Australian officers were paid not at Australian rates, but at South African rates, so as to be fair all round, and if they originally joined for the Scottish Horse in Australia they got their forty days' pay and free voyage home the same as the rest of the men. Considering that it was unfair both to myself, to the untrained officers concerned, and to the men, that squadron officers should be responsible for the payment of the men on active service, I had one paymaster for each regiment, who was entirely responsible for the accounts

and payment of the men, and every detail with regard to pay, with the exception of allotments, which were in the hands of the Imperial paymaster. These men, though officers of the regiment and under me, were under the control of the Imperial paymaster, who was supposed to go through their accounts every month, so there should have been very little field for speculation or error if properly audited. At the headquarters of the regiment a book of headquarters' orders was kept, quite apart from the different regimental order books in the field, and all promotions, etc., were entered in this book before any change of pay could be authorised, both paymasters having access to this book daily. I may state that it is almost impossible for regiments in the field to know when non-commissioned officers are invalided, etc., but that I, having better access to the correspondence, hospital returns, etc., was better able to fill up the vacancies more quickly, and to prevent over-promotion than the officers commanding the regiments in the field. The regimental paymasters visited each regiment each month, and paid the men so much of their balance as they required, placing the rest to their credit, the result being that the average of pay due to the 700 men I brought home was between £30 and £40, some of them having as much as £150. (See notes on paying-off, later.) In addition to this, knowing what balances officers and men had, the paymasters were able to authorise certain expenditure on officers' and men's accounts if they wrote in for anything, such as mess stores or clothes, or if they wanted to send money home extra to the usual remittance or allotment. No Imperial Paymaster would have had time to do this, and no squadron officer in the field could possibly have done it. In Irregular corps it would have been impossible to trust every squadron leader with the money, partly because of ignorance of their previous character and partly because they were not sufficiently well educated. Also I wished the whole of their energies devoted to their squadrons and to fighting the enemy. Each paymaster had a staff of one non-commissioned officer of the rank of quartermaster sergeant, one sergeant, and one corporal. It was necessary to give these high ranks to the men, as they were living in Johannesburg, and expenses were big, and also in order that there should be no excuse for speculation, as they were sufficiently well paid to be comfortable; besides it was necessary, so far as possible, to have trained business men, Army men not being available. I consider it absolutely necessary, if the above system is continued in future, that the senior N.C.O. should be a trained Army pay-sergeant. This would cause considerably less trouble to the Imperial paymasters concerned. I may state here that the only department that ever caused me trouble and did not assist was one of the departments of the Army Pay Department. By this I do not in any way reflect on the Chief Paymaster, who did his very utmost to help me at all times, but the actual department which Irregular corps had to deal with. Instead of being assisted, the regimental paymasters were, as a rule, very discourteously treated, and were never really told exactly what system to follow. The result was that many mistakes occurred which might have been avoided. No proper regulations were framed when the regiment was first started, and having no Army non-commissioned officers at that period, the books were apt to get muddled from an Army point of view, and I had far too much to do to be really able to check them. The regimental paymasters also would come back from Pretoria very much ruffled in their tempers, and in consequence did not play up so well as they might have done had they been more led than driven. This complaint was not peculiar to my corps, but was a universal one among all corps dealing at the same office. It must be remembered that it must have been even worse in other corps where there were no Regular officers to assist the paymasters. I have said the above not owing to any enmity against any particular officer concerned, but as I think it my duty to point out that to get the best results it is absolutely necessary to have a courteous station paymaster (who can be as strict as he likes) to deal with independent Colonials, who will do anything for you if treated courteously, but get very obstinate, and will try to thwart you at every point if treated otherwise, and in consequence the Public Purse suffers.

Allotments—Great difficulty was experienced with the first three squadrons which came out from home owing to the allotment papers never having been received, and having only the men's word to go on. In the case of one squadron they were received one year

and five weeks late, so far as I remember, and the men having a very hazy idea of the difference between allotments and remittances much confusion occurred, and in some cases went at home. Although I have no official knowledge of the same, I am under the impression that the allotment sheets came out in due course, and were sent to the Yeomanry authorities in South Africa, where they got shelved at Cape Town, as, when change of paymasters was made in that department, they suddenly appeared within a week of the new paymaster taking up the work. With regard to this point I may state that Colonel Mortimer and Major Molyneux (Station Paymaster, No. 2), did everything they could to get the allotment sheets. I should here like to place on record the great assistance and tact always shown by the Chief Paymaster.

Major The Marquis of Tullibardine, M.V.O., D.S.O. 19 Mar. 1903.

Arrangements for Pay on Demobilisation.—On going on board ship for the voyage home I found that the men had so much pay due to them that it would have been very injudicious to have given them all the money, first, as there was a large amount of illicit drink on board; secondly, as about a hundred Reservists on board had formed a "silver ring," I having only gold for my men. These Reservists had been paid in some cases about £20, and what they did not spend on drink they spent on gambling, and if any of my men wanted change for canteen, etc., they were forced to take 15s. for a sovereign. To check this I issued bank notes (specimens of which are shown below) to the value of 2s., 1s., and 6d. My men were paid

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TWO SHILLINGS

until the 24th August 1902, inclusive, after which date it is of no value. On 24th August 1902, the above-mentioned sum of TWO SHILLINGS will be handed to bearer in exchange.

No duplicate or credit will be given for this note if lost.

Tullibardine, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Scottish Horse.

S.S. "Goth," 18th August 1902.

No. 72. E. 30.

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Tullibardine, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Scottish Horse.

S.S. "Goth," 18th August 1902.

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SIXPENCE

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Tullibardine, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Scottish Horse.

S.S. "Goth," 18th August 1902.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

in these notes only. They were made the only legal tender at the canteen, and the only legal tender for beer, and I gave full value to any men in exchange for money. This very soon stopped all abuses on board. These notes were redeemed the day before landing, and were illegal tender for any of the ship's crew, and could not be redeemed by them. The result was that the crew were unable to sell drink as it was too risky to give the men credit. There was no redress if a man lost the notes, and any surplus gained through lost notes by the regiment was placed to Widows' and Orphans' Fund. I am of opinion that a great deal of good could be done by issuing notes to men on transports the day before leaving in lieu of pay—these notes to be redeemed at their depôt on date of arrival only, after which the notes should be immediately destroyed, so that they could be of no use afterwards to anyone who should have stolen any of them, or to the crew on board ship on subsequent voyages; different numbers, patterns, or colours being used on every ship. Care should also be taken that the type used was one which could not be forged on board the ship. Men on landing were paid £2 at Aldershot to meet current expenses, and all men were paid in full within five days of going to their homes by myself and my Adjutant, with the exception of details, and two or three men whose accounts had not been forwarded by mistake. This, of course, refers to the bulk of the regiment which came home with me, and not to the odd details who came home at various other times, with whom I did not deal.

Horse Supply.—Horses were drawn direct from the Remounts when required. Close to each advance depôt I had a permanent horse depôt of my own in the nature of sick horse lines. The horses were kept in kraals and tin sheds built by my natives and by my convalescents. At each of these depôts I had a selected officer, two picked Australian troopers, as many natives as necessary, and one farrier. Whenever the regiment came in off trek the worst of the horses were sent to the Army sick lines, but those that only wanted a fortnight's rest were sent to this sick horse depôt. All horses from the Remounts were sent to these depôts two or three days before the column came in. The regiment used to wire to me how many horses they required to complete, how many sick they were sending in, and if I had enough to supply them out of the depôt I used to have the horses waiting for the column taken from those that had been sufficiently rested at the depôt, or from those sent up to complete establishment by the Remount Department. The Remounts used to give me new horses for those that were sent to the Army sick lines, and used to replace death casualties, but did not replace horses that were simply sent into my depôt to rest, horses of men sick in hospital supplying the necessary working balance. This system gradually grew up, but was not in use at first. Colonel Birbeck reported very well on my depôt, and when Regimental Horse Depôts were done away with, that of the Scottish Horse was the only one allowed to go on. The reason of the success of mine was, of course, because the commanding officer was on the spot, and horses were very carefully checked and looked after. Horse Depôts under the charge of the average Colonial Corps would become a source of constant speculation, not only in horseflesh, but also in grain. With cavalry regiment depôts, too, I noticed that horses and ponies which were not worth their keep were often kept going because they were old friends, or because some non-commissioned officer wanted to show how he could bring a horse round after it had been given up by a veterinary surgeon, which resulted in little good, as a rule, to the horse, and none to the Government; also ponies suitable for polo were very often allowed to remain in the depôts longer than was otherwise necessary. Therefore I think that column depôts are far preferable to regimental ones, except perhaps in the case of a very big unit, as mine was, as a column can always spare a good officer to be in charge, and abuses are less likely to creep in. From a regimental or column point of view these depôts were useful, as one knew exactly how many horses one could count on when coming into the line, instead of being disappointed in getting horses from the Remounts owing to all available horses in the Army Remounts establishment having to be sent away to another part of the country to make good the loss caused by some reverse. Of course, it would be impossible to have these depôts against an organised foe as they would be captured at once. I tried giving a 40 per cent. extra supply of horses to one squadron for a short time, which turned out very expensive in

horse flesh, as the men took no care of their horses, knowing they could always get another one. Eight per cent. or 10 per cent., however, led by servants, etc., or ridden by camp followers, are extremely useful and I found that better care was taken of them if they were handed over to squadrons to be used as they chose, and not locked after regimentally and handed out regimentally, as they were better taken care of, though, of course, in cases of necessity squadrons had to give them up, but in cases where squadrons lost their horses through neglect I made them walk rather than take the spare horses from another squadron which could look after its horses well. From what I saw when attached to the First Cavalry Brigade, in Natal, in 1899-00, I found the best-bought English horses did best. With the Scottish Horse, the Walers were the best class of horse, but took too long to acclimatise, and, taken all round, the best bought American horses did, perhaps, best. For mounted infantry, when the pace was not too fast, there were no better or more tractable mounts than the Russian ponies. The Russian horses did not do so well. I went with Lord Downe round my second regiment, which had just been supplied with the first issue of Russian horses. They were not a good class, and had been issued before they were really fit, and, in consequence, did badly, but after he left for Australia I was issued with very large quantities of Russian ponies, which had had a good rest after landing, and were given light work in my depôt before being issued to the regiment. I had no better ponies for the purpose required than these, but they were too small and slow for cavalry, but suited the Scotsmen to perfection, while I issued my bigger horses to the Australians. The Argentines were of low class, and the Hungarian ponies quite useless.

III.—OFFICERS.

I got my supply of officers (a) from the regular Army, (b) appointed at home by the Duke of Atholl and posted as Yeomanry officers, (c) appointed in South Africa on raising the corps and at other times, and (d) through the ranks of the regiment. Class (a).—My regular officers got on extremely well with the men and were thoroughly respected and trusted by them. At first the Colonials were against having them, but when they found what a difference it made in their comfort and in general efficiency they preferred them to any others. I only got officers whom I knew about personally. The commanding officer of each regiment and the adjutant were regulars. Class (b).—The officers appointed at home were of a less affluent class than that from which officers are usually drawn, and did extremely well, and could be thoroughly trusted, but were deficient in horse knowledge and general training. I was particular that they should be of gentlemanly behaviour. Class (c).—With the exception of the Regular officers, as a class, these were the best and most useful officers I had, as they were selected from (1) Australian regiments going home, (2) men of considerable experience throughout the war and in South Africa generally, and (3) gentlemen who had settled in the country just previous to the war, or who had served in the original Yeomanry. Class (d).—Some of the most reliable officers I had were appointed through the ranks. They were of all classes, and were promoted purely on their merits. Many of them were not what is termed gentlemen by birth, but I never kept a man who could not behave himself. Perhaps almost the best officer I had in the corps had been a farm hand and was the son of a small farmer in Perthshire, while another had been a footman in civilian life. This last fact was, of course, only known to me.

Of course, especially in Class (c) I made some wrong selections before I had got the necessary experience; but I always turned an officer out at once who did not behave himself, or who was addicted to drink. I consider that it is absolutely necessary for a commander of an Irregular corps to have the power of dismissal of any officer or man, reporting the same to the General Officer Commanding. My chief difficulty with regard to Irregular officers was drink, and the standard of moral code in those regiments which were not commanded by Regular officers was in some cases extremely low, and lowered the standard of the men in consequence. From first to last I had 157 officers, 14 were killed or died, seven were invalided, 11 were removed or resigned at my request, 107 served to the end of the war, and the remainder resigned for private reasons. The officers were supplied—from Regular Army 22, appointed in South Africa outside the Regiment 78, through the ranks of the regiment 46. and at home 11. I may here state that having started

so late in the war, the supply of officers of higher class was extremely limited, and I had to do the best I could otherwise. In my estimation a man known as a gentleman at home makes the best officer, as if you give him an order you can be tolerably certain that it will be carried out, his only fault being that he is too much inclined for luxury, having independent means. By this I do not mean that I do not approve of "messes"—as I do—considering that officers require to a certain extent the food they have been accustomed to, and also that they require better feeding than the men, owing to their having to use their head more, and being put to a greater nervous strain. Men also infinitely prefer to be commanded by a gentleman. In certain cases, of course, certain men in lower stations in life proved themselves so eminently fitted for promotion that everyone was pleased to see them promoted; but these were rare examples, and their merits can only be found out in a protracted war—in fact, I think in every case they had seen service for upwards of a year previous to joining the Scottish Horse, in some other corps. The worst of this class of officer also is that he is too keen for his own squadron and not enough for the good of his regiment, so, incidentally, for the furtherance of the Army in general. If he can get things for his own squadron he is not very particular how he gets them, and if the cause in general suffers. Except in rare cases, though an excellent man fighting, he is apt to neglect camp duties, and, in consequence, the comforts of his men, very often not understanding that an officer must be ready to do any extra work that he is called upon to do. I found the Australian officers sometimes too apt to be too familiar with their men, and discipline suffered in consequence, and, at other times, they were too apt to be down on their men, but, generally, as subaltern officers, once they learned their duties, owing to their previous roving life in Australia, they were magnificent troop leaders and horsemen. From first to last I never had any friction with any of my officers, and they all backed me up so well that I could not have carried on the corps had they been less keen and efficient. Taken as a general whole, the officers of the Scottish Horse were, with the exception of such corps as the Imperial Light Horse, South African Light Horse, and Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, superior to those in any Irregular corps.

IV.—SPECIAL QUALITIES.

(A) Shooting.—Taken as a general whole, the Scotsmen from home were good shots owing to the large percentage of Volunteers, keepers, and farmers joining. They were more cool also in action. Australians.—Shooting indifferent, in majority of cases very bad, owing to inexperience. Excitable in action. South Africans.—One or two very fine shots among them, but the majority were indifferent. (N.B. It must be noted, however, here and elsewhere, that I never had the class of South African men who enlisted in the Imperial Light Horse, for example, at the beginning of the war.

(B) Scouting.—The Australians were magnificent scouts, but a little apt to romance. The South Africans were very apt to romance, and, in consequence, their reports were treated with suspicion. The Scotsmen—if you could get any who rode well enough—were the most reliable of all, but from a general point of view, owing to his fine horsemanship, the Australian was far away the best scout, though a good Highland stalker could give points to many men.

(C) Horsemanship.—Australians: Magnificent. Scotsmen: Very bad, but owing to perseverance and sense of pride in that they did not wish to be worse than others they improved quicker than any untrained men I had, and in six weeks they were quite as good horsemen as the average mounted infantryman and much better than the average yeoman who came out towards the end of the war. South Africans: A few picked men were excellent, but the majority were indifferent.

(D) Horsemastership.—The Australians knew most about horses, but owing to their being accustomed to getting a large supply of horses in their own home they were apt to use up their horses too quickly. Had they been less good horsemen they would have been better horsemasters, but the best Australians left nothing to be desired in this respect. The South African enlisted man was a bad horsemaster, and had none of that love for a horse which is so strong in an Australian. Scotsmen.—Very fair horsemasters, owing to their ignorance about horses and their willingness to do exactly on all occasions what they were told to do; also they seldom

had any ambition to gallop their horses, but preferred to go quietly.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

V.—MISCELLANEOUS.

I consider that one of the great causes of the success of the regiment was its *esprit de corps*, a direct result of its name, as the men felt they were representatives of a national regiment, and knew that if they did badly they could not show their faces at home again.

The success of the corps was also very largely due to the very excellent Regular officers who served under me and in command of the regiments in the field. Had these officers been less excellent and not had the welfare of the corps so much at heart, I feel sure that the regiment would not have occupied the position it did among South African Irregular corps. The officers I especially allude to are Lieut.-Colonel Leader (Carabineers), Lieut.-Colonel Duff (8th Hussars), both of whom commanded the 1st Regiment at different places; Major Murray (Black Watch), commanding 2nd Regiment, since killed; Major Blair (King's Own Scottish Borderers), second in command, 1st Scottish Horse; Major Jones (I.S.O.), commanding 2nd Regiment after Major Murray; Captain Lindsay (Seaforth Highlanders), adjutant 2nd Regiment, since killed; Captain Watson (Dublin Fusiliers), adjutant 1st Regiment, killed; and Captain Lord George S. Murray (Black Watch), adjutant 1st Regiment after Captain Watson, and Captain Sir W. Dick Cunyngham. The success of the regiment was owing to all the above, especially Lieut.-Colonel Leader, Major Murray, Major Blair, and Captain Lord George S. Murray.

The discipline the whole time was excellent, any crime that there was being, as a rule, confined to old soldiers. On the whole the discipline was more strict than in most Colonial regiments, and the men were required to behave the same as men in the regular service would have to. The only trouble I ever had with any of the men was with about eighty of the 2nd Regiment, who mutinied at Standerton. The men had considerable cause for complaint, and I anticipated insubordination. As the cause for the insubordination was a purely local one, and the men concerned were only a small detached body who had had a very hard time of it, I do not propose to enter into any further particulars, especially as the men found afterwards that they had been misled by certain discontented men, and all came back to duty again, with the exception of the ringleaders, who were punished.

VI.—DIFFERENT CLASSES OF MEN COMPARED.

I found that the best type of men were not what might be described as the high-class yeoman farmer, but men who had been accustomed to hard outdoor life, such as small farmers, farm hands (when sufficiently intelligent), keepers, stalkers, outdoor carpenters, plumbers, and masons, woodmen, etc. The men from the towns were just as good in spirit, but lacked the endurance and powers of vision of the above, and were considerably more difficult to manage when times were bad.

VII.—SPECIAL SCOUTS.

The special feature of the regimental organisation was two troops of scouts, fifty in all, attached to each regiment. These men were selected for their scouting powers. In the 2nd Regiment they were all Australians, and captured practically every prisoner taken with the column when under Colonel McKenzie. The scouts of the 1st Regiment were a mixture of selected Scotsmen and selected Afrikaners, and were the most useful body of men I had. They all drew extra duty pay while serving with the scouts, and a man was regularly reduced from or promoted to the scouts from the regiment. They did no guards or pickets, but had to be ready to turn out at any time. Although these men were under fire nearly every day, and used to wander great distances from the column, I had far fewer casualties among the scouts than among any other men in the regiment, owing to their being able to look after themselves. The great majority of the prisoners captured by the column under Colonel Kekewich was due to these 50 scouts. The regiment always found the ordinary scouting party required of a regiment, but the scouts were used over and above this, and at far greater distances. Attached to the scouts of each regiment were ten to twenty Zulus, whom we provided with Boer ponies, and they proved invaluable also. The only other regiment which I saw in South Africa adopt this principle a

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

the beginning of the war was the 5th Dragoon Guards, and they did it with great success. In my opinion it is impossible to expect every cavalryman to be an efficient spy, as opposed to the term scout, as usually understood in a drill term in a cavalry regiment. In the present Yeomanry I am raising in Scotland I am making one troop entirely of stalkers for this purpose. The scouts should be armed with one leather bandolier only, a carbine, and a pistol, if possible, so that they may be as mobile as possible, as they are never expected to offer serious resistance, and if they have to, it is bound to be at close ranges. Although the whole regiment was there, my scouts were mainly responsible for capturing Sarrel Albert's commando in February, 1902. Scouts should be changed the moment they show signs of losing nerve, which often happens owing to the risky nature of their employment.

VIII.—THIEVING IN HOSPITALS.

The only complaint I ever had to make outside my regiment, with the exception of the aforesaid complaint re paymaster, was the thieving of men's kits in hospital. In hardly any case, excepting from Rustenburg Hospital, do I remember a dead man's effects being returned to the regiment intact. It was impossible to obtain a conviction, and very great annoyance was caused among the men and their relations owing to this cause, and it often put me in a very difficult position, as it was impossible to explain to the men's relations exactly why the kit was not forthcoming, in the interests of the service. I feel sure some better system might be devised for hospitals. When I refer to kit I refer to pocket books, papers, and watches. As a rule a man's money was properly looked after. Of course, one cannot blame the hospitals for this entirely, as a very great number of men who were employed as hospital orderlies were men whom their regiments did not want to claim, or whom they sent to hospital if ordered to send orderlies, owing to their not being wanted in their regiments.

IX.—SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANISATION AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE FUTURE.

(1) Officers.—I am of opinion that commanding officers and seconds-in-command for Irregulars, Australians, Canadians, and Yeomanry should be Regular officers only (if possible, still serving and up to date). Ditto adjutants. I never heard of a good corps in South Africa that was not commanded by a Regular officer (really if not nominally) in the field, and which had not got a Regular adjutant. All these men should be picked for good all-round soldiering qualities, and should be picked as being good horsemen, a quality which all Irregulars admire. They should also be men with a very good command of temper and with a certain sense of humour, and ready to take things on their own shoulders, and they cannot err on the side of strictness in discipline in those points which are most essential for the well-being of a regiment. It is also necessary that every man should know he can approach his commanding officer at any time if he wishes to, but at the same time men must know that frivolous complaints will be suitably dealt with. It is fatal for these officers to be anything but strict with regard to the discipline and general behaviour of the other officers of the regiment. An excellent example of the result of good and bad officers was seen in the case of the 5th Victorians, whose commanding officer was inefficient, and the officers and non-commissioned officers generally inexperienced. The regiment came to grief. They had no Regulars. My Victorians came by the same ship and were the same class of men, in many cases brothers, and no men did better. Non-commissioned officers must be picked for sobriety, owing to the temptations in all Irregular corps.

(2) Future supply of officers.—The difficulty with the new Yeomanry in Scotland will be to get good officers without descending to the class of officers who are now often being chosen for the Volunteers, the best class to get being younger sons who cannot afford to go into the Army, or small lairds who have not got sufficient to occupy them at home. Both these classes will be available in case of war where the richer or more busy men cannot afford to go out; but it will be impossible for these former gentlemen to spare enough time from their business to go through the prescribed preliminary Yeomanry training with a cavalry regiment, as they can ill afford either the time or the expense. The only way to have efficient commanding officers, and trust them to train the officers to the best of their ability and to see that they do their regimental trainings, and experience proves that it is not a precise knowledge of drill

that is required but how to apply it with a general knowledge of system and common sense and how to command men. One of the best-drilled regiments I saw in South Africa, from a parade point of view, being, when it landed, one of the worst in the field. The best Colonial officers were the best local men who volunteered for the war, and not the men in the existing semi-permanent corps. This was especially the case with Australians, some of whose semi-permanent officers had lost all sense of initiation, but were full of drill in its worst sense.

(3) Replacing non-commissioned officers on active service.—The present establishment appears to be all that is required, but when non-commissioned officers are a long time in hospital or unfit for trek, regiments should be allowed to make acting non-commissioned officers in their places—the same to revert, if necessary, to their former rank on the return of the absent non-commissioned officers to duty. I would not recommend these acting non-commissioned officers to have, perhaps, full pay of their acting rank, but they could have some extra duty pay while thus acting, and the temporary rank while holding the appointment. An Irregular trooper can never understand why he should do a sergeant's work without a sergeant's emoluments, and it is very necessary to have a good establishment of non-commissioned officers on service.

(4) Employment of Regular non-commissioned officers.—I consider that there should be a Regular quartermaster, a Regular regimental sergeant-major, and a Regular regimental quartermaster-sergeant in every regiment, and that every squadron should have a Regular non-commissioned officer acting as squadron sergeant-major. It is not fair on Commanding Officers, or on the men, or in the interests of the Service, to have any of the above positions filled by Irregulars, both from points of economy, as they save much equipment and waste, and from the point of efficiency. In South Africa it was always a fight to get hold of a Regular non-commissioned officer or officer. A Regular farrier-major would also reduce the horse bill considerably. It might be possible to have a few extra non-commissioned officers in every infantry battalion and every cavalry regiment with acting rank and paid less than a full non-commissioned officer, who were under instruction in the duties of a non-commissioned officer, but required to perform the ordinary duties of their rank. This would not only provide a school for the regimental non-commissioned officers, but in the event of war would enable the War Office to call upon every regiment to provide a certain number of non-commissioned officers for Irregular corps, Yeomanry, and Volunteers.

(5) Veterinary Officers.—Although it has been stated by many authorities that veterinary officers are no use in the field, no brigade should be without one, in my estimation, especially in a country like South Africa, where there are so many poisoned grasses and special diseases, which, if treated immediately in the proper way, can often be cured. I am also of opinion that a good non-commissioned officer, under the veterinary surgeon, in addition to the farrier-major, whose time is fully taken up looking after the shoeing, is very desirable for the purpose of looking after mobile sick lines for slight cases with the regiment. This was not authorised in the South African establishment. In fact, in one regiment I had to return this non-commissioned officer as a trumpeter-sergeant, and in the other as a hospital-sergeant, both of which were unnecessary, and were done without a trooper being sufficient for these appointments.

(6) Farriers and Signallers.—With regard to farriers, I found it was better to work them regimentally directly under the farrier-major, and they messed together, and worked almost like a troop. I tried to prevent them as much as possible from going into the firing line and getting injured, as their services were too valuable, and the work was very much better done when used regimentally, as it often happens that the shoeing smiths in one squadron might get reduced in numbers, while a weak squadron might have its full complement of farriers. In this way each man got his fair turn of work, and, if a squadron or troop went on detachment, a proper proportion of farriers went with it.

The signallers were worked in the same way, and I feel sure that all signallers should be regimental, and only sent out with units when required.

I consider that more facilities should be given Yeomanry and Volunteers to learn signalling.

X.—EQUIPMENT.

With regard to equipment, the web bandoliers served out in South Africa were found useless, and were returned to store as they worked loose and lost the ammunition. Two shoulder bandoliers of leather, and sometimes a third round the waist, are quite sufficient for mounted troops if extra ammunition was carried on pack mules. For Yeomanry or mounted infantry, I consider bayonets essential, especially for night attacks, either offensively or defensively. A proper system of carrying the rifle still remains to be devised. It is impossible to expect men to carry a heavy rifle all day in one hand, and shoot properly at the end of it. No one who has tried to carry a magazine rifle on his back ever wants to carry one again. The small buckets for the stock of the rifle worked fairly well, so long as the man was forbidden to hold the rifle in his hand, and swung it on his arm with a short arm loop attached to the muzzle, otherwise, if he used it as a walking stick to support himself in the saddle it gave a sore back, and no inefficient horsemen, such as the Yeomanry are, can be expected to ride properly and hold a rifle in their hands at the same time. If the rifle were a little shorter, a good idea would appear to be an invention of Lieut.-Col. Paterson, of the Imperial Yeomanry, for hanging it on the body, but I never saw it practically tried. I am quite certain that Regular cavalry should stick to their swords, in addition to their rifle, and Australians could do well with a sword though untrained. During warm weather, a good jersey and a waterproof, or "a British warm coat" and a waterproof are found useful for the men, and slightly lighter than a greatcoat, but a good khaki greatcoat would be of more general use. Woollen gloves served out in cold weather would be most useful, but otherwise the clothing of the army was most complete. The greatcoat should not be rolled and fastened to the saddle in the usual cavalry manner, which not only fills up the saddle, but is inconvenient, gives a sore wither, and is impossible to roll up properly when wet, and never gets a chance to dry. I found the best way was to turn the sleeves inside out, fold the coat over, and lay it across the back of the saddle, flapping loose, with only one strap in the centre. This was easier for the horse, easier for the man, and better for the coat, and was adopted practically by most regiments, and the eye would very soon get accustomed to it at home for parade purposes. The cavalry pattern saddle was, without doubt, the best for the horses, but is capable of being lightened and improved, the burrs in front of the side bars are quite unnecessary, and interfere with the play of the shoulder. The enormous wallets now in use were never used in South Africa towards the end of the war. Very much reduced wallets fastened in the same way might be used, just large enough to hold tobacco and a pair of socks for the men, but hardly anything else is required. Should a man carry anything else, it should be carried in his haversack or pocket. A shirt can always be carried in the pocket of his great coat. If he is going light, he requires no more than this. If he is going with transport, his spare pair of boots and a grooming brush can be carried rolled up in his blankets in the waggon. Mess tins were found preferable to billies, and very soon lost their shine when cooked in, but it is a good plan to paint the outside of them with khaki paint to start with. Nosebags are most necessary, and, if made of stronger material, would last longer, but are always so badly looked after that this is hardly worth doing. One set of shoes per section or group is quite sufficient, and can be carried divided among the men, the remaining shoes of the regiment being carried by the farrier-major's cart. The enamel water bottles usually served out are excellent, but the tin ones served out when these ran short in South Africa were no use at all. The stirrups generally served out were much too small to take the men's ammunition boot, many accidents occurring from this cause. The boots served out to the men were very much too heavy, and were conducive to bad riding, as the men practically lost all sensation in their feet, and were slow to get on and off. Haversacks should be of stronger material. Corn Bags. —In the Egyptian Army we used to carry small corn bags, which held two or three good feeds. Corn bags were never used in South Africa, and the ones of English pattern are too big and clumsy, but I feel sure that the Egyptian Army's small cornbag, neatly rolled in front of the saddle, if the great coat is carried, or at the back if it is not carried, would help the mobility of a force immensely, and the weight grows lighter on the horse as it eats its meal. The men's spurs were

much too big and sharp for mounted infantry. Spurs are necessary for tired horses, but the rowels might be less severe, and very short necks should have been provided on the spurs for all mounted men. Also a leather strapping on seats, as well as inside knees, of men's breeches would be a good thing, and probably eventually save money. Two Maxim guns, and not one, should be attached to each cavalry regiment, if the regiment is strong enough and trustworthy enough not to have them captured. Two are better than one, as they can support each other if worked apart. On all occasions tripod mounting should be carried on pack saddles, in addition to wheel mounting—the tripod not being carried on the gun carriage, but on a horse, the gun, as a rule, being carried on wheels, with a spare horse carrying the tripod mounting handy, so that in case it sticks, or rough ground is encountered, it can be quickly placed on the pack saddle. This is especially necessary, and ought to be a regulation, if there is any shell fire. In this case, no wheeled Maxim can stand up against shell fire, but a tripod Maxim can be hidden and used to great effect. The gun carriage, in this case, can be used to great advantage as a dummy to take in the enemy and draw their fire, as a tripod Maxim, when carefully worked is quite invisible. I was in charge of Maxim guns during the relief of Ladysmith, and in that country, and under that fire, wheeled Maxims could not be used, but in the latter part of the war wheeled transport was preferable. Pom-poms, I consider, are too expensive and too valuable to be attached actually to regiments, but should be worked by gunners. They are very useful with mounted troops. These remarks refer, of course, to irregular corps. A battery of "Pom-pom," split up among the different regiments of a regular cavalry brigade, each section being trained in peace time with the regiment to which it will be attached in war, so as to know the various cavalry signals and customs of the regiment would be useful. Water Carts. —I am certain that a fruitful source of enteric was to be found in the water carts, which were never really properly cleaned, and I feel sure that an oil or other stove could be arranged underneath, without much extra weight, and, if filled in the morning, and fire lit during the march, the water could be boiled, and would be cooled by evening. This would sterilise the water, keep the inside of the cart pure, prevent the men from looting the water en route, and would help to have teas, etc., ready at the end of the march. At all events, even if not regularly boiled through lack of fuel, it would ensure the cart being properly disinfected every two or three days.

XI.—TRANSPORT.

I consider that a cart of the capacity of a Scotcl cart should be given every regiment to carry the veterinary surgeon's equipment, extra shoes, farriers' tools, etc., i.e., the heavier ones. Field forges should not be carried on the march with the first line of baggage, but are invaluable if carried with the main transport. Great mobility would be obtained if each troop was given a small four-wheeled cart of light build which would hold the kits of five-and-twenty men; thus each squadron would be supplied with four of these instead of two larger wagons. Two horses or six mules would pull these smaller wagons. It very often happened that a troop had to be sent away to some out-lying post just after coming in off trek, or even sent as a detached post for several days. They always had to go without transport as the squadron had to retain the wagons. The carts, being much lighter than the squadron wagons, could be drawn by spare troop horses with sore backs, etc., and would assist in making the spare horses in a squadron of use. These wagons should, however, be under the control of the colonel of the regiment, who would be responsible that they were not overloaded, otherwise the usual friction with the transport officers would occur. A light four-wheeled trolley with low rave boards would be the best type of vehicle.

XII.—TENTS.

Men infinitely preferred to make shelters of their spare blankets to sleeping crowded in a tent. If tents are to be issued on active service, green bivouacs, such as the Natal Police use, are easier carried, preferred by the men (if not more than two are put into one bivouac), and are much less of a mark for the enemy; also in the event of a surprise it takes a large force of an enemy to stop the men getting out owing to their number and distribution.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.
19 Mar. 1903.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

XIII.—RATIONS.

If a tinned ration of bread could be carried, or a softer biscuit, it would save many men going sick from indigestion or want of teeth. Emergency rations were never used except at the beginning of the war, as the men could never be got not to use them as soon as served out. Very great inconvenience was caused by mounted men being served out with enormous 7lb. tins of bully beef instead of with the ordinary 1lb. tin. The result was that the men threw them away rather than carry them, thus getting low in condition through insufficient food. The cheese and bacon rations were much appreciated by the men, and also the jam ration, which, however, was rather large, as the men ceased to appreciate it and used to give it away to the Kaffirs; also it went bad in about 8 hours after being opened. Brawn, mutton, and beef were always appreciated, especially mutton. Maconochie's rations were good as a change, but if given too frequently were too heavy for the men with weakened digestion, and were apt to go bad. The Maconochies issued in South Africa were much richer and more sickly than those issued in Egypt in the last Soudan war. As a luxury, no ration was more appreciated by the men than the chocolate ration which was served in lieu of coffee but it would have been better in lieu of tea, which was not so much appreciated by the men as coffee. This refers especially to irregulars, who were not accustomed to the "peculiarities" of ration tea.

XIV.—REGIMENTAL PAYMASTERS, ETC.

I consider that all mounted Irregular corps, and Yeomanry, Colonial corps, etc., should be paid on service at the same rates, as it causes an enormous amount of trouble when all are paid at different rates as mine were, and it also causes grumbling. Special bounties by Colonies to their officers should not be encouraged. Further, I consider the system of regimental paymasters a sound one, and the only workable one on service, and also that it is a *sine qua non* that all Irregular corps should have a trained army pay sergeant attached—even if only a clerk with temporary rank. A proper system for staff at headquarters of the Army in the field, such as Assistant Adjutant-General, Colonial forces, etc., should be formed before the war. This officer should have sufficient staff to allow him to go and visit Colonial corps in the field from time to time. He should be a senior man with readiness to act on his own responsibility, as he often has to give decisions off-hand, and he should be an officer who can leave well alone and allow those under him a pretty free hand if doing well—good address is everything with Colonials, and they are always grateful for help. A fixed establishment, rates of pay, and all Standing Orders and regulations, as simple as possible, should be prepared and ready to issue in the event of war.

XV.—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Recruiting in South Africa.—If this is ever necessary again, more care should be exercised in selecting recruits. Irregular recruiting officers and non-commissioned officers are often apt to be unscrupulous in recruiting men. It is best to let regiments recruit the men, as they work better for their own corps and get more men, but all men should have to pass a Regular officer and a Regular medical officer at a central bureau. The medical examination should be more strict, and good teeth (if biscuits are used) are absolutely necessary. All men who are discharged with ignominy should be notified to this office, or who are invalided out, or drawing pension, so as to prevent re-enlistment.

I consider Australians should be armed with swords as well as rifles, as, being such fine horsemen, opportunities may occur in European and native warfare where shock tactics, though undisciplined, would be very useful, even by untrained swordsmen.

I also consider that six months is too short a period for which to enlist Colonial troops, as, just as they are beginning to learn their work their time is up, and a man is always more trek-weary and home sick at the end of his six months than at any other time of his service. It is also expensive.

It is a great mistake also to enlist an inferior class of men, as they lead to disaster and they stop good men from joining. It is better to be weak for a little time and take more trouble in getting recruits, unless, perhaps, as was the case in South Africa, it was necessary to enlist as many people at the coast as possible for

political reasons, which was, I presume, the only reasons why some of the men were enlisted.

Another point I did not lay sufficient stress on was the intemperance of the average Colonial officer. Commanding officers cannot be too strict with regard to this point, as it often leads to trouble.

The great thing to teach Yeomanry is to ride, shoot, and scout, and nothing else should be taught. People are apt to be lulled into false security by the success of the Yeomanry in South Africa. Against European forces the second lot of Yeomanry that went to South Africa would have been, not only useless, but a source of danger. The first lot, I believe, were good, but I never saw them.

The men of Lovat's Scouts and the Scottish Horse were infinitely superior as fighting men to the second lot of Yeomanry, but even when as efficient as they were at the end of the war they would have to be very cautiously used if there was much trained cavalry opposing them. Further, it must be remembered that a great many men enlisted as they wished to emigrate and wanted to have a look at the country first, so they must not be counted on too much to go abroad another time, but for home defence they would be invaluable. If required for home defence, care should be taken not to drain the country of suitable horses as was done in the late war, as, in the case of invasion, the horse question would be an acute one.

My ambition is to raise a Scottish Horse Volunteer Corps in Canada and Australia, under local conditions purely. Before I left the Transvaal I started one there from among my old men and others, and there are over 300 in it now. In the event of war, all these would amalgamate, and 4,000 men would be provided at once, taking

1,000 from Scotland,
1,000 from Canada,
1,000 from Australia,
1,000 from South Africa,

and kept up by their respective Colonies.

SERVICES OF THE REGIMENT.

First regiment served under command of Lord Tullibardine in Colonel Flint's column in the Western Transvaal, afterwards with Colonel Shekleton's column near Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom. Later, under command of Major Blair, King's Own Scottish Borderers, under another brigadier. At this period the officers and men did not hit it off with the brigadier, and did not play up, the only fight being at Slipstein Kopjes, where my cyclists were left by accident, resulting in the capture of several of them. Casualties, two killed, one wounded, two officers captured and five men. But this General did not stay long, and was followed by General Dixon. The regiment then rapidly improved in morale, and Lieut.-Colonel Duff took command. The principal fight it was engaged in at this time was that at Vlaktefontein on May 29th, 1901, when the casualties were one man killed and one officer and four men wounded. The regiment, however, was hardly engaged, the enemy's attack being on the Imperial Yeomanry and infantry, the Scottish Horse only coming up late in the day from a raid to the east, and fortunately assisting the infantry to retrieve the day. When Colonel Dixon was appointed to another command Colonel Kekewich took over the column. Under this officer's magnificent leading the column then became one of the most useful in the country, being only equalled by Colonel Benson's for numbers of prisoners taken. The regiment improved rapidly. The first serious fight was when Delarey surprised the camp at Moedwill on September 30th, 1901. The Scottish Horse casualties were three officers and 17 men killed, 12 officers and 43 men wounded. The regiment, owing to the greater part being away on command, were very weak that night, and behaved splendidly.

Soon after this Lieut.-Colonel Leader (Carabineers) took over the command from Lieut.-Colonel Duff, who took over his own regiment, the 8th Hussars. To Colonel Leader is due the high state of efficiency of the regiment at the end of the war. The principal actions under him were: Gruisfontein, on February 5th, 1902, when the whole of Sarral Albert's commando was captured, our casualties being two officers wounded and six men. The next big fight was at Rooival, on April 11th, 1902, when one man was killed and eight wounded. So far as I recollect, 54 Boers were killed, and a great many captured. On this occasion the Scottish Horse recaptured the remainder of the guns taken from Lord

Methuen, after a gallop of over 20 miles. They also were responsible for the capture of the rest of the guns a few days earlier.

Practically all the prisoners captured by Colonel Kekewich's column, with the exception of Wolmaran's commando of about 40 men, were captured solely by the Scottish Horse, the chief credit for the capture of the above commando being due to the King's Own Scottish Borderers, though the Scottish Horse were present.

The second regiment started in Colonel Benson's column in the Eastern Transvaal under Major Murray, Black Watch, and thanks to Colonel Benson's good guidance, speedily became one of the best corps in the country, and never degenerated, even after his death. Their first serious skirmish was at Roodekrantz, on April 30th, 1901, when one man was killed, four officers and one man wounded. Their next at Elands Hoek when three men were killed and nine men wounded. The next fight was the big one at Brakenlaagte, when Colonel Benson and Major Murray were both killed. The men did magnificently trying to save the guns. Only 96 were engaged at this point, and they stuck it

out until only six were left unhit or prisoners. Their casualties were five officers and 28 men killed, four officers and 36 men wounded; total, 73 killed and wounded out of 96 engaged, all the officers engaged being hit. I do not think I have ever heard of better or more determined fighting, and though we lost the guns the camp was saved by the delay, and the men really did cover themselves with glory.

I was sent to reform the column pending Colonel McKenzie's arrival to succeed Colonel Benson. The men felt the want of Colonel Benson's guiding hand much, and the staff work until nearly the end of the war became very bad, and the men had rather an uncomfortable time of it, which led to much grumbling after the way they had been looked after—I may say almost spoilt—by Colonel Benson.

As with Colonel Kekewich, the men during all this time were responsible for nearly all the captures made by this column.

The prisoners taken by the Boers during all this period in both regiments were only six officers and 26 men, all of whom were returned to the column.

Major The Marquis of Tullibardine, M.V.O., D.S.O. 19 Mar. 1903.

SUMMARY giving particulars of Establishment, Numbers, Casualties, &c., of SCOTTISH HORSE.

OFFICERS.

Total establishment allowed with regiment	91	Not including two quartermasters with honorary commissions.
Total number of officers who served with the Corps.	157	-----
Total number of officers serving at end of war	107	This includes 15 officers promoted into Regular Regiments, resuming Regular appointments or invalided.
Total number of officers belonging to Regular Army.	22	These were not all serving at one time with the Scottish Horse, and include surgeons, veterinary officers, riding master.
Total number of officers appointed as Imperial Yeomanry at home.	11	This includes one surgeon and one veterinary officer.
Total number of officers promoted through ranks of Scottish Horse.	46	-----
Total number of officers (Irregulars) from outside sources.	78	This includes one civil surgeon.
Total number of officers whose services were dispensed with.	11	-----

CASUALTIES.

Total number of officers killed	- - - - -	11
" " " died of disease	- - - - -	3
" " " wounded	- - - - -	32
" " " invalided	- - - - -	7

NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN..

* (A.) Total number of non-commissioned officers and men enlisted in Great Britain as Imperial Yeomanry	- - - - -	1,250
+ (B.) Total number of non-commissioned officers and men enlisted in South Africa	- - - - -	1,458
‡ (C.) Total number of non-commissioned officers and men enlisted in Australia	- - - - -	544
		<u>3,252</u>

N.B.—* (A.) Of these 1,125 were Scots; 97 English; two Welsh; 15 Irish; 11 Colonials. Their average height was about 5 feet 7½ inches. Their average age was about 23 years.

+ (B.) This is about 100 or more below the actual number, but certain books are not available

‡ (C.) This does not include many Australians enlisted under heading (B.)

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

CASUALTIES

Total number of non-commissioned officers and men killed or died of wounds	60
Total number of non-commissioned officers and men died of disease (including three drowned)	45
Total number of non-commissioned officers and men wounded	173
	278

The regiment was at its strongest in February 1902, when its strength was 1,843 officers, non-commissioned officers and men actually serving in South Africa, and not on the high seas or at home.

COPY of LETTER from the late COLONEL BENSON (commanding No. 3 Column, Eastern Transvaal)
to Lord TULLIBARDINE (commanding SCOTTISH HORSE).

Machadodorp, 7-6-'01.

My Dear Tullibardine,—I must send you a few lines to say how well the Scottish Horse are doing. They have picked up the job very quickly indeed, and now I defy any troops to scout better. Perhaps that may sound to be saying too much, but they certainly are doing remarkably well. Both horses and men are excellent, and their organisation is one to be copied. The system of attached natives under a chief is invaluable when one has to dig out cattle and horses from kloofs perhaps 2,000ft. deep, as we have had repeatedly to do. Your fellows are as keen as ever, and never seem to mind

how long the day is. Often they have been out from 6.30 a.m. till 8 or 9 p.m., all because they *would* make sure of the cattle and wagons they captured. Last trek we only had small parties of Boers to deal with, but they always tried to defend their cattle. We got 29 prisoners and 14 surrenders, 1,700 cattle, 6,000 sheep, 95 wagons, 25 carts, 44 rifles, 300 horses, etc. I would like a turn on the open after some of the big people, but fear it is not to be at present. The new squadron looks first-rate, and Murray is very pleased with it.

(Signed) G. E. BENSON.

REPORT by His Grace the Duke of ATHOLL, K.T., to the Marquis of TULLIBARDINE, D.S.O., *re* raising men in
SCOTLAND for the SCOTTISH HORSE.

About the new year of 1901 Lord Tullibardine applied to the Highland Society of London to endeavour to send out two or three hundred men from home to the Scottish Horse, which regiment he was then raising. A deputation of the society accordingly waited on the War Office authorities, and were informed that the only way it could be managed would be for the men to be raised as Imperial Yeomanry and deducted from the number just authorised by Parliament. The Highland Society immediately advertised for recruits in the Scots newspapers, but as Edinburgh was the only Imperial Yeomanry recruiting station in Scotland, and there was no officer to look after the interests of the Scottish Horse, matters did not progress much. About the middle of February the Duke of Atholl, happening to go to London, communicated with certain members of the Highland Society to ascertain what was being done, and, finding no one knew much, went down himself to Aldershot, where a considerable number of Scottish Horse recruits were known to be, but could learn nothing about them from anyone. The Duke next obtained authority from Lord Raglan to return to Aldershot and see the Officer Commanding Imperial Yeomanry, and to report the result. He found everything in the greatest confusion—thousands of recruits spread over three miles of camp and no adequate staff to cope with the work. A few days later General Mackinnon was sent down to take over the command of the Imperial Yeomanry. The Duke remained in London, and with difficulty got three subalterns appointed to the Scottish Horse, and sent them to Aldershot to hunt up their men, but by this time upwards of 70 had sailed with other corps, and that all managed to join their regiment eventually, with the exception of 14, says a great deal for the men. During March the first two squadrons sailed, but the third was

detained until April owing to an outbreak of scarlet fever. As none of the men who sailed before March were expected to join the regiment, recruiting was continued in order to make good their loss, which accounts for the number taken above the 300 authorised. Early in May Lord Tullibardine asked the Duke to apply to raise two squadrons in Scotland, to take the place of time-expired Australians, enlisted for six months only. The War Office authorities at once gave permission, and were most obliging in meeting the Duke's views. The plan arranged was as follows:—Five recruiting stations were opened to the corps—Inverness, Aberdeen, Perth, Stirling, and Edinburgh—the recruits to be mobilised in Edinburgh Castle, with a Militia captain in command, the Duke overlooking the whole. Every possible assistance was given by the Headquarter Staff and by all the recruiting stations, both then and to the close of the war. The two squadrons sailed before the end of June. In November, to make up for the losses the regiment offered at Moedwill and Brakenlaagte, the Duke again received permission to raise three squadrons, to which on application a fourth was added afterwards. Two sailed before the end of the year, and the last two early in January. On this occasion Glasgow was opened as a recruiting station in addition. At this time all extra recruiting was stopped to permit of the raising of Fincastle's Horse, but as the Duke had a number of applications on hand he received a promise of another squadron when the above corps was completed. Leave to commence was not obtained until the middle of April, when the squadron was completed in nine days, and sailed on May 17th. For the purposes of raising the 10th Squadron Ayr was substituted for Stirling, which had not proved a very successful recruiting depot.

PARTICULARS regarding Men sent out from Home to join the SCOTTISH HORSE in South Africa
in 1901 and 1902.

1901 : January to April	Mobilised at Aldershot	404 men.
	Deduct casualties—	
	Apprehended as an army deserter	1
	Discharged as bad characters	2
	Transferred to Imperial Yeomanry	1
	Left sick at Aldershot	3
		7
	Sailed	397

*Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.
19 Mar. 1903.*

February and March	-	Ships unknown	-	-	-	-	-	20	
16 February	-	"Dunolly Castle"	-	-	-	-	-	3	
16 February	-	"Tantallon Castle"	-	-	-	-	-	11	
23 February	-	"Gaul"	-	-	-	-	-	1	
25 February	-	"Orotava"	-	-	-	-	-	6	
1 March	-	"Tagus"	-	-	-	-	-	31	
9 March	-	"Briton"	-	-	-	-	-	111	Lieut. David Robertson.
16 March	-	"Gascon"	-	-	-	-	-	110	" Duncan Robertson.
6 April	-	"Norman"	-	-	-	-	-	104	" Alex. Wardrop.
									" L. Jones.
								397 men and four officers.	
		Deduct men lost amongst the Imperial Yeomanry regiments on way out.						14	
								383	
Joined regiment - - - - - 4 officers, 383 men.									

Nationalities of the Non-Commissioned Officer's and men from Aldershot :—309 Scots, 76 English, 1 Welsh, 10 Irish, 8 Colonials.

OFFICERS AND MEN SENT OUT FROM EDINBURGH.

1901 :					
25 June	-	"Oceana"	-	-	Surgeon-Captain W. S. Kidd.
26 June	-	"Assaye"	-	-	Lieutenant R. H. Dick-Cunyngham.
				224 men (including the three sick men left at Aldershot in April).	Lieutenant W. Loring.
					Lieutenant N. C. G. Cameron.
					Lieutenant H. C. Erskine Flower.
					Surgeon-Lieutenant A. Robertson (attached).
10 August	-	"Antillian"	-	-	
30 November	-	"Tintagel Castle"	-	-	Lieutenant J. Campbell.
2 December	-	"Manchester Merchant"	-	-	
14 December	-	"Englishman"	-	-	*Lieutenant J. Stuart-Wortley.
1902 :					
11 January	-	"Raglan Castle"	-	-	*Major A. Blair.
				244 men	Captain R. Burgoyne.
				*1 man (Major's servant)	*Captain P. N. Field.
					Lieutenant Heilbron (Mounted Infantry).
					*Lieutenant D. Logan.
					Lieutenant S. H. Lewis.
					*Lieutenant T. McLetchie.
13 February	-	"Dilwara"	-	-	
15 February	-	"Cawdor Castle"	-	-	
		"Rosslyn Castle"	-	-	
8 March	-	"Arundel Castle"	-	-	
12 April	-	"Canada"	-	-	Veterinary Captain G. Henderson.
17 May	-	"Lismore Castle"	-	-	*Lieutenant D. Stewart.
				115 men	
Total number of men mobilised in Edinburgh					831
Deduct,—Deserted					2
Claimed as under age					1
Discharged, unsuitable					3
,, medically unfit					8
					14
Sailed					817
Add,—Sick from Aldershot					3
					820 men and 11 officers.

Six officers, one man, marked * already belonging to regiment, not counted.

SCOTTISH HORSE.

Total number raised in Edinburgh - - - - - 831 men.

Nationality—805 Scots, 18 English, 2 Welsh, 5 Irish, 3 Colonials.

Grand total Aldershot and Edinburgh (15 officers, 1,235 men) - - - 1,250 men.

Nationalities—1,125 Scots, 97 English, 2 Welsh, 15 Irish, 11 Colonials.

The Scotsmen were natives of Counties as follows :—

Orkney and Shetland	-	2	Kincardine	-	-	12	Haddington	-	-	18
Caithness	-	9	Forfar	-	-	82	Peebles	-	-	5
Sutherland	-	11	Kinross	-	-	2	Selkirk	-	-	11
Cromarty	-	1	Fife	-	-	36	Dumfries	-	-	13
Ross	-	38	Clackmannan	-	-	10	Berwick	-	-	11
Inverness	-	56	Stirling	-	-	38	Roxburgh	-	-	18
Argyll	-	13	Dumbarton	-	-	9	Bute	-	-	4
Nairn	-	9	Renfrew	-	-	29	Ayr	-	-	25
Moray	-	45	Lanark	-	-	116	Kirkcudbright	-	-	8
Banff	-	24	Linlithgow	-	-	6	Wigton	-	-	2
Aberdeen	-	111	Mid-Lothian	-	-	232	Galloway	-	-	1
Perth	-	118								

The men were of good physique, anxious to learn, and extremely well-behaved.

Roughly I should say each squadron averaged from 5 feet 7 inches to 5 feet 7½ inches in height, and 22 to 23 years average age.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

20282. Are there any points in the précis to which you would like to draw our attention, in addition to your statement?—On page 3 of the report, I mention, under special conditions, that I asked that the men from home should be directly under me, and not under the Yeomanry authorities in South Africa, because I was already commanding a large number of Irregulars, and was under the Assistant Adjutant General Colonial forces, and, therefore, it was impossible for me to be under two masters, and Lord Kitchener put them directly under me, so that I am responsible for any good or evil that they did, and if anything went wrong it was my fault, so far as regards their discipline or administration.

20283. But you consider that their discipline was good?—I think they were the best Irregular corps, as far as discipline went, because, of course, they were home men.

20284. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you think they would have been got upon any condition, except that they should serve under you there? Was that the main condition?—I wired home for them, and, of course, my father's influence helped a great deal, and to the Highlanders it certainly made a great difference, and they were among the best men I had.

20285. (*Chairman.*) Did you get a large proportion of Highlanders?—It is shown exactly in the Duke of Atholl's report where every man came from. I got most men from Edinburgh, but I got a great many from Aberdeen, and they were as good as any men I had; also very good men from Perth, and from Inverness-shire I got some very good ones. Of ones that were very good from the south, there were the Lanarkshire men; the men from Midlothian and Glasgow knew a little too much about strikes and that sort of thing, and they were a little more difficult to manage, but they did very well as far as fighting went.

20286. Do these reports show the class of men—what the men had been?—No, but I can give that if it is required: I can send in the employment of each man before he enlisted.

20287. Only generally?—The outside men were the best men I had; that is to say, outdoor carpenters, plumbers, joiners, blacksmiths, farmers, keepers, and farm hands, if they were intelligent enough; they were harder, and they could stick it out longer.

20288. Did you get a large proportion of them?—Yes, a very large proportion from the country; those men I got from what I may call the "country counties" were particularly good.

20289. The best men were the country men?—Yes, as a class.

20290. (*Sir John Jackson.*) They had better physique, of course?—The Glasgow men won the tug-of-war; there were a great many West Coast Highlanders amongst them. The Aberdeenshire men had the best physique from a general point of view.

20291-2. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) As regards intelligence, were the Aberdeenshire men good?—Very good.

20293. (*Chairman.*) What is the next point you would like to draw attention to?—I got some very good men from Australia. Lord Kitchener gave me leave to raise them, and I sent a wire to the Highland Societies in Melbourne, and they were instrumental in getting me 300 men.

20294. All Scotchmen?—No, I should think about half Scotch, or of Scotch descent; a good many of them were descendants of people who had emigrated from my part of the world, and they were a particularly good lot, and of very good physique.

20295. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) From what part of Australia did they come?—From Victoria, the first lot.

20296. And afterwards?—Afterwards they were mostly from West Australia, but they were supposed to be from anywhere later. The reason was that the first time the Australian Government were quite ready to send them out, but afterwards, when the other corps saw that I had got the men in that way, they all tried to get them by all sorts of means from Australia, and the Australian Government had to put its foot down. They found too many men were going out of the country, I think, and so all recruiting, except for Australian contingents, was stopped. Mine were outside the Regular Australian contingents.

20297. You did not get any from Queensland or New South Wales?—I got a few later, but not in any large

quantities. I arranged with Lord Kitchener, and permission was given for men who had already served in the war to come out, and, as I had 300 men waiting, who had nearly all served in the war previously, I got them under that heading the last time, and this, of course, did not make other Irregular corps jealous, or think that I was getting undue favour as they were coming out anyway.

20298. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) About what was the average age of the men you got?—23, of the men from home.

20299. And from Australia?—I should think, much about the same; some of the Australian men were a good deal older; they ran to all ages, and some were much older men.

20300. Did the older men do the work as well?—As far as concerns the Australians, better; they were a rather hard bitten type of men.

20301. In war, for an Irregular soldier, what age would you recommend—what is the best fighting age?—Of my Scotchmen, the average age was about 23, and no one could have done better, but for scouts the older men were better. The deerstalker's equivalent in Australia would be the old bush hand.

20302. About 30?—Yes, and sometimes much older; we never asked them what their age was, as a rule.

20303. They bore the physical strain of the war all right?—Perfectly; the young ones were the ones who bore it least well.

20304. What ages do you mean?—21 and under. Of the men from home, the average age was 23, and the average height about 5ft. 7½in. The South African men were of very much inferior physique in every way, but it is hardly fair to call them all South Africans, because the best of the South Africans were fighting against us, and these were men out of ships from New Orleans and all sorts of places, and it is not really fair to call them South Africans.

20305. (*Chairman.*) You did not succeed in getting Canadians?—No.

20306. You say that you had an arrangement about them?—Before I got anybody from Australia, I used to write out privately, because it was no use going to Lord Kitchener and saying I could get the men if I was not certain that I could, and I used, practically, to have everything ready in an unofficial manner.

20307. And the Canadians arrived too late?—I could have got the Canadians. I had asked several influential people out there, who were ready to send me men, but the Canadian Government, when I applied for them, said they preferred to send their own contingent, which, of course, was reasonable, and, unfortunately, the delay which occurred resulted in their being rather late for the war but they were not under me.

20308. The contingent you mention in your statement was not a contingent sent to you?—No, it was not; it was purely a Canadian contingent.

20309. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Had you any New Zealanders?—Yes, very good men.

20310. (*Chairman.*) I do not quite understand what you say here about the Volunteer Service Company men; the terms, you say, did not work?—That would not refer to any future occasion; but in the Volunteers the company was attached to each regiment, and they were very good men. When these men had served a year, they were entitled to go home, but if I enlisted them I had to enlist them as South Africans, because you could only enlist Yeomanry at home, and, of course, the Yeomanry conditions of enlistment were much better. The Yeomanry were entitled to the voyage home on full pay and an extra £5 grant, but these men were, of course, not entitled to the extra grant or to the voyage pay home. At the time if I could have offered these men Yeomanry terms they would have joined on, which would have been a good thing, as they were the best men from a Mounted Infantry point of view that I saw out there. As it was, afraid of losing their voyage pay, they went home with the intention of enlisting at home in the Imperial Yeomanry, and coming out again, but naturally when they got home many changed their minds, and did not re-enlist.

20311. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Good shots?—Yes, very good—the first Volunteer Service Company men. The second Volunteer Service Company were not up to the class of the first ones. Of course, they were picked men at the beginning.

20312. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was that regulation altered ultimately?—No.

20313. Did they get their voyage pay home?—No, they got their free voyage after strong representation, but no pay. They were the only men on the ship who were not paid coming home. It was quite according to Regulations, and they joined under those conditions, which were explained to them.

20314. But there was no relaxation of that condition?—No, not as far as pay is concerned.

20315. (Sir Frederick Darley.) How were the Australians brought there? Had they to pay their own way out?—No, the ones I enlisted in Australia were brought out very much in the same way as the Yeomanry. They were paid from the day they left Australia on a Government transport—that is to say, the ones actually enlisted for the Scottish Horse in Australia—what I might call the genuine draft that came—but any odd men I picked up, of course, were taken as South African Colonials.

20316. My impression is that the New South Wales and Queensland Governments did not favour the enlisting?—No, they did not—in fact, to put it mildly, we had to dodge to get the men.

20317. (Chairman.) What is the next point?—I have described my dépôt convalescent camp—it is in the report. I had a camp of instruction for men from home for riding in Johannesburg, because I asked the Duke of Atholl to send me men who could not ride, as I found in the Highlands you got a better class. I asked for men who could shoot. I could not teach them both, of course, in the time allowed, but I found I could teach them enough riding in the time.

20318. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) How long was that?—From three to six weeks. I had a very strict riding master, and they were hustled much more than the men in a Regular regiment would be under the circumstances, but it was to their own interests to learn to ride, first of all as they were very keen to go on trek at that time, and, secondly, as it was not very comfortable in the camp, so that it was to their interest to learn as quickly as they could.

20319. (Chairman.) And they did?—Yes, they learned quite well enough. They would never have done at all to take on civilised cavalry, as they would not have been quick enough; but a very good example of how well they did was at Rooivaal, when the column was suddenly rushed by a considerable number of the Boers—about 2,000, I think—and they went right through them.

20320. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) How many of your men were there?—Upwards of 700, and I think there were about 2,000 Boers on that occasion. It was the whole lot of the Boers in the Western Transvaal, and my men did not realise what they were until they heard from the next column, which happened to have come up that day under Colonel von Donop. Grenfell, who was in charge of the column in which my men were, did not know anything about it, but Colonel Leader was in front, and had just time to tell the men to fall off their horses, and they with the South African Constabulary, who were with them—about 80 of them—let go their horses, and simply lay down, and as the majority of my men were new men it was a very critical performance. They killed 54 Boers, and I think we captured about 200 and got Lord Methuen's guns back. The Boers were within 30 yards of them before they knew they were Boers really. They were within 30 yards of the South African Constabulary and within 75 yards of mine. It was their first fight, and they did extremely well, which shows the value of getting a good class of men, who do not get excited. I think if I had had Australians on that occasion they might have got too excited; but a Scotsman will do exactly as he is told.

20321. (Chairman.) The object was to dismount?—Yes, to dismount and keep quiet, and let them have it when it was necessary.

20322. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) A good deal depends on the officers. Who were your officers?—I have described it fully in my report; but the officers were of three classes—the Regular officers, the officers promoted through the ranks, and the officers appointed at home as Imperial Yeomanry.

20323. How many of them had seen service before?—They were new troops, but I put them under the command of my best men.

20324. (Chairman.) What is your next point?—The

next thing I have got down is transport, and I advocate—in South Africa, at all events—having professional transport officers, as they were much better than any British officer could possibly be.

20325. What do you mean by professional transport officers?—The best class of men are what are called transport riders. They are men accustomed to wagons, and I think the officer should be an Irregular if you could get a good one you could trust. The one I had had been accustomed to driving wagons all his life. There are lots of gentlemen out there who have left this country, and spend their time in charge of big convoys, and these men would be invaluable on service in charge of the wagons. I do not mean in charge of the organisation or money, but simply in charge going along the road.

20326. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) For trekking?—Yes; in fact, a superior kind of conductor.

20327. (Chairman.) If you had Regulars whom would you have? Would you have an officer from the Regular Army to do that sort of work?—Yes; he is absolutely in charge, and you must have an officer there to take charge of the transport, otherwise you do not know quite what they would be up to, and all sorts of abuses would creep in. The men would get into the wagons, and the things would get overloaded.

20328. Do you speak of these Irregulars, the professional men, as officers?—As officers. I am talking of the men in charge of what I might call the wagons and horses and the loading, and so on.

20329. But I understood you to say that anyhow you would have an officer of the Regular Army in charge of the money, and all the rest of it?—I mean that the Army Service Corps officers ought to be Regulars, but in every regiment, in addition to the ordinary column transport, there is a certain amount of transport attached, and one of the officers of the regiment who has previously had no experience of any sort is always told to look after the wheeled transport. He is usually the junior subaltern or a subaltern who is a bad troop leader, and he is told he has to look after the transport. One of these professional men is very much better, and they keep the transport going.

20330. It is in substitution of that officer, and not of the Army Service Corps officer?—That is so. We had civilian conductors out there, and they were necessary, because of their knowledge of the language; but they were a great nuisance, and you could not trust them. A very good sergeant is the chief thing you want.

Pay is the next thing. I have given you the rates of pay, and they were the usual rates for the different classes of men. I had three classes of men, which sometimes created a little grumbling, but that was unavoidable.

20331. You had paymasters?—Yes, and I advocate that very strongly on service. A combatant officer has not time to look after his pay and to see that the men are paid or looked after, and I found that the plan was to have an officer as I describe in my report: "Considering that it was unfair both to myself, to the untrained officers concerned, and to the men, that squadron officers should be responsible for the payment of the men on active service, I had one paymaster for each regiment who was entirely responsible for the accounts and payment of the men, and every detail with regard to pay, with the exception of allotments, which were in the hands of the Imperial paymaster. These men, though officers of the regiment and under me, were under the control of the Imperial paymaster, who was supposed to go through their accounts every month, so there should have been little field for peculation or error if properly audited. At the headquarters of the regiment a book of headquarters orders was kept, quite apart from the different regimental order books in the field, and all promotions, etc., were entered in this book before any change of pay could be authorised, both paymasters having access to this book daily. I may state that it is almost impossible for regiments in the field to know when non-commissioned officers are invalided, etc., but that I, having better access to the correspondence, hospital returns etc., was able to fill up the vacancies more quickly, and to prevent over-promotion that the officers commanding the regiments in the field." (It is impossible, and when a regiment was split practically into three I had to go and sit in Johannesburg and work it as a headquarters.) "The regimental paymasters visited

Major The Marquis of Tullibardine, M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

Vide col. 2, page 448.

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine.
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

their regiment each month, and paid the men so much of their balance as they required, placing the rest to their credit—the result being that the average of pay due to the 700 men I brought home was between £30 and £40, some of them having as much as £150. In addition to this, knowing what balances officers and men had, the paymasters were able to authorise certain expenditure on officers' and men's accounts if they wrote in for anything, such as mess stores or clothes, or if they wanted to send money home extra to the regular remittance or allotment. No Imperial Paymaster would have had time to do this, and no squadron officer in the field could possibly have done it. In Irregular corps it would be impossible to trust every squadron leader with the money, partly because of ignorance of their previous character"—(it would be perfectly impossible with most of them)—"and partly because they were not sufficiently well educated. Also, I wished the whole of their energies devoted to their squadrons and to fighting the enemy." (I may here state that there are so many forms to fill up that very few Regular officers are able to work out a pay-sheet right without its being sent back.) "Each paymaster had a staff of one non-commissioned officer of the rank of Quartermaster-sergeant, one sergeant, and one corporal." . . . "I consider it absolutely necessary if the above system is continued in future that the senior non-commissioned officer should be a trained Army pay-sergeant. This would cause considerably less trouble to the Imperial paymasters concerned. I may state here that the only department that ever caused me trouble and did not assist was one of the departments of the Army Pay Department. By this I do not in any way reflect on the Chief Paymaster, who did his very utmost to help me at all times, but the actual department which Irregular corps had to deal with. Instead of being assisted the regimental paymasters were, as a rule, very discourteously treated, and were never really told exactly what system to follow. The result was that many mistakes occurred which might have been avoided. No proper regulations were framed when the regiment was first started, and, having no Army non-commissioned officers at that period, the books were apt to get muddled from an Army point of view, and I had far too much to do to be really able to check them. The regimental paymasters also would come back from Pretoria very much ruffled in their tempers, and, in consequence, did not play up so well as they might have, had they been more led than driven. This complaint was not peculiar to my corps." These men were Australians, who are an independent sort of men, and if they had been rather led I do not think there would have been any difficulty with them, and I think it rather important in a pay department dealing with Irregulars to have somebody they like, because if they like a man they will do anything for him.

20332. These regimental paymasters were extra to the ordinary staff?—Yes, they were two officers appointed. I tried to get good business men, and, not knowing the Army Forms, it was almost impossible not to get behind-hand at first, because they did not know exactly what was wanted, and I considered that we should have been supplied with a good Army clerk; such a man would have saved, I am quite certain, thousands of pounds to the Government in the way of over-payments to men, and so on, in Irregular corps. For instance, very often when a new paymaster paid the men, a man with stripes on his arm walked in and said that he was a sergeant, as he probably was, and he got paid, but afterwards it was found that he was in excess of the establishment, and that he should not have been paid. An Army pay-clerk would have stopped that.

20333. (Sir John Jackson.) I suppose the regimental officer more or less considers it a little *infra dignitatem* to be bothering about accounts?—No, I think it is pure ignorance on his part. And if you come in very tired in the evening after having been out all day, and you are going out for a night march, and you have a month's accounts to make up it is very trying. A month's accounts will take a good man a good long time to make out, especially when you have to deduct all the allotments and remittances, and so on, and especially in an Irregular corps. It is very difficult work, and you are always changing squadron leaders on service, as they are getting killed, die, etc., and the next senior and subaltern of the corps does not know the men in the least; he does not know the men in the hospital, and they never get paid at all, and so on, and there are men invalided home who are lost sight of.

20334. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Had you clothing accounts, too?—No, none. I was not very anxious for any outside accounts. One regiment in Natal provided themselves with a great many things; they were given leave to do so, and it was the most expensive pay account I saw. I remember when it was being passed by Lord Kitchener.

20335. And you had no complications beyond the actual pay and allotments?—That is so. The allotments from home were rather complicated, because the Yeomanry authorities never sent me any, and the allotment sheets in the case of one squadron arrived a year and five months late.

20336. (Sir John Hopkins.) How did you provide necessities—for instance, if a man wore his boots out?—I had a depot at Johannesburg, and they drew nothing in the column at all, but before the column came in they used to wire to me what they required, and I used to draw it and to have it waiting for them when they came in. I have described that very fully, but it would not work against anyone but the Boer.

20337. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Why not?—Because I think they would have captured my little advance depôts. No civilised foe would have allowed them to remain.

20338. I suppose the Boers captured all they could?—They got quite enough, but they had no organisation; and we fought them in that way in the same way as we would fight a savage. I am talking of the end of the war. I also made arrangements on board ship at the end of the war to try to check the waste of money on drink among the men, and that is thus referred to in my report. "On going on board ship for the voyage home I found that the men had so much pay due to them that it would have been very injudicious to have given them all the money, first as there was a large amount of illicit drink on board; secondly, as about a hundred Reservists on board had formed 'a silver ring,' I having only gold for my men. These Reservists had each been paid, in some cases about £20, and what they did not spend on drink they spent on gambling, and if any of my men wanted change for canteen, etc., they were forced to take 15s. for a sovereign. To check this I issued bank notes to the value of 2s., 1s., and 6d. My men were paid in those notes only. They were made the only legal tender at the canteen, and the only legal tender for beer, and I gave full value to my men in exchange for money. This very soon stopped all abuses on board. These notes were redeemed the day before landing, and were illegal tender for any of the ship's crew, and could not be redeemed by them. The result was that the crew were unable to sell drink, as it was too risky to give the men credit. There was no redress if a man lost the notes, and any surplus gained through lost notes by the regiment was placed to Widows' and Orphans' Fund. I am of opinion that a great deal of good could be done by issuing notes to men on transports the day before leaving in lieu of pay—these notes to be redeemed at their depôt on date of arrival only, after which the notes should be immediately destroyed, so that they could be of no use afterwards to anyone who should have stolen any of them, or to the crew on board ship on subsequent voyages." I thought that helped the men a lot to save their pay.

20339. (Chairman.) As to horses?—I drew from the remounts. My system was to have an advanced horse depôt established up the line somewhere near where the regiment was working, and I drew remounts from the Army remounts and sent them up to this depôt, and when the regiment came to the line they drew horses from this depôt and left their sick horses there. The Army supplied me with horses, and only casualties were sent to the Army sick depôts. I only handed in to my own depôts horses that would take about ten days to get better, so that I had always a supply of fairly good horses when the regiment came in.

20340. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Where was your principal depôt?—My principal depôt was Krugersdorp, and it used to work to Klerksdorp; my other one was up at Middleburg and I shifted it later to Standerton according to where the column was.

20341. (Chairman.) You were always able to keep horses until they were properly acclimatised?—That is what it practically came to. A good example of this was at the beginning when I was given the Russian horses;

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.
19 Mar. 1903.

they had to send them out at once because we were hard up for horses, and they went sick and died and were very badly reported upon, and Lord Downe saw them and did not like them at all. Later, he went to Australia and I had another lot of Russians, ponies this time, and I was able to keep them in my dépôt for nearly a month, and they were the best ponies for mounted infantry I ever had.

20342. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Had you exercising grounds at your dépôt?—Yes.

20343. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Where did these Russian ponies come from?—The Caucasus, I believe.

20344. Where were they shipped?—From Odessa, but they had only just landed when I got them, and they had tremendously long coats, rather like Highland ponies. They are not suitable for cavalry, but they are typical mounted infantry ponies.

20345. (*Chairman.*) And by keeping them a month they got into sufficiently good condition?—Yes. Of course they might have been better, but they were better than most of the animals we were able to get owing to the pressure.

20346. And you think your regiment got through the war with less wastage of horses than an average regiment?—I think in proportion to the work it did. You must remember that we were with Colonel Kekewich and Colonel Benson, and later, with Colonel Bruce-Hamilton, and they had practically the whole of the fighting and trekking in that part of the world to do, and it would not be fair to compare it with a regiment that was working off the line. Of course, we had very heavy casualties from the enemy, so that it is impossible to compare regiments.

20347. But the great wastage of horses arose from their being used before they were in condition?—That was the real reason.

20348. And you think your dépôts prevented that a great deal?—To a great extent, but dépôts are impossible for Irregular corps, as a rule, unless commanded by Regular officers. One or two corps who tried it found that they were dépôts for a great many things besides, and that it led to a great deal of peculation in every way, and especially if near Johannesburg the horses were apt to stray, and sometimes the grain disappeared, whereas, if you had a Regular officer over them such abuses were much more likely to be stopped.

20349. Of course, they would require regulation, but granted that, the dépôt made all the difference in the lasting qualities of the horses?—Yes. Of course I was only doing what the remounts in a way ought to have done, but being my own regimental horses we took a very deep interest in them and had more hands to them. I used to turn my convalescents on to look after the horses when they had nothing else to do, and it was also a good thing, because the convalescents had not to wait on the line as long as they otherwise would have had to do.

With regard to the officers, my Regular officers did extremely well, and it is everything in an Irregular corps to have a good supply of them. It is perfectly impossible to expect a regiment to run without a Regular Adjutant, and it is not fair on the regiment or on the men. I never heard of a good Irregular corps out there that really did well that had not got Regular officers commanding it, and everything was checked, such as these extravagances in clothing and horses, and abuses were much less likely to occur. The men were also very much more comfortable. At first the Colonials did not want to have Regular officers at all in the Scottish Horse, but they very soon got to like them better than any other; they preferred them as there was a difference in their comfort in every way.

20350. You would like to have all the senior officers Regular officers?—I should like to have the commanding officer, the second in command, and the Adjutant, Regular officers.

20351. Not the squadron commanders?—Of course, one would like to have them, but one cannot, as there are not enough, and you must leave a certain amount of promotion for the Irregulars. There are certain fine men among the Irregulars who make fine leaders, but who have no ambition to command a column, but the moment they began seeing other men commanding columns, naturally, they thought they should, too. Even in some of the biggest Irregular corps, which were nominally commanded by Irregular officers, they were

really commanded by Regulars; in fact, very often the Irregular officer got promoted so high, that it was almost impossible for him to take the field with the small bodies that went out. I think that it ought to be a *sine qua non* that every Irregular squadron ought to have a Regular sergeant with it; it makes the whole difference, and a good example was the 5th Victorians when they landed; they landed in the same ship as my Victorians—the “Orient”—in Cape Town, and they had practically no one of previous experience among their officers, and no Regular non-commissioned officers, except a sergeant-major, who was a good man. They landed equipped, and my men landed without any clothing at all, but I was able to get my men ready for the field before their men were ready, because there was no one with any knowledge with them, and their men got out of hand. The officers were ready to do what they could, but they did not know what to do, and there was no Regular officer to help them in any way. I reported, not officially, but I mentioned that I thought they would come to grief if they had not a Regular Commanding Officer to look after them. They were magnificent men, just as good as my men, and some of them were brothers of some of my men, and a great many wanted to transfer to me but that was not, of course, entertained for a moment by me. When they went into the field they rather came to grief, and it was chiefly owing to bad discipline; but they were identical with the men I had under Colonel Benson, and I do not think anybody did better than my Australians in that corps.

20352. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) One Regular non-commissioned officer per squadron would do?—Yes, and he must be sober.

20353. And an experienced man?—Yes. I would have a Regular sergeant-major, too.

20354. Would he get on with the men?—They are very popular, and I do not find that the Regular sergeant-major is unpopular. The remark of one of my Victorians made to me was, “We did not like to have these men coming in and bossing us up, and we thought we knew everything ourselves, but this man knows all about it.” He had had experience, and knew exactly what the men wanted, and I never had an unpopular Regular non-commissioned officer except one, and that was his own fault.

20355. (*Chairman.*) You think that the commander of an Irregular corps must have the power of dismissal?—Yes, it is absolutely necessary, and if he tells a man he has to go he must be backed up. I have had officers in Irregulars, whom it was necessary to tell, “I cannot keep you in the regiment,” and Lord Kitchener always backed me up.

20356-7. You mean with regard to officers and men?—Yes. With regard to officers I exercised the power eleven times. With regard to the officers, you should have a very free hand, and with regard to the men you ought to be able to do it then and there on the spot; it is far the best punishment to turn them out of the corps.

20358. There is a difficulty about punishments in the field?—I found none. I had very little to do, and what I did, as a rule was to make the man walk beside the column and take his horse away. The field imprisonment is very degrading. I saw a man at the time of the Spion Kop affair who was given field imprisonment, and tied to a wagon, and he fainted before he got there. He was a very fine man and an old soldier, but it was the only imprisonment that could be given him, and I made up my mind never to give it to a man again; I did not give it to him personally on that occasion, but I saw it given, and I know that the officer who gave it to him never gave it again, and it is especially bad to tie a white man up before niggers.

20359. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) We have been told that a man dismissed in that way could enlist in another corps?—Yes, that was the great difficulty, and I have mentioned that. At the coast at the beginning, all you had to do was to enlist a man and take him away to the front, and this got so abused by some corps, as they took what were known as wasters, that a Central Recruiting Office was formed with a Regular officer in charge, and every man had to go through him before he was sent to the front. A register was kept, and every man who was discharged had to be reported to him.

20360. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) In exercising the power of dismissal, did you have a court of inquiry, or was

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.

19 Mar. 1903.

it a drum-head court-martial?—Dismissal was only exercised in the case of an absolute waster; sometimes he was quite a nice man, and you would tell him quietly it was no good his staying; at other times they were men who were always getting into trouble, and giving the corps a bad name, or whose nerve was not right, and so on, and you were supposed to report each man to the Assistant Adjutant General Colonial Forces; but at one time I had a lot of bad men I had been obliged to take, because Lord Kitchener wanted men in a hurry, and a good many of those men I had to send away.

20361. And the power of dismissal you kept absolutely in your own hands?—Yes; I was supposed to report them to the Assistant Adjutant General Colonial Forces, but, as a matter of fact, he trusted me, and I reported to him at the end of the month.

20362. You really dismissed on account of reports you got?—The Commanding Officer used to send them in to me with proper evidence; evidence was taken, and the men who were turned out were usually men who wanted to go.

The officers appointed at home were of a less affluent class than those from which they are usually drawn. The men promoted through the ranks were simply men promoted on merit, and they did extremely well. We found that gentlemen were the best men, and, by a gentleman, I do not mean a man with a lot of cash, but a well-bred man, because you could always trust him, and if you put him in charge of a post, he would stay at that post, and he keeps his head better in action, as he does not get excited, as a rule. He is rather wider-minded in every way, the men liked him better, and you could get him to understand, which you very often could not get men of a lower class to understand, that when he came home to camp after a hard day, his day was only beginning, and he had to look after the men. I had 157 officers altogether with the regiment, and I had 11 who had to resign.

20363. (Chairman.) As to shooting, scouting, horsemanship, and horsemastership, I suppose you have stated them all in your paper?—Yes. The Australians were far and away the best horsemen in every way.

20364. And in horsemastership, too?—They would have been better if they had been less good horsemen; that is to say, a Scotsman is not very anxious to gallop if it is unnecessary, and his horses did not get used up so much, but the Australian always prefers to go at a gallop, and, if a horse is doing very hard work, it cannot stand it.

20365. (Sir Frederick Darley.) When he has ridden down one horse, he jumps on another?—Yes, that is what he is accustomed to doing in his own country.

I have marked "Thieving in Hospitals," and it is explained exactly in my paper what that is. When men went into hospital, I never got their kit (except in a very few cases) if they died, and it caused a lot of trouble. You cannot blame the hospitals, because they had men sent by the regiments as orderlies.

20366. (Chairman.) You now pass on to the suggestions for the future?—Yes.

20367. Is the Scottish Horse being continued?—Yes; we are to raise two battalions of them at home as a Yeomanry.

20368. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Where are they now?—At home; I have got about 400 of them.

20369. (Sir John Jackson.) Are they all from one particular county?—No; Lord Lovat has one half, and I have got the other, from all the northern counties.

I have already touched on most of the things in my report pretty fully. I made a point rather about farriers; the present Army organisation is that there are so many attached to each squadron, and if they all go sick in one squadron there are no farriers, and there is grumbling, and I think they ought to be regimental, the same as the signallers, and I have touched upon that. As to the equipment, I have stated what was good and what was bad. The clothing was excellent all through. The web bandoliers sent out to us were perfectly useless, because if they got wet they stretched, and they dropped all the ammunition; you cannot get them to keep their size, as they either shrink or get loose.

20370. (Chairman.) I see you consider bayonets essential?—For mounted infantry regiments in attack; for instance, whether you are going for them or they are going for you, they are very useful.

20371. Do you mean a bayonet used on foot?—Yes, I saw them used, or tried to be used on horseback, and I thought it was silly; you cannot use a bayonet or a rifle on horseback.

20372. And you have no use for an arm for the mounted infantry besides the rifle?—Not for mounted infantry; but the Australians are such fine horsemen, and it is almost a pity that practically the only, what I might call, Cavalry Reserve we have got—because you cannot really call the Yeomanry a Cavalry Reserve—should not have swords as well as their rifles, because although you could never expect them to drill and manoeuvre against European cavalry in some ways, yet they are so quick that occasions might arise when they can get a charge. I had lots of charges when the men had no weapons, and we could do nothing, and if we had had a sword it would have been very useful. I armed my 50 best Australians, by Colonel Benson's advice, with short lances. We cut off 2ft. from the butt ends of the lances, and then put the shoe on again, and used them as pig spears. We used them often, but we never used them into people, because the Boers put up their hands the moment they saw them. They were a weapon that any inexperienced men could use.

20373. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) What would the length be altogether?—I could not tell you, but it was 2ft. off the present lance. I should think they would be about 7ft. long.

20374. (Chairman.) It has been suggested that a bayonet could be devised which could be used on a rifle as a short spear?—A rifle is much too heavy, I think. With a small carbine it might be possible.

20375. You would prefer a lance to a sword?—No, I do not say that; if you have a rifle as well, of course, the lance is more deadly. Before going up the Atbara, Colonel Broadwood went to Lord Kitchener and said that we wanted water bottles and new swords for the Egyptian cavalry. The swords we had were of foreign manufacture. They may have been made in Cairo for all I know, but they bent up. Lord Kitchener said he could not have both, but he could have which he liked, so he chose the water bottles. We took the old swords up the Atbara, and we had a very severe fight just before the battle of the Atbara, and I saw men using the swords, and they did absolutely no damage; they nearly always hit with the flat. I never saw the men do any harm with the swords at all, while the lances did do damage. It is impossible, however, for a man to carry the three arms at the same time, and the sword in the hands of an expert European should be deadly enough.

20376. A proposal which has been made to us is to have a sword for a thrust—a much lighter sword than the present one—to be used for a thrusting sword rather than a lance?—The present sword, especially the one we have got in the Household Cavalry, no one could possibly use without falling off, if he really cut with it.

20377. I think everybody agrees that the present regulation sword must be altered?—Yes, you want quite a light sword, and pretty strong at the forte.

20378. The question I meant to put was whether you preferred the lance to a sword of that description?—I should prefer the sword. I think that actually the lance is the more deadly weapon, but as you have got to carry a rifle, the sword is the only other weapon you could carry.

20379. But the only person who could carry the sword is either a cavalry man or a man who is fit to be turned into a cavalry soldier?—Yes, and the lance gets very much in the way when scouting, as you will see it for miles. Taking things all round, I think the sword would be better than the lance.

20380. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Would you have the sword attached to the saddle?—Certainly.

20381. Not round the waist?—No. I saw a very good attachment for a rifle, and I have mentioned it in my statement, which Colonel Paterson, of the Imperial Yeomanry, had. It is the nearest approach to a sound thing I have seen. If you can carry your rifle on the body it is much the best plan, because if you fall off or if the horse gets away from you you have your rifle, and the one I have just mentioned was the best attachment I saw. The Natal Carabineers had one, but it was a bad attachment, because it always caught your elbow. It was all right for a carbine, but not for a big rifle, and the muzzle of the long rifle is apt to go into the ground. The best type of saddle all round was the cavalry saddle, but it was too heavy. The Colonial saddle was not a

good one, and used to give sore backs. The blanket system is much the best.

20382. (*Chairman.*) We had some evidence to-day that the Colonial saddle was the one which gave fewer sore backs?—Well, I have not got any statistics, but I was in charge of a troop of the Royals personally at the beginning, and we used cavalry saddles, and they did well, but they were too heavy. Colonel Leader, who was a particularly fine officer of the Carabineers, and who is now commanding the Volunteers in Natal, begged me to get nothing but cavalry saddles, and I had all my Colonial saddles changed so far as I could for cavalry saddles. Colonel Duff also asked for them. I personally preferred them, and the men among the Australians always asked for them when they had been out a short time.

20383. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) The cavalry saddle is heavier?—Yes, but you can alter it to suit the horse's back, and it could be very much lightened by cutting off a great deal of the unnecessary parts—for instance, those burrs in front ought to come off, and the naps on the saddle should come off, and there should be a small leather guard on the stirrup leathers—simply a sort of slide—as they have in some parts of America, and instead of being made of wood it could be made of steel.

20384. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) When you speak of the Colonial saddle you mean the South African?—I meant the pattern known as the Colonial saddle, or the South African. They varied in weight.

20385. Have you seen the Australian stockman's saddle?—Yes, I know them well, and they are good saddles. The Allan pattern saddle was the best saddle I saw out there. That is Allan of India, the man who supplies the Indian Government. But it was capable of being lightened a good deal, and he was working to present ideas. The wallets we never used, and they were always thrown away or returned. Very much lighter ones might be used. The great coat has also caused sore back when it was folded across the withers, and it was much better used as the Boers did, across the back of the saddle, flapping open, with one strap round the centre. We never used corn bags; we never carried any extra supply of corn at all. In the Egyptian cavalry we used to carry a small corn bag. If that was carried across the smaller wallets, the further the horse went the lighter it would get, and we might have gone without transport for two days more than we could do otherwise.

20386. (*Chairman.*) You want two Maxim guns instead of one?—Yes, because the one could support the other. I worked the Maxim out there at the beginning of the war, and you very often cannot get away if you have only one. It is just when you are limbering up that you are caught. If you have another working in support you are all right, but if you are limbering up by yourself they are in on you very often.

20387. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Some of the Colonial regiments had three Maxims?—Yes. Lord Dundonald wanted me to take charge of his Maxims; he wanted to work them as a sort of division. He wanted to have about 12 Maxims altogether, and the Boers, I think, saw much better than most people that these kind of guns ought to be separated and used to support each other.

20388. I spoke of the over-sea Colonials?—Of course, we got as many as we could get. They are a very useful adjunct to your force. I had two with one regiment and one with the other. The Colt gun did good work, what I saw of it, and there ought to be a tripod mounting, I think, always beside it. I have described that in my paper.

20389. (*Chairman.*) The pom-poms you thought too expensive?—They are good guns, but it is too good a gun to entrust to an untrained cavalry officer. That is what I mean by that, and I do not think it ought to be attached to a cavalry regiment, because sometimes you are going too fast, and you would have to leave it behind. It ought to be attached as required, I think, in the same way as guns are.

20390. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Did you find you could carry your Maxims without hindering you at all?—Yes, perfectly. We could take them anywhere—not if you had an infantry carriage, but with the cavalry carriage. The best plan is to have a cavalry carriage and a tripod mounting carried on a separate horse—not on the carriage.

20391. And you had that?—Yes; and if there is shell fire you simply change the gun on to the other horse, and they will shell the carriage while you can get along with the gun in another direction. As to water carts, I said I thought there might be some arrangement for lighting a fire under them. I am sure that would help to prevent enteric, and if there was an oil-stove, or something of that sort, you could have hot water at the end of your march. As to transport, I advocate more transport and lighter. By "more" I mean instead of having two heavy wagons it is better to have four light ones of the four-wheeled trolley type.

20392. (*Chairman.*) That is the transport to carry the kits and that sort of thing?—Yes, to carry anything, in fact.

20393. Not the supplies?—Well, to carry your supplies with the regiment, that is your first line of transport.

20394. Not the second?—No.

20395. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Do you think oil motor cars would be useful for transport?—No; they would be for the main columns possibly, but if they stuck anywhere you would have nothing to haul them out with. Going over rough ground they would be very difficult; going over roads, of course, they would be perfect. For what you call bringing up supplies they would be perfect; but not actually in the field. As to tents, the men always liked bivouacs better, and they show up much less. As to rations, the only thing the men did not like was a "Maconochie," it was too heavy when their digestion got weakened.

20396. The biscuits were hard sometimes?—Yes. The chief trouble I had with the men was through their teeth, because their physique was always good as a rule if they passed the doctor, the men from home, anyway; but their teeth used to go, then their digestions went, and they generally got dyspeptic, and you could not do anything with them.

20397. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount-Royal.*) Had your men filters?—Yes, we had filters; but, really, if you are going hard they get damaged, and you can never count on using filters, or a man may use them for a week, and then one day he does not use them, and very often if a filter is not carefully looked after it is very apt to get foul and to carry disease.

20398. (*Chairman.*) The regimental paymasters you have already spoken to?—Yes. Before I left South Africa I raised 700 men for the Scottish Horse out there as a permanent force, and they were to be increased to 500, and I also started an infantry battalion to be raised to the number of 800, and they have recruited very well, and they are working really in conjunction with my regiment at home. If we could get another lot in Australia, if the Colonial Governments would agree, I believe we would have a very good nucleus for a future war. The men from home and from Australia came out so well that if you had them organised before a war I think you could get from 3,000 to 4,000 Scotsmen who would be very useful; they would come out from every country from *esprit de corps*.

20399. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You tried them from Australia?—Yes, and it was very successful during the war.

20400. But since?—It is a matter for the Government; I have put it here as a suggestion.

20401. Have you been in communication with the Federal Government?—No. It might be worth trying and might be taken up on account of that *esprit de corps*, and I have described it fully.

20402. Do you know General Hutton?—Yes.

20403. He is there now?—Yes.

20404. I dare say he would be able to give you information?—Yes, I thought of writing him, but I was not quite sure that it was my business.

I have put down a summary of the services of the regiment; we were under Colonel Kekewich and Colonel Benson, and that is what made the difference between a good and a bad regiment—they were really good regimental commanders. I have appended to my statement a letter of Colonel Benson's.

20405. (*Viscount Esher.*) Who was the first commanding officer under whom you served?—General Burn Murdoch. I was with him at Colenso and going into Ladysmith; I was his staff officer there.

20406. When you went out to South Africa you were

Major The
Marquis of
Tullibardine,
M.V.O., D.S.O.
19 Mar. 1903.

Vide
page 456.

Majr The Marquis of Tullibardine, M.V.O., D.S.O. a subaltern in the Household Cavalry?—Yes. I was really a captain, but it had not been gazetted.

19 Mar. 1903. 20407. When did you get your lieutenant-colonel's rank?—Not until quite late in the war, in August, 1901.

20408. When you came back again you went back to your ordinary duty?—Yes, I did go back. Now I am going to be seconded for yeomanry.

20409. (*Chairman.*) Have we gone through everything?—I think so, roughly. I have given full statistics of where the men came from in the Duke of Atholl's statement, and I have given a summary in the last page of my own of casualties, and so forth. The best thing the Scotsmen did out there was when Colonel Benson was killed; they had 96 men engaged, and they had 77 hit, which is very good indeed for irregular troops, I consider. Our commanding officer, Major Murray, was killed, and the adjutant, Captain Lindsay, and they had 77 other casualties.

20410. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Where were those men from?—Scotland, nearly all of them; there were a few Australians.

20411. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Out of 1,125 men you had from Scotland there were not more than a couple of dozen from the West?—No, very few from Argyleshire. I do not know that part of the country, and they do not know me very well, but I am going to recruit there in future.

20412. You have mentioned that you tried to get some Canadians, and that they were ready to go, but that the Dominion Government objected?—Yes.

20413. What was the cause?—Lord Kitchener asked me to get 400 Canadians, and this was just before the question of sending out a Canadian contingent arose, and they said that as it had been settled they were to send 600 they would far rather send 1,000 altogether, which was, of course, quite reasonable.

20414. And that they should go out as a Canadian contingent?—Yes, and not as Scotsmen.

20415. But, as a matter of fact, you had some Canadians?—Very few. Those I had were all good men.

FIFTIETH DAY.

Tuesday, 24th March, 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary.*

Mr. L. S. AMERY, called and examined.

Mr. L. S. Amery. 20416. (*Chairman.*) I believe you went out as a representative of the "Times" to South Africa in August, 1899?—Yes.

24 Mar. 1903. 20417. That is to say before the outbreak of the war?—Yes, I went out really to study the political situation.

20418. And you went up to Pretoria at that time?—Yes, about the third week in September.

20419. Just before the outbreak of the war you were in the Boer laager?—Yes.

20420. Did you form any opinion then as to the position of the Boers?—In what sense?

20421. Either as to numbers or supplies, and so on?—Yes, I took a good deal of trouble at the time to try and get from the Boers what their numbers were, and since then in connection with my work on the "Times" History of the War. The Boers in the Sandspruit Laager, where I was, and immediately round there were about 8,000, and, as far as I could make out, the total number of Boers who invaded Natal, including Free Staters, at the beginning of the war was about 17,000 to 18,000, and another 2,000 or 3,000 came on in the next few weeks. I think the total Boer force that crossed the frontier at the beginning of the war was at least 37,000.

20422. That crossed the Natal frontier?—No, all the frontiers—about 37,000, and possibly over 40,000.

20423. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Where do you get the difference between the 17,000 and the 37,000?—The force that was with Cronje on the Mafeking side was large, and then there was a force at Kimberley, and there were the Free State forces along the Cape Colony border.

20424. Would you put those three forces at 20,000 as an aggregate?—I think so. There were certain commandos watching the Rhodesian, Basuto, and Swazi borders.

20425. (*Chairman.*) Was that from information you got while you were with the Boers?—Yes, and in Pretoria, just before I went down to their laager.

20426. And in the Sandspruit Laager did they seem to have supplies and equipment?—No. The most of the Boers got down there between September 29th and about October 4th or 5th. I came down on the 5th, I think, and things were still in very great confusion, and some of the commandos had nearly starved. The Boers in making up their mobilisation had only thought of mobilising the men and sending them down by train, and they had made no proper provision for stores. All the Netherlands Railway trains had to run down in a great hurry to the frontier with burghers and horses, and there was a great lack of supplies. Some of the commandos had bully beef and nothing else—no forage and no tents. I think Joubert's War Office, such as it was, had allowed for every burgher bringing his own things, and the burghers had relied on Joubert. It was very raw, cold weather, and rain, too, and many of the commandos were very short of blankets. Some were without mackintoshes, and, in fact, there was great confusion all round. I think it was that confusion that prevented their crossing the border about October 1st or 2nd. The ultimatum, I believe, was ready on September 27th. Mr. Reitz told me of the ultimatum on the 27th or 28th, and I have seen the first draft of the ultimatum which was sent to Bloemfontein on the 26th or 25th, and the revised draft sent back to Bloemfontein on the morning of the 27th. I believe it was entirely due to this hopeless jumble with their supplies and transport, and so on, in the beginning of October, that Joubert refused flatly to move until the 9th. The moment Joubert said he was ready to move at all, then the Government at Pretoria sent in their ultimatum.

20427. And they did get things ready?—Even then they had no proper transport, and they had not anything that we call first-line transport—proper mule transport. They had sent a certain number of wagons up

from Pretoria to the Natal border at the end of September, and a great many of the Boers brought their own ox wagons. One family very often had about three times as much transport as they wanted. The Boers I was staying with had three tents, a German cook, and several Kaffirs, and so on; but taken as a whole, they had no transport, and I know when I was at Sand-spruit Laager they shifted the laager for better grazing a distance of about three miles, and they had to do double journeys for a great part of the transport to move that three miles. I do not think they could have invaded Natal at all if we had not kindly left all the railways untouched.

20428. Is not that the system—if it can be called a system—of the Boers, that they should rely upon the individuals bringing their own supplies?—Yes; but the burghers had not got them. Later on there was enough transport, but a great many of the Pretoria and Johannesburg and Krugersdorp commandos were largely composed of townfolk, who had not their own transport to begin with; and then there were all the poor Boers, bywoners and so on, who had not adequate transport, and relied on the Government. Later on they got together much more transport from the country, but in the early stages of the war they were absolutely dependent on the railway, on the Natal side, at any rate. I do not think they could have got to Dundee for about a fortnight at least.

20429. When did you leave?—General Joubert sent me back to Pretoria on the morning of October 12th, when the commandoes crossed Laing's Nek.

20430. Then you left Pretoria when?—On the 13th. I got off with the last train that went down by Norval's Pont.

20431. And you went back to Cape Town?—Yes.

20432. Of course, we do not wish to examine you upon the events of the war, and we are not dealing with a history of the war, so to speak; but in order to put on record what your experience was, I will ask you some questions. After that you went to the front with Lord Roberts?—I went to the front in the beginning of November in Natal, and stayed there until a few days before the battle of Colenso.

20433. With Sir Redvers Buller's force?—Well, it was General Hildyard's force most of the time.

20434. And you remained there until December?—Yes, about December 3rd or 4th.

20435. And then went back to Cape Town?—Yes.

20436. And then to the front with Lord Roberts?—Yes.

20437. Which meant the march to Bloemfontein?—No, only as far as Paardeberg, and after Cronje's surrender I went to Cape Town again.

20438. After that, I think, you were mainly at Cape Town?—Mainly.

20439. So that your experience of the events of the war would be gathered from other people?—Chiefly, yes.

20440. As I said, we do not wish to take you through that, and we have it before us in the "Times" History of the War, I presume; but there is one matter that I think would be interesting to you if I just mentioned it with regard to one particular incident. Our attention was called to a passage in the "Times" History of the War, page 235, Vol. II., in regard to the battle of Ladysmith, which is called "Disorderly retirement of cavalry," and it says, "When the infantry were clear, the cavalry began their retirement. For reasons which it is difficult to understand, the cavalry were allowed to save themselves by their speed alone. No attempt was made at a judicious withdrawal by regiments. Troop officers were not even given the time to form their troops. A seething mass of clubbed and broken cavalry charged down the narrow neck on the west of Lombard's Kop, and streamed southwards into the open plain, where, after a short interval, it collected and re-formed itself." Of course, that raised a question of discipline, and so on, with regard to which we have put some questions. Sir George White referred us to Sir John French as the best authority on the subject, and Sir John French gave us evidence to the effect that the retirement was perfectly orderly?—From all the evidence I have so far been able to go into, I would still adhere entirely to what I have said there, and that passage was actually written by an eye-witness of the retreat.

20441. I do not mean to argue the matter with you, but I call your attention to the fact that we have referred it to the chief authorities, and that is the answer we got. You will find it in the evidence when it is published. Mr
L. S. Amery.
24 Mar. 1903.

20442. (Sir Frederick Darley.) However, you were not there yourself?—No.

20443. (Chairman.) I understand the chief object with which we can usefully examine you to-day is on certain points which you have stated in the précis which you have submitted to us, as to which you have formed some opinions, and we shall be glad to hear you on these points. The first point you mention is "The insufficient importance assigned to Intelligence work, both before the War, and in the field during the earlier stages of the War." If you have any observations to make on that, we should be glad to hear them?—What I mean is that, in the first place, we did not spend nearly enough money or send enough officers. The eight or ten or a dozen officers who went out did very good work, I know, but they were fewer than the men I employed myself as "Times" correspondents, and I should have been ashamed to send "Times" correspondents anywhere, or even a commercial traveller, with the sums of money they were given. The same applies to mapping—that at no very great cost they could have done a very great deal of mapping, which would have proved useful afterwards. With regard to the Natal mapping, the Intelligence Department did offer to do it, but because the Natal Government would not supply the transport, the thing fell through.

20444. We have evidence about the negotiations in Natal, and it was not quite as you have put it?—I believe, as to the later map that was done by Colonel Grant, his original estimate was cut down, and what he eventually did was only a matter of £600 or £700; but I believe the whole of Natal could have been mapped under £10,000.

20445. We had Colonel Grant before us, and we got all the details?—At Modder River there was great complaint that the maps being wrong upset Lord Methuen's calculations of the battle. The fact is that the officer who did the map of Modder River, on which the map supplied to Lord Methuen was based, was sent down only for a morning, to draw a sketch of Modder River Bridge, for its defence by one company of Infantry, and he made a map round it as far as ordinary rifle range, and it so happened that just about a mile and a half above the bridge the two rivers formed very sharp bends in other directions. I might illustrate it by a drawing in pencil (*exhibiting the same to the Commission*), which completely upset Lord Methuen's calculations. Such sketches as Lord Methuen had with him did not show the course of the rivers; and the same remark applies to Stormberg, where there was a very good map of Stormberg Station and about a thousand yards round, but no proper map of the country beyond that, the idea being, apparently that you could have a tactical attack upon Stormberg Station or upon Modder River, but that there were not likely to be any strategical movements of troops in the district.

20446. But, as you say, these maps were formed for the protection of posts?—Yes. If you protect posts it is probable that troops may be moving in the district, and you really want maps for the whole district.

20447. (Viscount Esher.) Have you got all those maps, or copies of them, or have you had them in your possession?—I have had them in my possession at one time or another, and I think I have got most of them myself. There were other similar cases. Again, the Intelligence Department does not only deal with maps and the mere number of the enemy's troops, but all sorts of things, like water supply, the character of the different commandants, and the supply of food in different places. I believe that Lord Roberts' original idea was to march from Orange River Bridge to Springfontein, and not as far north as the Kimberley-Bloemfontein route, but that he could get no information when he first arrived in South Africa as to whether there was water available on that route. In the field I do not think nearly enough importance was assigned to the Intelligence officer, and anybody was made Intelligence officer; there were not enough of them, and they were hopelessly overworked. As a rule, any junior officer was made Intelligence officer, and he probably had to do

Mr.
L. S. Amery.
24 Mar. 1903.

press censorship and permits as well. In one case at Estcourt there was a Lieutenant, a very capable young officer, who did very well afterwards, and after we had been there a fortnight or more altogether, I was referring to a very important feature—a wall running right outside the village of Estcourt—and I found he did not know of its existence, because he had arrived at Estcourt at night, and had never been outside the hotel into which he went, because he was so fully employed with issuing permits, map-making, and other work; but to have an Intelligence officer who does not even know the visible features of the place outside is not a good state of affairs. In the same way, when General Gatacre marched to Stormberg, he left behind that day the officer who had been his Intelligence officer up till then, who had been at Stormberg all the time, and knew the district intimately, and there is no doubt that if that officer had been there, as he knew the particular farms where the force halted on the night of the march, he could have told General Gatacre exactly where he was, and where to go to.

20448. What is the general inference you draw from all that?—That neither did the Government as a whole nor the War Office value Intelligence enough before the war, nor did individual Generals attach sufficient importance to their Intelligence officers in the field, or run enough risks to get intelligence. To get proper intelligence you ought to be losing a certain number of scouts every week; but, as I often saw myself, the scouts used to go out in the morning, after daylight, and ride till they saw the Boers in the distance or heard from Kaffirs that there were Boers there, and then they came back. That sort of intelligence is not worth much. A General ought to see that a certain number of his scouts get shot every day; that shows they are in proper touch with the enemy. There was in these matters no sort of judging of proportion on the part of generals; it was considered dangerous to send a man out to scout the enemy's position if there was a chance of his getting killed, although that was not at all dangerous for the Army, being only one casualty; on the other hand, it was not considered very dangerous, as it ought to have been, to lead a whole division against an unreconnoitred position.

20449. (*Chairman.*) In saying that you rely upon what you have been told?—Yes, mainly, though in this case I was thinking rather of when we were lying before the Colenso position, shortly before Colenso. I remember riding with the scouts round the base of Hlangwane Hill. We started in broad daylight, and came back early in the afternoon; we rode near the base of Hlangwane, and stopped at Kaffir kraals. We took a little precaution not to be seen, and we heard the Boers were on the hill, but if we had run any risks, it would have been perfectly easy to stay till nightfall and crawl up the side of Hlangwane Hill. It would have been perfectly easy, also, to go down the course of the Doornkop or Gomba Spruits, or to wade or swim across the Tugela at night.

20450. If, in the course of reading the evidence hereafter, you find that we have received information from officers of that sort of thing having been done, it would a little modify your opinion?—Yes, I know that that sort of thing was done sometimes, but I do not think it was done nearly enough, especially in the earlier stages. At Colenso there is this Doornkop Spruit, which is wrong on all the maps; it runs a matter of two or three miles further down the Tugela, and that might have had a considerable effect on the battle. It would have been easy to crawl down the bed of that spruit opposite the Boer position.

20451. (*Sir John Edge.*) Those were military precautions which the officers in command ought to have taken?—Yes; which they ought to have insisted on. Similarly, I believe it would have been easy for officers to have gone in and out of Ladysmith at any time. People volunteered to do it, and they were told not to endanger themselves. The Kaffirs did it freely, although they ran the risk of being shot whenever they were caught. I do not think General officers used to let their officers run nearly enough risks to get information. I consider it would have been perfectly easy to have sent a dozen junior officers across the Tugela every night, to crawl about the Boer lines: three or four of them would have got captured, but the rest would have brought back valuable information. In the same way, I think agents should have

been kept in the Boer laagers at the beginning of the war much more than they were. I myself found no difficulty in passing as a member of the German contingent when I was riding about from one Boer laager to another, and there was no proper precaution taken by the Boers.

20452. (*Viscount Esher.*) Was that after the war had broken out?—No; but just the week before. It would have been easy to send men out into the Boer laagers, and their discipline was so slack that that could have been done without any great risk.

20453. Did you yourself send any men paid by the "Times" to go into the Boer laagers?—No. Perhaps I should quote another experience of my own of the sort of inferior Intelligence officers who were used, and the lack of interest shown. After Willow Grange battle the Boers were all between Estcourt and Mooi River, and cut off the two places, and as I did not want to be separated from the "Times," I rode that night through the Boer lines, and got into Mooi River about four or five the next morning. I went to the Intelligence officer there, and said I had just come through, and he asked me what I wanted. I said I could give him information if he did want it, and he hummed and haw'd, and finally gave me his Intelligence notebook, and said, "There, write in that anything that occurred to you," and went out of the room. He apparently had no questions he wished to ask at all, and I put down what occurred to me; but, as a civilian, I really did not know what information General Barton might be wanting at that moment. Then there was another thing. I do not think on our side information was sufficiently given by headquarters to subordinate commanders; good information used to come in, but it did not go round to everybody to whose interest it might be to know it. The Boers did very well in that way, and they kept each other posted up.

20454. Did our officers complain of that?—I have heard a great many complaints of that. The Intelligence at Delagoa Bay sent in August and September, 1900, very full information about the Boer movements and their plan of escape round to the north through the bush veld, but somehow that never seems to have properly reached the people for whom it was intended; at any rate it was never acted upon in any way. On the other hand, the Boers did keep each other posted up very well, and I have had a great number of these Boer telegrams from different villages in my hands, and they took a lot of trouble in that way.

20455. (*Chairman.*) Did they use the telegraph for that purpose?—Yes; the Boer telegraph and heliograph system was very good. They took a lot of trouble about it; they had a lot of telegraph lines, and they kept their telegraphic communication going almost to the very end of the war, using our lines or running up new lines.

20456. They had no field telegraphic system?—Yes, and it was under a Lieutenant Paff, of the Field Artillery. I know down at Sandspruit he did very good telegraphic work. I think three days after the battle of Ladysmith all the Boer laagers round Ladysmith, in a circle of 20 odd miles, were connected by telegraph and telephone. Although their resources were less, they took infinitely more trouble than we did about that subject of communication.

20457. We have had a great deal of evidence about the telegraphic system, and in Ladysmith, for instance, they had a regular telephone system?—Yes, that is inside Ladysmith; but the Boers also organised theirs round Ladysmith at once.

20458. (*Viscount Esher.*) I suppose that all the information, or nearly all, which you have given in the "Times" history of the war has been supplied to you by officers?—Yes.

20459. Leave was given to the officers practically to supply all that information to you, was it?—Yes, for confidential use.

20460. Was there not an order of Lord Kitchener's issued?—Yes, there was a temporary order, which really referred to a circular of Mr. Lionel James, and for some months officers in South Africa were not allowed to answer that circular, but I saw Lord Roberts about it the moment I heard from Mr. Lionel James, and he wrote to Lord Kitchener. Lord Kitchener then amended that order, and said that anybody who knew Mr. Lionel James personally could answer his circular. I do not think that the question

of answering any letter I myself wrote to any people I knew ever came into question. When I went out myself the second time I saw Lord Kitchener, and got a circular letter from him to all officers that they were at liberty—

20461. Empowering them to give evidence to you?—Yes; that they were at liberty to supply me with information for confidential use.

20462. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) May I ask who organised the Boer telegraph or telephone system?—A certain Lieutenant Paff.

20463. What countryman was he?—I think he was a Boer. I knew him slightly.

20464. Had he served as an Engineer officer?—No, he was a member of the Boer Staats Artillerie, but they had a telegraphic section of the artillery, and he was head of it.

20465. (*Chairman.*) You now wish to speak about staff work and the question of a general staff?—That is a large subject, but what I mean is that there was really in the first place before the war nothing really deserving of the name of plan of campaign. The question was discussed to some extent no doubt, and the Natal route was decided upon as against the Cape route; it was decided to use the Cape line and to use the three Cape seaports, but that sort of thing was the mere rudiments and skeleton of a plan, and there was no careful elaborate working out what the Boers would do and what their railway service would do, and where they would concentrate. In fact, the lack of a proper strategical judgment of the whole military situation was shown by the difference between the size of the force which the Government were assured by their advisers was sufficient for the defence of the British colonies in South Africa, and the force they were told would be required for the subsequent offensive movement. The defence has only an advantage when it has some natural obstacle, some conformation of the frontier to help it, or when the defender can fall back through friendly country, trusting the enemy will be weakened by advancing; but our positions in South Africa were so situated that although they were good for offence, they were very bad for defence indeed, and, in Cape Colony at any rate, the further the Boers advanced the greater amount of strength were they likely to get; so if 75,000 men were required to march to Pretoria it would have required fully 75,000 to hold the frontiers of Natal and Cape Colony. The origin of the difference was, I believe, as follows: The authorities, having no proper means of forming an estimate, in an off-hand sort of way, simply asked General Penn Symons how many men he wanted to hold the whole frontier line of Natal to Laing's Nek, and he formed his own estimate. I do not suppose that sort of estimate can be considered as worth very much, but he asked for 6,600 men, and I think 6,700 composed identically as he asked them to be were sent from India, and the theory on which they were sent originally was that they were to defend Natal and all round the frontier to Laing's Nek, and down again.

20466. May I ask where you got that?—It is all in the Blue Book; the whole correspondence is there. General Penn Symons is asked how many men he will want, and he says he will want so many to hold to Dundee, so many to Newcastle, and so many to hold the whole of Natal, and they sent him just what he asked for. They had no proper department to think out the problem of the defence of Natal; they simply took General Penn Symons' estimate without any knowledge of what his powers of forming a just estimate would be. As for the problem of the advance into the enemy's country, they simply took the existing organisation, and said it would want an Army Corps, without considering how far an Army Corps was adapted for the particular conditions. To repeat, if 25,000 men at the beginning of the war could have defended the frontiers of Natal and Cape Colony against the Boers, they ought to have been amply sufficient to march to Pretoria, as the frontiers were so badly placed. But if on the other hand it did want a large force to march to Pretoria you evidently were insufficiently prepared for defence, unless the whole scheme was based on the assumption that the Boers would practically do nothing at the outbreak of the war. If there had been any adequate strategical department it could never have committed such a folly, as to draw a hard and fast line between the defensive and offensive parts of a campaign in a territory possessing no defensible natural positions. As it was the Intelligence Department got some information, and the heads of the War

Office glanced at it in their spare time, and having been in South Africa themselves 20 or 30 years before, gave their personal impressions to the Government, but the whole thing was sketchy and worthless.

20467. There is a different view, is there not, that the General in the field must be allowed a free hand?—Yes, but that does not conflict with what I suggest; before a war you must have proper preparation, very full information, and some scheme of campaign, and then you can allow your General a free hand.

20468. I wanted to bring out exactly how you meant it?—I do not imagine there should be a rigid plan of campaign telegraphed daily from London after war has begun, but you must have some fully worked out plan, and the mere operation of thinking out a plan beforehand would prevent your committing such absurdities as were committed at the beginning of the war.

20469. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What is it you complain of, that there were not sufficient men there at the beginning of the war?—Either there were not sufficient men or the force that was sent afterwards was too large; if the first force was sufficient for defence then the other force sent afterwards was too large—which, of course, it was not. If it did require 75,000 men to march to Pretoria then the force left to defend Natal and Cape Colony was evidently hopelessly inadequate.

20470. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) When you use the words "sufficient for defence," you mean sufficient for defence of the whole of our frontiers?—Yes.

20471. You do not mean sufficient to prevent them seizing our seaports and driving us out of South Africa?—No, the idea was that we should hold the whole of Natal. In Cape Colony it was important to hold our frontiers, because the population was on the side of the Boers, and the advantage of the defence is either that you can hold a very strong line somewhere, or else, if you fall back into the interior of your own country, you make his communications longer and his difficulties greater, but neither of those things applied to the Boers.

20472. But what I want to put forward is: You realise, of course, that in the British Empire we cannot keep an army ready for war in every part of our possessions?—Quite so.

20473. And on the point as to what would have been a sufficient force for practical defence in South Africa at the commencement of the war, there is a great distinction between having sufficient men to hold the essential points in the country without their being actually taken possession of by the enemy pending the arrival of reinforcements, and having sufficient men to smash two military Republics such as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State?—Yes, but if we had had a more clearly thought out military policy, and worked it more hand-in-hand with our political negotiators, it might still have been possible to have strengthened our position in South Africa more before the actual outbreak of the war.

20474. Yes, with a view to defence prior to the arrival of reinforcements?—When one talks to the politicians one sees that, during the months just before the war, they were all under the impression that our Colonies had been made perfectly safe, and that they would remain perfectly happy, even if war broke out, until we chose to make a forward move, and that then all that was required was that the expeditionary force should start marching to Pretoria.

20475. I only want to draw a distinction between the number of men who ought to be kept in a place where war appears at all likely—men sufficient to hold places like Cape Town, Durban, Maritzburg—the principal fortresses—and places like Kimberley, of great money value, and generally to hold the country without trying to protect the frontier and the number of men that might be necessary—it might be 100,000 or 200,000, and it turned out to be 400,000—who were necessary to absolutely take possession of the two Boer States?—Yes.

20476. The distinction I have drawn seems to me to apply rather to the case of Bosnia with Austria; it took Austria a very large number of men, 200,000 at least, if not more, in order to quiet Bosnia, but no one would have expected that Austria should have kept 200,000 men as a garrison of Bosnia in the early stages?—Of course Austria had several hundred thousand men within close reach of Bosnia all the time.

Mr.
L. S. Amery.
24 Mar. 1903.

Mr. 20477. (*Viscount Esher.*) Still, it took two years, as
L. S. Amery. well as 200,000 men?—Yes.

24 Mar. 1903

20478. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I only want to draw that distinction, and to ask you whether you in your evidence draw the distinction between having a sufficient number of men to hold the vital points pending the arrival of reinforcements, and having enough men to undertake a war of conquest?—Yes, but in this point I was discussing not so much a war of conquest spread over a vast area, which again would have required a much larger force, but simply the question of the forward movement to get as far forward as Bloemfontein and Pretoria. I think the idea then was that the capture of the capitals would probably decide the thing, as it very probably would have done then. What I meant was that the force required simply to march to Bloemfontein and Pretoria would have practically been required to defend our very awkward frontiers.

20479. Yes, to defend them fully. I do not speak of South Africa because I know that certain people have views with regard to keeping troops there, but we could not afford to keep 80,000 men in every part of our Empire?—Oh, no; I only meant really to draw attention to the point that if the thing had been more thought over by a responsible department in touch with the Government the whole negotiations and the military policy would not have been so separated by a sharp edge as it was, nor would the Government ever have been under the impression that the defensive force there would defend our Colonies in the sense in which you hold the door of a house.

20480. (*Viscount Esher.*) Supposing they had thought it out; is it your idea that a larger force would have been permanently maintained in South Africa, because that is what *Sir George* means, or do you mean that just before the war larger reinforcements should have been sent out than were sent out?—I should think that if there had been a department that had thought the matter over, the forces in South Africa would have been gradually increased some time before, and both the forces there and some of our forces at home quietly prepared for South African conditions.

20481. How long before, because that is the point?—They would have thought out the matter; it might have been a year before.

20482. Do you not see that political considerations come in there directly; and, therefore, at what point would you suggest that larger reinforcements should have been sent out?—Of course, the fear of the Government was to draw attention by suddenly sending out large forces, but I suppose there could have been gradual and not very striking reinforcements extending over a year or so beforehand.

20483. Have you any reason to think that the military authorities did not draw the attention of the Government for a year or two before to that very point?—I dare say they did.

20484. That is the point; you must not assume that it was the want of military foresight; it may have been political considerations?—I think there is a difference—

20485. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Would not the considerable increase of men there, which you think was necessary, have precipitated the war?—Not if it had come about gradually; the sudden mobilising and sending of men at any moment during the last three or four months would have precipitated the war. The Boers were ready to go to war the moment they saw we were strengthening our hands very strongly.

20486. (*Viscount Esher.*) When you were in South Africa in the months immediately before the war, did the military people you saw there complain very much to you of not having larger reinforcements sent to the Cape?—As far as I remember they spoke of Cape Colony being defenceless.

20487. What was the political view? Did I understand you to say just now that their view was that they were perfectly safe, and that the actual initiative would always lie with them? Was that what you said just now?—I referred to the politicians at home. I think the politicians in South Africa had a sort of general confidence in the British Army and the British Empire, and they thought it would be all right the moment the troops came out.

20488. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I just want to get this second point quite clear; the first point has

been threshed out now, but on the second point do you hold that if it required 80,000 men to march to Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and to occupy the country in the first instance, therefore we should have kept 80,000 men in South Africa during those three or four years of tension?—No; therefore we should have tried to strengthen our forces to as nearly as possible that amount before the moment of the ultimatum came; when the political people saw the ultimatum was imminent, day by day almost, they ought to have tried in every way to make every preparation to bring the thing up. There are many ways in which preparation might be made without actually adding to the number of Regulars sent from England. Transport could have been got together, for instance.

20489. The point is this, that there are two distinct things, whether they had a sufficient number of men for the practical defence of the country prior to the arrival of reinforcements for the forward movement—that is one question; but it seems to me that your evidence goes to the effect that in your point of view we ought to have had, not for the defence pending reinforcement, but originally in the country, 80,000 or 100,000 men for an offensive movement?—No, I did not mean that.

20490. I am glad I have elicited that fact?—I only meant that the moment they saw war coming near the Government ought to have realised something as to the size of the war, which it did not, and should have taken every step to increase the forces and to hold over the last strain until they had more men there. The Government were under the impression that the men they had there could, so to speak, hold the door until the new forces came and walked through it.

(*Viscount Esher.*) There again you have the political situation; you are urging political considerations, and not military considerations; that is a question one might argue to the crack of doom, depending on the particular view you take of politics, but that is not a military consideration.

20491. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It is not a question of the general staff?—The carefully weighed opinion of the general staff with the authority it would have, based on a very large amount of information, and worked up, would have carried much more weight with the authorities than the offhand statement of the Commander-in-Chief or the Adjutant-General who had happened to be in South Africa a number of years before, and perhaps just quoted a little hand-book made up by the Intelligence Department.

20492. (*Viscount Esher.*) You have no reason to suppose that the authorities you blame would not admit—they probably would—that they were perfectly alive to the fact that there were not sufficient troops in South Africa; if they made that admission your argument falls to the ground?—But they do not; I have always heard them make the other one.

20493. (*Chairman.*) We quite understand what you mean; that if the question had been worked out adequately you think there would have been information before the Government which would have induced them to decide otherwise?—Yes. Now to come to my next point. I mean with regard to the staff work generally throughout the Army there was no clearness about the functions of the staff officer in war; somebody who was a very good fighter, because he wanted to be in South Africa, was attached as Chief Staff Officer to somebody, although he had no staff officer qualifications; others were good staff officers in peace, and excellent men to know all the Army orders and to fight with the War Office from Aldershot, but were not good fighting staff officers. I do not know that there is any good of giving instances, but the fearful staff muddling was in everybody's mouth, and with regard to many of the things that went wrong you invariably heard people say, "The staff was so hopeless," or "We were never told this." At the Battle of Ladysmith the staff work went to pieces very badly. Other instances besides Ladysmith were Stormberg, Modder River, and the loss of the Watervall convoy, and there were many other unfortunate incidents with regard to which bad staff work had a great deal to do.

20494. (*Viscount Esher.*) Is it your view that there are not enough staff officers, or that they are not properly trained in peace time?—That they are not properly trained, and that you want one school of training, a real general staff school, and that rather comes to another point—that there was a lack of co-operation between our different forces very often, because there

was no *esprit de corps* of the general staff, and each General had a natural tendency to play for his own hand, and his staff officers, instead of looking at the end from the point of view of the Army, were his own personal adherents, and magnified the quarrels that there were, and the selfishness.

20495. (Chairman.) Although the General chooses his personal staff he does not choose his general staff?—Still, they become his personal staff because they have not a pre-existing *esprit de corps* as a staff.

20496. There is the Staff College training, and the Staff College officers are appointed to the staff?—They pass through the Staff College, but that is not the same thing as having a permanently existing general staff, of which an officer would feel proud of being a member, and of being constantly in touch with the other members. The only *esprit de corps* we have at present is regimental.

20497. Do you mean that an officer appointed to the general staff would be cut adrift from the regimental work altogether?—I believe in the German Army they do send them back occasionally, but still his main interests and his main loyalty would be to the general staff.

20498. That is contrary to the bulk of the evidence we have received?—

20499. (Viscount Esher.) I understand what you mean is that you ought to have a Staff Corps, just as you have a Commissariat Department, and just as you might attach a Commissariat officer to a General Officer Commanding, and he remains in spirit a Commissariat officer, so you would like to see the staff officer attached?—Yes, and he would remain in spirit attached to the general staff of the Army.

20500. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) As a matter of fact, supposing the new Army Corps scheme is ever carried out, is not that largely the principle of it—that there is to be a body of staff officers attached to each Army Corps?—Yes, but they are not attached to each other; the staff officers of one Army Corps are not in intimate connection with the staff officers of another Army Corps, and they have had no common school of military training or thought.

20501. At the Staff College?—Yes, but that is not enough; that is only the theoretical teaching; they may have had the same lecturer perhaps, but what you want is a general staff where future campaigns are worked out, and discussed, and so on, and where you get a common sentiment and a common theory of war, which, of course, is very useful.

20502. In London?—Largely in London, and then sent out to the different Army Corps as it is in the German Army.

20503. I wanted to see whether you drew a distinction between the general staff in London and the general staff in the field, because they are two perfectly distinct things?—The officers who are attached to the different Army Corps or divisions would have had their training or part of it in the general staff in London, and the staff officer in the field would also have been some of his time in the general staff in London.

20504. (Viscount Esher.) You see in order to create that *esprit de corps* which you think desirable, a man who had been once a staff officer would have to remain a staff officer, because the moment he goes back to his regiment you break down that very spirit which you think should be encouraged?—I do think the majority should do as I suggest; you might have a young officer on the staff for three years, and send him back to his regiment, but if you bring him back to the staff again after that he should remain a staff officer.

20505. That is a detail. But what I point out is that if a man is in the 17th Lancers, and you take him temporarily out of the 17th Lancers and put him into the Staff Corps, knowing he is coming back again, his loyalty would probably remain to his own regiment, and your idea is the converse of that?—Yes.

20506. You see what you are doing; you are then taking a number of men from the regimental arm of the Service and creating them into a Staff Corps. That is your suggestion?—That is exactly what I want, and what I think absolutely necessary.

20507. Have you thought whether they could be adequately employed in time of peace?—That is the whole point; you want a staff which will not be overloaded with routine work in peace, but will have leisure to prepare itself scientifically and thoroughly for war.

20508. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You would require a very large number of staff officers in time of war?—Yes, in time of war you would have to create a certain number of new ones, but the people who had passed through the Staff College and gone back to their regiment could in time of war come out again, and do staff work.

20509. That is exactly what is proposed, except that you have not one central office for it, but you will have a central office in each Army Corps. Assuming the three regular Army Corps to be created, it is proposed that there should be three sets of staff officers all working together, and learning to know each other?—Within the limits of the Army Corps that is very good.

20510. Within the limits of the Army Corps you are satisfied with that?—Yes, but that is not quite enough for the whole Army, because at times different Army Corps, or parts of different Army Corps, may be in contact, and then you will find that there are different schools of military thought. That is one reason why the operations often were so very centralised, and subordinate officers were not given a free hand. A Commanding Officer could not know how certain Generals or their staff would act under given circumstances, but if there had been a common military training or a school of military history or strategy in connection with the general staff he would have had a much better idea, and have been readier to give them a free hand.

20511. The great bulk of the staff officers would have to do with the Army Corps, and there would be only a small proportion in London?—There would always be a large number permanently in London on the "great general staff," as the Germans call it, and the others would be passing through it from time to time.

20512. I do not think there is very much difference between your scheme and that proposed under the Army Corps system?—All the difference in the world. The one is a general staff and the others are local and temporary staffs.

20513. (Viscount Esher.) Has it not often struck you that the faults attributed to the staff are very often the faults of the General Officer Commanding, who does not know how to utilise the staff?—Yes.

20514. That is a conceivable proposition?—Yes, that is largely because there is not a general school of staff teaching.

20515. Can you not also imagine that the staff which has failed under one particular General, owing to his not being able, as I say, to utilise his staff properly, might succeed under another man?—Yes; but the fact that the two did not always fit together would have occurred much more rarely if you had had a proper staff system at home.

20516. You think the staff ought to work the General under those circumstances?—Yes; or rather that Generals and staffs should be trained in the theory and practice of working together in time of peace.

20517. (Chairman.) Would you pass on now to the next head: "The need of training men and animals under realistic conditions"?—I mean that much more attention should be given to marching about and looking after yourself, and I should think the company officers ought to take their men about much more; the sort of training that is given in running a Polytechnic tour would be most useful.

20518. We have had a great deal of evidence from various officers very much in that direction; of course, as you are aware, there is a difficulty in this country in giving them opportunities?—There are other countries where you could do it more easily, South Africa for instance. One of the worst defects of our soldiers is that they will not exercise sufficient restraint in food and drink, and so on, because they always live in barracks, and come back to meals at certain hours. If you could give the men some training by which they actually get to know by experience that so much food can last and has got to last for a certain number of days, it would make all the difference in your operations. When you want to make a march round the enemy's flank, you have to consider, can you trust your men to carry their rations for so many days, and if the General says to himself "I cannot trust them," then he has to give up what might have been a big success. Similarly about the horses; our horses were not trained for war at all, they were kept in the stable, and the soldier knew how to look after them in the stable, but not out

Mr.
L. S. Amery.
24 Mar. 1903.

Mr. L. S. Amery. 24 Mar. 1903. of doors, and they were the wrong kind of horses. In war the great essential for a horse is that he should be thoroughly tame and without nerves, and that he should be a determined feeder, eating whenever he has a chance. The Boer horse was splendid in that way; you threw the reins over his head during a battle, and he commenced grazing at once. For getting wounded men away in a hurry it is hopeless to use horses that are easily frightened. If you had 400 Boers going to hold a kopje it meant 400 Boers in the fighting line and three or four Kaffirs just preventing the horses straying too far, whereas if you had 400 British mounted infantry every fourth man was holding horses, and you only had 300 men in the fighting line, and you got beaten. With cavalry, especially Lancers, the proportion was even worse. As far as food and the other things you have to drag about with you in a campaign are concerned, you had to look after 400 men, however. It became still worse when you got the horses brought out in great cargoes from one part of the world, say the Argentine or Australia, to men who were not accustomed to that sort of horse, while the horses were not accustomed to being ridden in that sort of way. The Argentine is ridden in his own country with a peculiar saddle and stirrups. I believe it is a very good horse in its own country, but it arrives utterly done up, and is taken up country by train, not fed or watered on the way, and then a soldier who rides in a different style is put on board of it. You must have your horses trained together with your men, and trained for war.

20519. (Sir John Jackson.) The Boer horse you maintain is not a horse of the same spirit as the English horse?—No, it is a campaigning horse, a horse accustomed to rough it, and to go long distances on short food, and it will stand still while its master is hunting or shooting.

20520. So far as the noise of battle and guns and that sort of thing goes, the Boer horse is more experienced than the British horse?—It is accustomed to stand still with a man shooting from or over its back; that is a thing the Boers frequently do. They use their ponies for stalking purposes, shooting across their backs.

20521. (Viscount Esher.) How would you realise that? How would you propose to train a sufficient number of horses?—In the first place, I think you could keep horses in paddocks, and teach the men to run out and catch their horses.

20522. Are you speaking of cavalry?—And mounted infantry, too. We ought to have a large supply of horses trained to campaigning conditions; in fact I think if you pay a money grant to Volunteers, so that they may be able to shoot, it would be almost worth while paying a money grant to anybody who could produce a horse which would stand still and go on grazing while you fire a gun off.

20523. These are the sort of temptations you would offer to people in this country?—Yes, you could do a great deal in this country, but you could do a great deal more in the Colonies. Generally, I think if you could draw more distinction in the soldier's life between that part of it which is meant to be imitating war, that is the real roughing it, and the part which is ordinary life in barracks, it would be better. If you make him comfortable in barracks, and he understands he is to be taken out for a month or two real campaigning, he will not mind the hardships much, but what he objects to is living uncomfortably in barracks with the idea that the Spartan life there will make him fitter for war.

20524. (Chairman.) The next point is with regard to the long-range rifle and the smokeless powder; we have heard a good deal about that also, and the conditions prevailing in South Africa, which I suppose you recognise were peculiar?—Yes. The point I really particularly want to make is the physiological one, the question of running. Taking a man in boots and ordinary clothes, with a rifle and ammunition, the distance to which he can run without getting thoroughly exhausted and blown is about 400 and 500 yards. Under the old ranges the theory was that you crossed the open ground and you got into the enemy's position, a certain number of men getting shot on the way. Under present conditions, if you have an open field of fire of a thousand yards or more to cross, it does not become a question at all of the proportion of men who will remain unhurt at the end to carry through the charge, but before you are half-way across all the men are lying down on the ground utterly blown, with their mouths parched, and unable to go on. The point is that the human

wind will allow you to run at a reasonable speed—I am not talking of track running, but of the exciting and exhausting conditions of battle—for 300 or 400 or 500 yards, and it will not allow you to run 1,000, and the result is that with men on foot the old-fashioned infantry charge across level ground is no longer possible. The only way you can carry out the old-fashioned infantry charge is on horseback, and in all the later part of the war (I suppose you have had plenty of evidence on that) our cavalry leaders used to gallop any position with mounted troops in loosely extended order, and almost invariably with success.

20525. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) What is your deduction?—That you want large numbers of mounted troops, if you are in South Africa or a great part of India or Persia, to take positions by charging; if you are attacking with infantry you can only do it by crawling and stalking. If you want to charge a position you must do it with mounted troops.

20526. You mean more mounted infantry?—Well, mounted rifles or cavalry; that is a question of definition, but they must be good enough horsemen to carry through a charge at the gallop. Another point in favour of mounted troops in open country is that infantry cannot escape; if you get half way up a kopje or anywhere, and then get the worst of it, it is quite impossible to walk or run down and get back over a thousand yards of open ground, with the enemy on top firing at you; in fact, it means a surrender; whereas if the thing does fail in a mounted charge you double about and gallop off, and remarkably few men get hit.

20527. How far would you go—to the abolition of dismounted infantry altogether?—No, but I would almost abolish them in a country like South Africa.

20528. How about wars in Canada?—In Canada you would, I imagine, mainly use mounted troops.

20529. In a great many parts you would not?—I do not mean to say the infantry should be abolished, but their tactics have become different; for charging tactics you must have mounted troops.

20530. (Viscount Esher.) What is your proposition—that all infantry should be trained as mounted troops?—No, only that the proportion of mounted troops should be very much larger, especially in our Foreign Service Army, which is likely to fight in open country. On the other hand, with troops required for the defence of England, the proportion of horse mounted troops would be very low.

20531. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) We have no idea where we are going to fight; we do not think we are to fight again in South Africa just yet?—No.

20532. (Viscount Esher.) In that part of Natal you were in, do you consider that mounted troops would be as effective and as useful as they were with Lord Roberts in his advance?—Yes, they would at any rate gallop to the foot of the hill, though a certain amount of it might have to be done climbing.

20533. I suppose you are not in favour of diminishing the cavalry forces of the country?—No.

20534. You are not in favour of substituting mounted infantry for cavalry: that is not your point?—No, I should not like to go into the question of where the exact boundary line comes. The cavalry has been modified considerably since the war. All I mean is that mounted troops who are really good horsemasters, and good scouts, and something better than infantry put on horses will be wanted; that is my main conclusion.

20535. (Chairman.) As to attack and defence under modern conditions?—I see it said very generally that the defence has gained, and I think that an absurdity. Strategically, the offence is as good as ever it was. Tactically, one particular form of defence has gained enormously, namely, where you have a very wide open field of fire and good cover yourself. But that condition does not exist everywhere, even in South Africa. It is not easy anywhere to select a defensive position of any size protected by such a complete glacis, and which cannot be approached across ground affording cover to the attack on one side or another. Against good men, who can make good use of cover and are good shots, the defensive position is perhaps weaker than ever it was if the attack is skilfully handled. The great weakness of the defence has always been that it does not know where it is going to be attacked. Modern extension and the great range of the rifle have not altered that; even if the defence has a great open glacis in front of it on one side, all you need do, as the attack-

Mr.
L. S. Amery.
24 Mar. 1903.

ing party, is to post a few men on your side of the glacis, so that the offence cannot break out there, while you secretly concentrate your forces to strike home where the defence is weakest. After all the offence succeeded countless times in the late war; again and again with weaker numbers on their side the Boers have taken positions simply by making better use of ground. Or are we to assume that the Boers were so infinitely superior to our men that no deduction can be drawn? At Elandslaagte and Driefontein, where our men were well handled and a fair use was made of the ground, they attacked successfully. In my opinion the only conclusion is that skill is now of very much more importance, and the more skilful force, whether smaller or greater, will be able to carry out the attack, and that the defensive position, unless very well chosen indeed, is weaker now than it used to be. That is one of the things I have been struck with in talking to many officers—the great difficulty of finding a position to defend which is not commanded by other positions affording support to the attack. If you take the one instance of Nicholson's Nek, there was this isolated hill, with a number of other hills standing about one thousand to fourteen hundred yards away; under the old conditions these hills would not have come into play, and this hill had command of all the open ground round about. With the new rifle the whole of these hills were occupied by Boers keeping up a heavy long-range fire; a great part of our force was diverted to reply to that fire, with the result that the party of Boers who carried out the attack under De Wet brought a much greater volume of fire to bear on the weakest part of the position than they received in reply from the small fraction of the Gloucesters and Irish opposed to them. If you take Waggon Hill as another case, Waggon Hill would have been much more defensible with the old range rifle than with the new one, because it was heavily swept with rifle fire from Mounted Infantry Hill and a number of other points, all about one thousand yards away, which would not have come into play with the old rifle; so that I do not think there is any evidence to show that the defence has gained over the attack except in the one particular case when it is protected by over a thousand yards of open ground. Of course, if the attack is stupidly conducted it will lose more than it did before, and seem more hopeless. The advantage lies simply with the side that is more skilfully handled. And in so far as skill has more opportunity of showing itself in action rather than in inaction, I should say that the offence has gained rather than the defence.

20536. That leads to your next point, of quality against numbers?—Yes, that really comes to the same thing; I believe skill and character are almost everything. If you talk to officers who have been out there, you will find that what they always reckoned was not how many men they had with them, but had they the so-and-so Yeomanry or the so-and-so Yeomanry with them; for instance, some squadrons of Yeomanry were considered of more value than a whole brigade of others, and others again were not worth a section of infantry. There were troops like the Imperial Light Horse, to give an instance, who were worth an enormous amount of other troops. On the other hand there were some of the troops raised at the latter end of the war, as, for instance, the people who ran away at Lord Methuen's defeat.

20537. (*Viscount Esher.*) Can you be sure that the same principle is going to apply in European conflicts?—I should think so very largely.

20538. Of course it is contrary to the experience of previous wars?—The previous wars have been tests of general organisation rather than of this tactical question.

20539. Over and over again; in fact, in the great majority of cases, you have found that the big battalions walked over the others?—The Germans had the big battalions, but they had a lot of other things as well.

20540. Take the battles which were fought in the last century?—In the American Civil War victory was not always with the big battalions.

20541. The Franco-German war, in any of the battles that you can think of, the attacks were ultimately successful in nearly every case owing to the great masses of men who were brought to bear on some specific point?—Yes, but that was mainly a question of skill in the strategical concentration. Besides, the two sides were fighting on more or less the same tactics. The French were not individually more skilful; that

issue was not put to the test. Two thousand men will always beat a thousand of the same quality, but they will not beat a certain other thousand men. The big numbers had great difficulties in South Africa.

20542. That is hardly an argument for reducing your two thousand highly qualified men, if you can get them, to one thousand?—If you can get the highly qualified men the more the better—a million if you can get them.

20543. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You would say, if you could afford them?—Yes.

20544. That is as far as Europe is concerned?—Then it comes to be a question of countries where there is great difficulty about water supply, and where transport forms the principal item. In those circumstances the advantages on the side of the small force are very great; you can undertake movements which are absolutely impossible for a large army. Take the instance of a country like Montenegro; it held out against the Turks not so much on account of its fighting qualities, but because when the Turks brought large armies they starved before they got far into the country, and when the Turks brought small forces they were not sufficiently superior in quality to the Montenegrins to secure victory.

20545. (*Viscount Esher.*) But you are quite confident that you are not being misled by the nature of the war in which we have just been engaged?—No, I think not. I have always tried to keep—

20546. To keep yourself free from that influence?—Yes, still I do admit that the difference between fighting in England and fighting in countries like Canada or Persia or Manchuria is a very great one, and that the argument for small numbers and great mobility is much stronger in the case of foreign uncivilised countries than in the case of Europe.

20547. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You must have a considerable number if you want to take flanking movements?—If you take Jackson's fighting in the Shenandoah Valley he had only about 16,000 men, and had 170,000 men against him; on the other hand, he never met in battle more than about 10,000 of the enemy, as he always walked round them, and beat them in detail. It is just for flanking movements that you want to have a force which can use even the small roads and do with limited supplies or live off the country.

20548. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That assumes you can change your base at any moment, and not require a long line of communications with a fixed point to get your supplies?—Yes. With a big force you cannot, but with a small force you can if it is tactically very efficient.

20549. If the country is such that you can feed your small force in it?—Yes, every country will feed something.

20550. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Does it not come to this, that whatever your force is, it ought to be trained to the highest point of efficiency?—Yes.

20551. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) You would say brains before numbers?—Brains and physical and moral qualities too.

20552. Efficiency before numbers?—Yes.

20553. (*Viscount Esher.*) Take your own illustration, the case of the Shenandoah Valley; there your contention would be that the northern army might safely have been reduced in numbers if they had been more efficient?—If they had been much more efficient.

20554. That they were inefficiently led everyone admits, but has it ever been maintained that the men of which that army was composed differed materially from the men on the other side? We know that Jackson and Lee were very superior to the Generals against them?—I always thought that in the Southerners there was a larger element of men who were accustomed to out of door life, while the townsfolk predominated in the Northern armies. An efficient General is certainly a great acquisition, and in the instance we are discussing it was no doubt the element of difference in efficiency rather than the difference between the men that came into play.

20555. (*Chairman.*) And individual initiative and discipline you require also?—Although you want a great deal of individual initiative, because of the scattered fighting, and so on, yet discipline is quite as important, or more important than ever it was. You want discipline on a higher plane, as it were; you want a man who can intelligently take in exactly what you want him to do, and go on doing it all day, and two or

Mr. L. S. Amery. three days if necessary, without forgetting about it, and getting listless. The fault of our people was that when they came to a difficulty, and could not find their superior officer to refer to they stuck and became listless. You want somebody who when he is given a thing to do will just go on doing that. He may, perhaps, if necessary, slightly modify the exact wording of the order, but at any rate, he must be imbued with the conviction that he must try to carry out his superior's will against all obstacles.

20556. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How do you propose to reach that end?—That is a matter for the Adjutant-General; higher training.

20557. We want all these qualities in our men, and we are anxious to find out how we are to get them?—I think more could be done; through barrack-square training we can make a man do what he is told the moment he is told it; for the higher discipline you must send a man to go a certain distance, and do certain things, and he must come back the next day, having done them, and he must get into serious trouble if he has not done

them. There are a variety of things you can do with that object.

20558. Why I ask a question of that sort is that there is no use saying to the Adjutant-General that every man must be an "Admirable Crichton"; somebody must show him how he is to be turned into an "Admirable Crichton"?—If you could be trekking about the country you could train them practically; if you sent a sergeant out with a certain number of men, and told him to take two or three days in going to York, and to bring so many horses back, and if he got into serious trouble if he did not do it well, that would be a very good method of training.

20559. (*Chairman.*) We have had a good deal of evidence that during the war the men improved very much, and the officers also, so that it is the opportunity they want?—Yes. One has to keep an eye on the training of the will, apart from the mere training of the ear.

20560. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I do not think so. I think I have covered most of the ground.

Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, called and examined.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. 20561. (*Chairman.*) When did you go out to South Africa?—I went out in February of 1900.

20562. What part of the war then did you see?—I came to Bloemfontein just at the time of its early occupation, within a fortnight of the entrance of the British troops, and I was there for about three and a-half months, during the enteric epidemic. I then went on to Pretoria; I went part of the way with Lord Roberts' army, and saw one or two operations, and I afterwards went back to Bloemfontein, and then went up to Pretoria, and was there a very short time. I came back to Bloemfontein in August, 1900.

20563. You have been good enough to give us a précis of the evidence you wish to give, and in the first place you wish to speak as to the medical side?—I think that is the only side perhaps that I am really qualified to speak on, because I was personally engaged in it.

20564. Of course, we had to take into account that there had been a Royal Commission inquiring into the special medical case on the spot, but we have had some medical evidence, and we shall be very glad to hear what you have to say. As you say, you were at Bloemfontein at the time of the epidemic?—Yes, right through from the very beginning of that epidemic.

20565. What would you like to say about that?—I thought that the medical service was somewhat unjustly blamed for not having everything ready for so abnormal a thing—a thing which has never occurred before, and probably will never occur again. I think it was impossible to keep any service always ready to cope with such an emergency as that; it would be a waste during all the time when the emergency did not come, and it might only occur once in a century. I thought no blame was due to anybody; everybody did their best to meet the very exceptional circumstances. I think the epidemic was due to the fact that the Boers had cut the water supply; when an attempt was made to drive the Boers away five weeks later they went without fighting at all, and it is a very great question whether they would not have gone at once, immediately, after Sanna's Post. Of course, it is a question on which a civilian hardly ventures to offer an opinion, but still, I think there are facts and grounds for thinking they would; and with 30,000 men in Bloemfontein, it was a very great misfortune that we did not recapture the water supply. We were thrown back on the old wells in the town, and there is no doubt that those 8,000 or 9,000 cases of enteric which occurred in Bloemfontein were entirely due to drinking the water of the old wells. If we had recaptured the waterworks there would not have been an enteric epidemic.

20566. Do you think the epidemic did not begin before that?—I do not think so; there was no evidence of it as far as I could see or hear.

20567. It was not due to the exhaustion in consequence of the march?—I do not think that exhaustion in itself would ever produce a specific disease like typhoid; I think that exhaustion, and then drinking bad water on the top of exhaustion, would be very likely to do so.

20568. It would cause it to be a very severe epidemic?—Yes. I question whether there would be an epidemic

from mere exhaustion. I was very much struck with the wonderfully good work that the private hospitals did, and how impossible it would have been to meet the situation without them.

20569. Was that with regard to the Bloemfontein epidemic or generally?—That is the only thing I am qualified to speak about really, because that was the only medical work I did during that three and a-half months in Bloemfontein.

20570. You were working yourself?—I was the head physician of the Langman Hospital, which was one of the private hospitals, and I was working myself.

20571. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Had you many men in your hospital?—We had about 150 cases all the time; we were only supposed to take 100. We had 100 beds, but the pressure was so extreme that we took 50 per cent. more than we were supposed to take.

20572. (*Chairman.*) Do you think that that service was not sufficiently acknowledged?—I think that the gentlemen who fitted out the hospitals have been ignored unduly. I think they did a great patriotic action; they spent a lot of money, they did the service really an incalculable good, and I think there would have been a terrible scandal and disaster if it had not been for the presence of those hospitals, and the gentleman who fitted out his particular hospital, Mr. Langman, has never had one word of official thanks of any kind whatever, except in the field, where the General on inspecting the hospital complimented him on its efficiency. I meant he had received no acknowledgment from the home authorities; he has not only had no reward, but no thanks of any sort.

20573. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) It has not been officially recognised?—Not in any way, and I think when we need men to do a patriotic action in the future it will take the keen edge off them a little that they have been ignored in the past.

20574. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was Mr. Langman there?—He went out for a month at the end to see his hospital actually working, but his only son was in administrative charge of it. The only son, I may say, got some decoration given him, but that he deserved for his own efforts, quite apart from the fact that his father had fitted out the hospital. At the end of nine months the whole thing was given as a going concern to the Government without the Government being charged a penny. Mr. Langman kept it up for nine months, and at the end of that time he gave the tents and drugs and everything, so that some thanks were due to him.

20575. (*Chairman.*) It was taken over by the Government?—Yes, just the plant, not the personnel.

20576. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Was it a surgical hospital as well as a field hospital?—We supposed we would get more surgical than medical cases, but when we came to Bloemfontein we found there were nothing but medical cases. Later, I believe they got a large number of surgical cases when they went to Pretoria.

20577. (*Chairman.*) The medical service itself was short-handed?—It was very short-handed, and I think that could hardly be helped with such a demand as there was.

20578. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) Do you consider that the arrangements and methods of the Medical Board were quite up to the requirements of the moment?—I do not think they always were so. I think that the different hospitals varied very much according to the administrative capacity of the man who was in charge, and I think some were exceedingly efficient and I think some were not.

20579. With regard to the supplies sent out and the medicines, were they not very much antiquated and obsolete in many cases?—I think after the first pressure it was all right—all the drugs and everything needed were there; but during the first two months there was such a great pressure on the railway that I think many things were wanting which should have been there. Everything was wanting, in fact; all the conveniences, such as bedpans and things you really could not do without, you had to vump up.

20580. They had not given sufficient regard to the concentration of medicines; that is, to medicines in the concentrated form of capsules, and so on?—I never heard of their running short of actual drugs; I heard of them running short of all sorts of accessories, such as bedpans and so on, but I never heard of drugs being actually short.

20581. (*Chairman.*) That was only for the time when the railway was being opened up?—Exactly; the railway was running at the time, and had been for two or three weeks, and the pressure upon it was extreme.

20582. The single line had to bring up all the supplies also?—Exactly.

20583. You do not attribute any blame on that account?—No, I think not; I think they did very well.

20584. There were civil surgeons sent out by the Government. Were you satisfied with those you saw?—No, I thought they were a very mixed lot indeed; they were sent out singly, and not as a hospital. The men in the hospitals were excellent, but as to the single surgeons who were sent out, each just to do any duty allotted to him with the troops, I believe many of them were men of drunken habits, and not of good character, and, on the other hand, some of them were splendid. I think the Government should have taken more pains to test their men.

20585. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I suppose it is rather difficult to take out a number of competent surgeons all having their own civil employment to give them a living?—Yes, but I should imagine that if the thing was organised in time of peace it would not be difficult, if a roll was kept with a number of names upon it.

20586. I know from experience the difficulty of getting even three or four really good men at a time?—I am sure it would be difficult if no preparation beforehand was made.

20587. (*Sir John Jackson.*) It is the case that in the medical profession in the lower grades you find an unusually large proportion of unsatisfactory men?—That is what I mean.

20588. (*Chairman.*) Do you think there might be a register?—Yes, and some inquiry into a man's character before his name was put on the register.

20589. Do you think men would register themselves?—I think that if they understood that in time of war those men would get the preference, and that the pay would be good they would.

20590. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I suppose you are aware that there is now an Advisory Board composed of some of the first men in the profession?—Quite so; I should think that would quite meet the case.

20591. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) As many able surgeons and doctors could have been procured from the colonies, say Canada, do you not think that under the particular circumstances of the moment it might have been well to have disregarded the rule that none were to be received into the Army except those who had actually passed examinations in the United Kingdom?—Yes, it never struck me, but certainly it would have been very wise to have done so. I did not know they made that rule.

20592. There was a hard and fast rule that they must have passed examinations in the United Kingdom, and those, at any rate, from Canada must do so before they could be admitted into the regular Army?—Well, it is very extraordinary. I never knew that before.

20593. They are endeavouring to alter that now, but

such was the case, although many would have been glad to have taken employment.

20594. (*Chairman.*) On the military side you wish to speak to the spirit of the troops you saw in the hospital?—Yes, their bearing was splendid. I never saw a case of malingering or anything of the kind during the whole time I was there, and I was particularly struck by the spirit of the Volunteers, which I thought was higher even than that of the Regulars. They seemed really keen to get back to their work, to get fit, and get back to the front.

20595. Do you mean the Yeomanry?—The Yeomanry and the Colonial troops, the Canadians and Australians, were all equally good, and I think all South African Irregulars, too.

20596. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Even taking the Regulars, you would not say, considering that one always hears they are drawn from a lower class of the population, there was any bad spirit among them?—No bad spirit, but I thought the others were more educated men, and knew more what the fight was about.

20597. They had more intelligence?—Yes, quite so.

20598. (*Chairman.*) And the conclusion you came to was, that being able to get up good Volunteer troops a large standing army was not necessary?—I thought there was a strong argument for that from the excellent stamp of men we were able to produce so rapidly.

20599. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Were these trained men?—The Yeomen seemed to pick it up. It was soon very difficult to tell which was the Regular and which was not. They all looked very fine soldierly fellows, and very keen at their job.

20600. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Did you find the men of the Regulars of as good physique as the Volunteers?—The physique of the Regulars was pretty good, because they had been well weeded out before that; the regiments were full of Reserve men, and I was much struck with their physique, they were splendid fellows.

20601. Speaking generally, a large number of the Regulars would be recruited from a class which perhaps does not always feed very well?—That is so, but on the other hand they had left all the weaklings behind, and they had called in their Reserves, so that the regiments were very fine regiments.

20602. (*Chairman.*) But in this you are speaking more of the spirit of the man than of his performance in the field?—Exactly.

20603. You did not see so much of his performance in the field?—No; I saw two or three actions, but none of them were of great importance.

20604. You would not be prepared to say that the Volunteer troops, good as they may have been in spirit, could do the work that the Regular trained Army could do?—No, I think as a civilian, I could not commit myself to that statement; but my general impression was that they did very well.

20605. And, on the other hand, you want to have the best possible men in the standing Army?—Exactly; it seems to me that if a man has got to be conveyed so far it is very bad economy to convey anything but a first-class man.

20606. You would rather have half the numbers?—Half the numbers, and double as good, certainly. The good men and the bad men each consume the same amount of food, and cost the same for arming and clothing, and it is very false economy to take anything but a good one.

20607. Even if he went at twice the pay?—That is so.

20608. And you would insist on good shooting?—I think that a man should be turned out of the Army if he is not a first-class shot; I think that should be absolutely requisite, and everything else is subordinate to that. That is the conclusion I formed not from what I saw exactly, but I wrote a little account of the war, and I examined into a very large number of documents concerning it, and that was the conclusion I came to.

20609. Have you come to the conclusion that the shooting was distinctly inferior to the Boer shooting?—Not on all occasions; I think there was some evidence that there were occasions when it was better, but I should think that taking the average rate through the war it must have been inferior.

20610. If you reduced the numbers of the standing Army in that way, you would have to have an extension of the Auxiliary Forces?—Yes, a large extension.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

24 Mar. 1903.

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24 Mar. 1903.

20611. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Or you might have universal training when they were young?—If you could possibly get it, but I do not see any Government going to the country with that cry.

20612. Did they not say the same about the Education Bill of 30 years ago?—Quite so.

20613. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) After all, our rank and file did good work?—Most excellent work.

20614. Even at their present rate of pay, and with their present field of recruiting?—Yes, but I should think their shooting was very mixed; they had a certain number of good marksmen amongst them, but a large number of men were practically useless as shots.

20615. That is a question of training?—?

20616. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other point you would like to speak to?—I do not think there is anything that occurs to me.

20617. (*Lord Stratheona and Mount Royal.*) We have had it in evidence that the instruments used by the Army Medical Officers were very far inferior to those of the civil surgeons out there; that they were antiquated, and not such as were recognised as proper at the present day for surgical operations?—I could not speak on the point; our own were the very best procurable, but what the others had I do not know.

20618. We have it in evidence, also, that the sanitary arrangements of some of the hospitals were very bad?—There, again, that would be talking about other hospitals, and I do not know. We were so hard worked in our own hospital that if we did get out for an hour the last thing we thought of was to go and look at any other hospital, and all we wanted was to get a little fresh air. I was confined very closely to my own hospital for those three months.

20619. Had you an opportunity of forming an opinion of the services of the female nurses?—I think those nurses who got up to the front (I know nothing about those at Cape Town) were simply admirable, and I do not know what we should have done without them.

20620. They did excellent service?—Admirable; and we had such confidence in them that when we had a really serious case, and the drugs had to be given at a certain hour of the night, we did not ask the orderlies, although they were good men; we knew the nurses were infallible, that they would never sleep, and were bound to do their duty. The orderlies sometimes made a mistake, but the nurses never, and we had the utmost confidence in them. They were splendid, self-sacrificing women. Only three of them were in our hospital, and I believe two of them are dead. There is one other small point I should like to mention, and that is that it was very strongly borne in upon me over that epidemic that any breach of sanitary law ought to be made a military offence; the soldier never recognises anything except a military offence. You may argue with him, and give him advice, and he will not do it; but if they had made the drinking of foul

water (and I have seen the soldiers drink from the puddles by the wayside) a military offence, they would not have done it. No efforts were made to cut the thing off at the fountain-head, so as to prevent the men getting enteric; when they did get it, every effort was made to cure them, but no effort was made to stop them getting it, and as far as I know, right through the war there was no military order against drinking foul water, and no precautions of that sort were taken. We wanted preventive medicine very badly, I think, all through the campaign.

20621. (*Chairman.*) Precautions were taken in certain cases; we had at least one witness who told us that precautions were taken in his regiment?—I think it depended very much on the Colonel; I think if he liked it was done, but there was no general order, I am convinced, as to boiling water.

20622. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you not think it would be a simple thing to have interesting lectures given at the different recreation rooms at barracks, showing the microbes and impurities in water?—I do not know that familiarity might not breed contempt.

20623. In addition to the men, some of the younger officers know nothing about the danger of microbes?—No; but I am quite sure that if the soldier was told he would be punished if he drank that water, he would take a direct interest in microbes then.

20624. We have had it on the highest authority that it was impossible to keep him from drinking it?—I think a military offence he will never commit.

20625. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Do you think it would be an advantage if in time of peace you had something in the shape of a retaining fee for medical men in consideration of which in time of war you should have a call on their services?—I think a mere registry, with promise of employment under a high scale of wage, would do it without the retaining fee, and I think that money might be saved.

20626. But a man gets on in his profession, and while he may be quite eager to go to war this year, five years hence he is in a good practice, and he does not feel inclined to go?—He need not bind himself to go, but he would put his name down, and he would have the refusal, and I think so many men would do that that you would find you would have enough for your purpose.

20627. Competent men?—You would have an opportunity of examining into their antecedents and character a little if they put their names down on a registry.

20628. But do you not think you would stand a chance of getting better men if under such an arrangement as I have suggested the Government could call upon men who in many cases would have had experience and had got on in their profession?—I think that would be the ideal way, but the country seems to be put to great expense over many things, and it is a question if it could be afforded.

20629. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything more you would like to add?—I do not think so.

(After a short adjournment.)

Major The Lord LOVAT, C.B., D.S.O., called and examined.

Major
The Lord
Lovat, C.B.,
D.S.O.

20630. (*Chairman.*) We are aware that you raised a corps for service in South Africa, and we are anxious to have a few particulars with regard to that corps if you have no objection?—Should I give the facts with regard to raising it first of all?

20631. If you please?—Immediately after Magersfontein I went to the War Office and asked permission to take out 10 or 12 gentlemen and 50 or 60 Highland stalkers for the purpose, being attached to the different brigades and divisions of the army in South Africa with a view to utilising their developed talent of using the spy-glass. The War Office declined my offer, and said I must produce a unit of 100 men or more units of 100 men each, and that they did not want any specialists to be used in that particular fashion. I accordingly raised two units of 126 men each, and as a matter of fact we went out 269 strong. We went out to South Africa and remained out there for 18 months. The first contingent took part in the advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria and to Diamond Hill, then in the Wittebergen fighting and all through the earlier chases of De Wet in the Orange River Colony. In June Lord Kitchener sent

me home to raise another lot of men, and I took out a second lot of just under 300.

20632. In June of which year?—June, 1901. They landed early in July, 1901. The first contingent then returned home. On the 20th September of the same year Colonel Murray, who was the Commanding Officer, was killed, and there were heavy casualties, and a further draft of 130 men were sent out in November, 1901, making the strength up to 360 men or thereabouts. The second and third contingents remained out till the end of the war, landing in this country in August, 1902.

20633. What were the class of men you got?—The class of men were ghillies as a whole. We aimed at about 30 per cent. of stalkers, and I suppose we had between 20 and 30 per cent. of either *bonâ fide* stalkers or their sons, and I should say something like 35 per cent. of men thoroughly trained in the use of the telescope, and with several years experience of it.

20634. That was your specific object in view?—Yes.

20635. When the War Office told you that you must

Major
The Lord
Lorist, C.B.,
D.S.O.
24 Mar. 1903.

form units, did that mean that instead of being scouts they were to be used as ordinary Yeomanry?—Yes, I took that to be what they meant. We asked leave to be attached to the Highland Brigade for scouting purposes, and we were permitted to be attached to the Highland Brigade for scouting purposes, but the general idea as to using these men, and the way I considered they ought to have been employed was by being attached to general staffs, to the artillery, and the advanced guards, where they would have opportunities for using their telescopes. Instead of that they were confined just to the one brigade.

20636. And were used as ordinary soldiers?—Yes, but they were used in the main for advanced guard and scouting work.

20637. That was done, I suppose, by the authorities in South Africa?—Yes.

20638. But as far as the organisation in this country was concerned, it was a unit?—It was a unit similar to any other unit. We got no extra grant for telescopes, although I tried for it. The second time I went out I was given a grant of telescopes.

20639. How were you equipped?—In the same way as ordinary yeomen; we had very nearly the same grant as the Yeomen, although it was not quite so high.

20640. And were armed with the rifle?—The rifle and bayonet.

20641. You had no difficulty in getting the number of men you required?—No, we had about 1,200 applications the first time, about 900 the second, and 300 or 400 the third—about three or four times as many as we wanted each time.

20642. So that you could make a selection?—Yes, we were able to make a selection.

20643. And they were practically picked men?—Yes.

20644. And as a matter of fact they were used for scouting purposes?—Yes.

20645. Do you still attach great importance to the use of the telescope?—Yes, I do very strongly, but I think that to develop it to its furthest point would be on the three lines I indicate. (1) Attached to staff; (2) attached to artillery; (3) attached for scouting and outposts. The manœuvres are now in such extended order that it is impossible to see with the ordinary Zeiss glass, unless you are an expert with the telescope; to the full extent when the fighting is on anything like open ground—to see the extent and movements of your own forces and the enemy. Fighting is often carried on over 12 miles front. With the telescope in South Africa we have often distinguished single horsemen up to a distance of 14 miles on account of the clearness of the air, and moving bodies of men up to 20 miles.

20646. You would not be able to do that in this country?—No, but you would be able to tell moving bodies of men from the top of a hill with no mirage and with the light of the sun behind you, up to great distances. You would not do it in England, but you might do it miles off in Scotland, where the air is clearer. I do not know about that in this country, but in South Africa I am certain of those two distances stated. With regard to the artillery, I think it would be a very strong point for two special reasons, and the first is on account of this, that undoubtedly on a great many occasions the telescope was able to point out what the gunners, with Zeiss's, did not see themselves, and as proof of that on all occasions when we acted with gunners, if we went into action with the same artillerymen, they asked for some of our spiers to be attached; they always reported that the spiers did good work. As well as for finding the adversaries it was very useful in seeing that the advancing infantry on our own side was not shot into, as occurred on very many occasions in South Africa; I should think that almost every man would say that in every fourth or fifth fight they had seen shells being fired into the advanced columns of our own infantry. That arises from the range of the guns being so large, and from the fact that the artilleryman is busy firing his guns, and he fires at what he sees. Our men were no doubt able to get a more extended view, and having nothing to do with the working of the guns, they were able to watch the movements of other troops and prevent the infantry or cavalry on a flank movement being fired into. I may mention as an example that on one particular day, at a small fight at Wit Kop, Heilbron, a hill taken three times, each time our men were driven off by our own fire by separate guns, by the 5 inch first of all, then by the horse artil-

lery, and finally by the field artillery acting in different parts of the field. The hill was taken by the Scottish Yeomanry at one time; then the Bushmen were driven back, and it was taken again by the Scottish Yeomanry. I put that as an example to show you how often errors were made in shelling our own troops, which I think would be avoided by the use of the telescope. Finally, for the further use of the telescope it was useful for scouting and advanced guard work, and also for outposts. With the great range of the telescope you are able to see movements before they are absolutely developed, and in South Africa it was specially useful in connection with the habit of the Boers in laying traps for the advanced guard; as a rule, Boers were much more readily caught at six to seven miles off than when we were at about 3,000 to 4,000 yards, because by that time if they were going to lay a trap they were in their places. By detecting them at seven miles off you had seen them before they imagined that they could be seen, and the trap was seen in the process of formation.

20647. That a man with a telescope could do?—Yes, and the men with the Zeiss (the Boers being armed with Zeisses themselves) only got out of sight when they were able to see men coming, but the man with a telescope, being able to see further than that, therefore could detect them. In the same way we have often seen Boers with Zeisses riding from a distance, get on the top of a hill, and creep over the top and spy with their Zeisses into camp at four or five miles off, thinking they could not be seen, which was a definite proof that the telescope could more readily pick them up. I should like further to add in that particular line that I am absolutely certain of one thing, and that is that it is no good giving telescopes to untrained men. Outside the 35 per cent. I told you of we had a certain number of those Zeisses and opera glasses, and we invariably served these out with very much better effect to the men who had not had previous training. A man cannot learn in the course of a month or two accurate spying with the telescope.

20648. How long do you think it takes to train a man with the telescope?—I should say it would mean several months to make him better than a man with a Zeiss—six or seven months, but I think men improve up to 10 or 12 years' work. I have never met an amateur whom I should consider equal to a first-class stalker.

20649. How would you propose to get a sufficient amount of training, except from the men who actually take it up as their work?—I think there is only one way, and that would be by retaining fees.

20650. A retaining fee to stalkers?—A retaining fee to a certain number of men who had done well in the past, or a retaining fee to stalkers or ghillies if they joined any corps on the principle of the reservists.

20651. Supposing you went outside of the stalker or ghillie, so much training would be required, that you could scarcely devise a system?—I do not think so, for the telescope to be valuable. With Zeiss glasses men could undoubtedly improve themselves rapidly by practice, but with the telescope my opinion is—and I know a great many men who have been out there always held the same views, and all my squadron leaders, I know, held the same views—that it is not worth while giving a man a glass in the hope that he would train himself in a few months, but that it was better to give him a Zeiss, which he can quickly learn, and let him work on with that.

20652. I was thinking more of the future; you intend to have a corps raised?—Yes.

20653. You have got authority to raise one?—I have got them raised now; I have got a thousand men.

20654. Are they in the same proportion as to the men who can use the telescope?—Not in the same proportion, but I have got, I should think, at least 15 per cent. of first-rate men with the telescope. I may have others I do not know about that I have recruited, but in all cases where I got the chance of having a man with the telescope I took him at once.

20655. With the majority of the regiment do you propose to try to train them for the telescope?—No, I do not think you could train them for the telescope to be proficient. The essential things you have to teach your spiers to be experts in are to be able to catch up large masses of men at great distances, which one cannot do if you are only training them in Scotland with small bodies of men. The next point is, of course, to get them into the habit of making accurate reports and know-

Major
The Lord
Lovat, C.B.,
D.S.O.
24 Mar. 1903.

ing sufficient about military work to be able to follow the ordinary rules as to the number of men passing a given object in a certain time, and that sort of thing, which, of course, I could train them in, and I intend to do. And, thirdly, one of the most important points is to train them with guns, in order to be able to tell by very accurate spying where shells are bursting, which you cannot do unless you have opportunity of training with artillery.

20656. And the men who would do that work would be your 15 per cent.?—Yes.

20657. I was referring to the rest of the regiment. Would you endeavour to instruct them in the use of the telescope at all?—No, because I should have enough for my own use in the 15 per cent., and, of course, if I was given any grant of telescopes, or anything like that, I certainly would do so, but I would not be able to do it at the present moment.

20658. Would there not be the difficulty, even if you had a grant of the instruments, in finding time to educate the men?—Certainly, but I should like to let them have the telescope to use in their own time.

20659. You think they could teach themselves in that way?—I do not think it would be a very popular move in the Highlands with regard to the deer of the neighbouring proprietors, but it could be done in that way.

20660. As a matter of education you think it could be done?—I think, certainly.

20661. Because a man could teach himself?—Yes, they have all got the idea of it in the Highlands, because they are talking with stalkers and ghillies, and those people who go to the hill, and even if we took every ghillie that went out in employment, and gave him a glass, he would, instead of leading a pony, and not having a glass, use the glass and spy most of the time. If a ghillie gets a glass he will always spy most of the time, as it is an interesting pursuit.

20662. Your corps as it is now organised is to act as a unit in the same way as you did in South Africa?—Yes, two regiments of Yeomanry.

20663. And not, as you originally intended, as scouts pure and simple?—No. I did not bring up that idea before the War Office in my return. I simply asked for permission to raise two Yeomanry regiments because I did not think that they cared for anything except units.

20664. Do you think, from your experience in the war, that two regiments of the size of your present corps could be usefully employed in connection with the Army as scouts?—Well, you see you always get over this difficulty of using special scouts in this way, that it is so manifestly hard on horses; the advanced guard takes about one-third to a half more out of horses than any other work, and therefore in the ordinary practical work of a campaign you have got to have a certain roster on which men do their turn of advanced guard and of scouting work. You have perhaps your cavalry screen, which everyone takes their turn in, and you have your advanced scouts in front of your cavalry screen. Those advanced guards employ a great number of men, and the men having to go enormous distances to the flanks, they go very much further than the others, and they take tremendous exertion out of their horses, and therefore would not be able to come up to time unless special arrangements were made. As a rule, although they may give certain regiments preference for advanced guard, they have got to put in other regiments when the original regiments' horses are done.

20665. You think what is required is a body of scouts belonging to each regiment?—I think you ought to have trained scouts, certainly; there ought to be men specially trained in connection with each regiment. I think there ought to be a body of scouts. I do not know if you are arguing now on our existing methods, or on what our methods should be.

20666. I was thinking more of what they should be?—I am personally of opinion that if you had a properly organised body of scouts you ought to have them quite separate from the regiments, and get the advantage of the talent which we have in the Highlands, in Australia for trackers, which is most important, and fine riders like the South African men. I would have a special recognised scouting corps composed of men who are accustomed to such work, and who show natural adaptability to that particular line, but you would have to equip them differently, and you would have to give them two horses apiece, probably, and everything else in keeping with that, officers included.

20667. And attach bodies of them to every force as it was required?—Yes.

20668. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) What was the class of horses you had for your scouts?—We just got them from the remount dépôt as we could draw them.

20669. What size of horses?—They really ran to every size. There was absolutely no system about the issue of remounts. We were supposed to get what they called at one time Yeomanry cobs, and the cavalry were supposed to have rather larger horses than the Yeomanry, but as a matter of fact it really meant the class of horse they had got on hand in the dépôts.

20670. What would be the usual weight of your men?—I could not give you a certain answer as to that, but they are heavy men; the chest measurements are very high.

20671. So that they really ought to have a strong, wiry horse for the work?—Yes, they are distinctly bigger men than the ordinary cavalry regiment.

20672. (Chairman.) But the corps you are raising now is not intended to take the place you have been describing in the Army system?—No, I have not been asked to do that; of course, I shall personally develop the scouting side, because I think that is what my men are adapted to. I shall develop that more than any other line, and I have informed some officers at the War Office of my intention of doing that, and I think they believe that sound. I shall work on those particular lines specially, rather than trying to make them a smart parade regiment, which they would never be.

20673. Do you think the Yeomanry force is the best for the particular purpose of scouting, rather than the regular forces—part of the Army?—No, I think Regulars would be much better; I think there is nothing requires higher training and more strict discipline than scouting work, and I do not see how you can get that in perfection outside the Regular Army. You may have individually excellent men, but I think you would be very liable always to break down, both through lack of military knowledge and through not strict enough discipline.

20674. You think that the work of your corps in South Africa has proved the advantage of the system, and that the system ought to be adopted in the Regular Army; the system of training scouts?—Yes.

20675. But nothing of that kind has been done hitherto?—No. I think it would be an excellent thing if they gave bounties, or by some method tried to attract the men into the Army who would make the finest scouts. I am certain if they could get that done it would improve the Army very largely, and if they had a first-rate scouting corps the different classes I consider the best would be our Highlanders, the New Zealanders, and Bushmen for tracking purposes, and perhaps your Western Canadians, who have magnificent sight and knowledge of horses.

20676. The only disadvantage I see is that you would take away all the stalkers from the deer forests?—Yes, you would, no doubt, but I am afraid you would not get them to go.

20677. (Sir John Jackson.) Are your men mostly raised in the same district?—All over the Highlands, the Northern Highlands chiefly.

20678. Any from the west?—Yes, I had a good many men from the west. Sir Arthur Ord, the owner of North Uist, brought 20 men with him who did very well. It is rather against one's general opinion of the West Coast, but I am quite prepared to say, as to the 50 men in all that I had from the West Coast, that they were as good as any men I had.

20679. The general impression is not so?—That is so.

20680. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Did you enlist any men in the colony?—None.

20681. All here?—All in the Highlands.

20682. (Chairman.) You have a heading here, in your précis, "Imperial Yeomanry, with special regard to officers and organisation of the force." What have you to say about that?—The first point I wished to mention was the question of Yeomanry officers, the difference of stamp. I do not know if you care for me to go into that—between the first and second classes of Yeomanry officers who went out.

20683. Do you mean the first and second contingents?—Yes.

20684. We have, of course, had a good deal of evi-

dence with regard to that question?—And the number of officers who were sent home as useless?

20685. Yes, we have had evidence as to that?—And the points with regard to how those officers were selected, or if there was any selection?

20686. Yes, we have heard a good deal about that?—And that the regiments out there had practically nothing to say to any men who applied being given an officer's berth; I mean that the officers who were actually serving in South Africa had nothing to say to a man who had gone home from their regiment to this country, and who then applied for an officer's position at the building here.

20687. Are you speaking of the men in the first contingent?—To take an example, I had a man who went home from me—a completely worthless fellow—

20688. (*Sir Geogre Taubman-Goldie.*) Do you speak of the private soldier?—Yes; and who applied for an officer's position in the second contingent of Imperial Yeomanry. As far as we could judge out there, practically any man who applied who had been in South Africa before was at once given a commission. I had a special arrangement with the War Office in writing that I should select my own officers, and that kept me perfectly safe, and I never got anyone except I wanted him. As I say, I knew a case of one of my own men, and I know a great many other cases that I heard of by word of mouth. This man who went home from me asked me to recommend him for an officer, and I said I could not, but he came out with another lot almost immediately as an officer.

20689. As an officer?—Yes.

20690. (*Chairman.*) We have had a good deal of evidence of that kind?—I need not go into that point further. Besides that 184 officers who were sent off up to June, 1902, as undesirables, each regiment practically had officers who were completely worthless, and could not be taken on trek; they used to be left in the different headquarters for superintending baggage and stores, and that sort of thing. The number really was very considerable of officers who were worthless, and that is the point I wish to bring out.

20691. That did not affect you?—No, because I made the stipulation before I went out the first time, in writing from the War Office, that no officer should be sent me unless I wanted him.

20692. You went home to get a second contingent?—Yes, but for the third contingent the officers were selected for me by men whom I appointed to select them for me.

20693. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Were your officers from the Regular forces?—I got as many as I could from the Regulars; I got two in each contingent from the Regulars.

20694. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) How many men had you in your first contingent?—269.

20695. And the largest number altogether you had?—I had never more than 360 in the field together. The other point I should like to bring out with regard to the organisation of the Yeomanry officer is the point of ordinary home service. I have just been raising a regiment, and from inquiry in other regiments it seems certain that you have to take two classes of officers. You have first of all got to take your officers from the men of influence in the country, and the men financially sufficient to be able to help your squadrons to go, and, secondly, you want to get the other officers who, if it comes to war, would be ready to help, and who would really do the work of the squadron, and who, as a rule, are not so rich. At the present moment by the regulations one is given the same number of officers practically as in a cavalry regiment, but I think it would be advisable if the numbers of officers in the Yeomanry were increased. In the first place a sufficiency of officers in the Irregular forces is more necessary than in the Regular forces, as the discipline is not so high, and non-commissioned officers less effective, and then in time of peace, if you are able to have rather more officers, it lessens the expenses in the regiments. At the present moment the system is gone on that no attention is paid to the fact that you have these two different classes of officers, and the result is that you can get your men of position easily enough, they can afford it, but with the equipment they have to provide themselves with and the cost of the annual training, and so on, the 16s. 8d. that the subalterns get does not cover it, and therefore you are not able to get the number of poorer officers whom it would be advantageous to get into the

Yeomanry. As well as that, you have hard and fast regulations now, that they have got to do a course at Aldershot and a course of a month with the Yeomanry or with a Regular unit in their first two years. This prevents your men of the second class—your poorer men you want to get in—coming, because they cannot get away very often for the time to do this. My opinion is that if you could pay them a little better for these classes and make it easier for them during the time of training, you would get not only your landed gentlemen in and the people you must enlist, people of influence, but you would also get the poorer class, the large farmer class or the gentleman farmer, or the barrister without much money—a man with brains, but without means—and by paying him a little higher for those different obligatory classes and courses you would make it worth his while to go to them, and therefore you would get him as an officer. There is no doubt about it that your landed proprietor and the person you put in for recruiting purposes of your regiment is not always much aid once you have your Yeomanry regiment going, and therefore you want as well younger men perhaps to carry on the business, and you can only get that if you are not tied up in any way, and if the point of finance is no bar. I am thoroughly in favour of courses, and I think the more courses the better, but you must make them easy for the poorer men who attend them.

20596. (*Chairman.*) All these officers are Volunteer officers, and not officers of the Regular Army?—Yes, these are all Yeomanry officers I am referring to now; I am just talking of the organisation of the Yeomanry.

20597. In peace time?—Yes.

20598. On service, I suppose, you would look forward to having Regular officers among them, too?—There is no doubt that the Yeomanry regiments do well with the Regular officers, because they have the training. I am absolutely convinced, because I have trained three separate lots, that you can train men as quick as you like in a very few months to be as good as you ever get them up to the stage which you cannot get beyond without strict discipline. You cannot train officers in two or three months, it takes many months before they really become so that you can trust them to do work.

20599. Would you not hope to get into the Yeomanry, even in peace time, officers who had served in the Regular Army?—I daresay there might be a certain number.

20700. But that would not be sufficient backbone?—I do not think so; if you could get them it might, but as you think you would get them in sufficient quantity?

20701. I was asking you?—I beg pardon. I do not think you would. I do not feel qualified to offer an opinion upon that, because I really only know northern Yeomanries, and just casually about Yeomanries from the south, and it has not been my experience yet from what I met in South Africa that there were a great number of Regulars. A few fashionable regiments undoubtedly had them, such as the Bucks Yeomanry.

20702. Of course, in the emergency in South Africa the Regular officers were not available probably?—No, and therefore they would not be in any future war.

20703. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You speak of giving somewhat higher pay; what rate of pay would you consider sufficient to induce the class of men you mention to enter?—I think they must first of all get the whole of their equipment free.

20704. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How much does that come to?—It depends chiefly on the clothing—£32 is the minimum, I think.

20705. To be renewed how often?—It very much depends on the smartness of the corps, and those things.

20706. On the average?—I have only started my regiment, and I do not know. I have never been in the Yeomanry before.

20707. Following up Lord Strathcona's question, you could not say what the annual cost of your proposal would be per regiment?—No, I have not calculated it out. I could answer your question, perhaps, in another way, namely, that as a rule, in regiments, I have heard that it costs a subaltern about £40 a year.

20708. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What are they paid?—Some get 6s. 8d. a day and 10s. grant.

20709. What would you make the pay?—I think I should raise it by another 10s. or so—give them £7 more, and they should get their equipment clear, and I should give a contingent grant to the commanding officers, so as to cover prizes, band, etc., which at the present moment come out of the officer's pocket.

Major
The Lord
Lovel, C.B.,
D.S.O.
24 Mar. 1903.

Majors
The Lord
Lovat, C.B.,
D.S.O.

24 Mar. 1903.

20710. And you think that by giving that additional pay you would attract the men?—Yes; so many of them have to get a man to take their place, and the whole of their pay which they draw at their course goes to this locum tenens. That is what so many officers complain.

20711. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You spoke of the uniform. Did you find the clothing supplied of good quality?—Yes, first-rate.

20712. Were you satisfied with the boots?—Yes, first-rate. We supplied our men with boots in the first instance.

20713. We heard a great deal about the quality of the boots?—I could not say about boots, but the clothing I should say was good. I do not know about boots for this reason, that we supplied our own boots to the men when they first went out.

20714. Do you consider that two pairs of boots or shoes were sufficient for the year?—My acquaintance with facts of that sort is small on active service. We drew boots without any rule. If so many men wanted boots, they just got them; therefore, I am afraid I did not keep statistics. I could not give an opinion of any value, but the clothing, taken throughout, and the accoutrements were excellent.

20715. (Chairman.) Have you anything else to say about the organisation?—No.

20716. You also have a note here in your *précis*, "Some headings under which public moneys have been wasted in South Africa." What have you to say on that point?—I thought of mentioning one or two headings which specially came before me. The first one, which no doubt you have had particulars about, was the pay to the native leaders and drivers of oxen.

20717. I do not think we have had that before?—The natives at the beginning of the war were paid at the rate of £4 a month for a driver and the ordinary rate of pay in the colony for this class of native before the war was something like £3 to £4 a year, with perhaps a couple of sheep and a small amount of mealies. This pay of £4 for the drivers went on till February, 1901, and then by order the rate of pay was lowered. I may say that from personal observation the natives have not the least idea of the value of money. Every South African I ever spoke to on the subject, and I spoke to a very great number of large employers, including men in Kimberley, and farmers, were flabbergasted at the rate of wages paid. The number of drivers of those ox wagons was very considerable, and the sum wasted was therefore a large one. My opinion is, and it was the opinion of many of the people out there, that if you had paid drivers a half, or even a third, of the amount, you would have got equally good men. A large number who were supposed to be good drivers were totally unskilled.

20718. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Can you remember when that pay of £4 a month started?—No, but it was there when I arrived in March, 1900, and it went on to February, 1901. I understood it started from the beginning of the war.

20719. That is your impression?—Yes.

20720. (Sir Frederick Darley.) The transport officers were responsible for that, were they?—No, it was the people who made the contracts at the beginning, I presume.

20721. Who were they?—I do not know; we only took the orders given us to pay the £4, and we paid it. I presume it was the advisers as to the contracts at the beginning of the war.

20722. (Chairman.) Where did you get the natives from?—I do not know in the early stages where the natives were got from, but in the later stages, when we had to get natives ourselves, when everyone had to impress them more or less, we used to go to certain spots where there were native agencies, and the way they did at Dordrecht, for instance, was that they paid so much to the head chief, and he provided so many natives; I think the rate was 10s. a man produced, and they came down and practically served in forced labour until the thing was finished.

20723. Were those men paid £4 a month?—No, that was in the latter stages. I take it the men all through were paid on the same principle. We used to be sent out with raw drivers. We used to go to the transport and requisition for so many drivers.

20724. You got them from the transport?—Yes, unless you could pick a man up on the road; you saw a big native on the road, and asked him to come and drive for you.

20725. The men you paid £4 to you got from the transport, and they got them from the contractors?—Not all from the transport; we very often picked them up; you would go to the transport if you did not know where to get natives.

20726. Did you pay £4 to the men you picked up on the road?—Yes, for drivers that was the standing wage.

20727. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) When you say you picked them up what do you mean?—You might see a man at a native kraal, and you would give him a pot of jam, and ask him to come, and he would very likely take it on at once. To show how little they knew about money, they used to pay up to 30s., or £2 for a single spur, which is always a native's delight to have on his feet.

20728. (Chairman.) The reason I asked the question was that those men you did get from the transport were contractors' men—the men the transport got under some contract?—I could not tell you, but I should not think so, because they were always looking about for men, and I think they just picked them up as we did.

20729. Were not the oxen contracted for?—That is different; I do not talk about Julius Weil's contract, and that I know nothing about. I talk about the regimental transport, our mule wagons, and so on.

20730. How were the mules provided? Were they not by contract, too?—No. The mules and mule wagons belonged to the Government. The ox transport which was arranged for by Julius Weil was, believe, at first paid for at the rate of so much a day and so much a span, and there were certain iniquitous rules to the public cost about that; if they were over driven they used to be filled up by looted oxen. The mules were regimental transport, and the regiment had to get drivers somewhere, either from the transport or by picking them up from the road.

20731. And it was those you had to pay £4 to?—Yes.

20732. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Do you know what the contractors paid for the drivers of the oxen? Did they pay £4?—If it was Julius Weil, he certainly would not. The common rate of wages before the war I know, and during the war at different farms, was from £2, in some cases to £3 and £4 and £5 per year, with a sheep every now and then and mealies.

20733. (Sir John Jackson.) Do you think that in all cases the chiefs were paid?—I will not give that as an opinion.

20734. But in many cases?—I am sure that it is the only way to get natives.

20735. I know several cases where large numbers of men were got without a single sixpence being paid to the chief, not for fighting purposes?—I only just speak of instances I know about. I do not offer the information in a general way, but it is the common plan to get natives in that way.

20736. (Chairman.) Have you any other instance?—I thought I would bring up the instance of the kit that was given to us—the unsuitableness of certain kit which was issued. To take one example of the wastage of money in that way: they issued a hay net for South Africa, and they continued to issue it to the end of the war or within a very few months of the end of the war; and also a shoe case. Now, no man ever carried a hay net in South Africa, because there was no hay. When I came home for my second contingent I said, "I do not want any hay nets," but they told me I should take them out, and I did. In the same way no man ever wore a shoe case after the first three days out from home, and everyone must have known that, and they knew it at the War Office. I sent back a report myself on the subject, which was acknowledged. There were several other useless articles, breast-plates, and so on, which were issued with a lot of horse trappings for each horse, and which were generally thrown away on arrival in South Africa. There was no good dragging them about in a wagon. That is just an instance of the way money is wasted, through lack of communication from here to the front, or from the front back, or not paying attention to communications.

20737. These unsuitable articles were simply thrown away?—Yes, or returned into store out there. If you were on the veld when you got a brand new lot of men sent you, you would throw the useless articles

Major
The Lord
Lova', C.B.
D.S.O.
24 Mar. 1903

away. With the second contingent Lovat's Scouts the useless rubbish was put into store, but as to the third contingent, we dropped a lot of kit; we were trekking hard, and we could not fill the wagons with rubbish. The third point I was going to bring up with regard to the wastage of public money, was the subject of Yeomanry pay. The Colonials had a paymaster attached to each corps, and the Yeomanry had not. It was by not having a regimental paymaster, I consider, that the Yeomanry pay-sheets got into a hopeless state of confusion.

20738. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Do you mean the loyal Colonials or those from over-sea as well?—I think all the Colonials had a paymaster. I will not be absolutely certain that all of them had, but a great many Colonial corps had; in fact, all I met had one regimental or corps paymaster.

20739. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The Australians had?—Yes, and the South Africans, but I do not know about the Canadians.

(*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) They had a paymaster.

20740. (*Chairman.*) But you had none?—No, no Yeomanry regiment had a regimental paymaster.

20741. Had you the system of the Army—the company officer?—Yes, but in many cases he was a Yeoman raised by promotion, and he had not the slightest idea how to keep a pay list. It might easily happen that the sergeant went sick, and you would have no man competent in the squadron to keep a pay list at all. There were some gross cases that I knew of which occurred, and the method was very slack. The management at Cape Town in the late 1901 and early 1902 seems to have been very moderate. It was very hard to extract answers to letters, and there is an example in October of a gentleman in Mafeking by the name of Robinson, who raised about £1,400 on one of my company accounts, and the company was charged with this amount right on to June, so that presumably the man had seven or eight months to get away or spend the money if he wished.

20742. I do not quite understand how it was done?—The system was so lax. He cashed a cheque on a company of Lovat's Scouts, and signed it as being the officer commanding the company; the cheque was cashed as part of the Yeomanry account and charged to me; we could not get at it to explain that we had not had the money, and there was no system. If we had had a paymaster we could have detected errors instantly, and it could have been brought back and checked, and this man Robinson, presumably an officer, could have been got at immediately. As it was, we could only report to Pretoria and Cape Town, and then go out on trek for a month and come back to find that nothing was done. There is another example of how money apparently was lost or wasted; two captains I know returned to their company and found their pay-sheets were for some reason or other balanced out £1,000 in their favour; they had paid all the men that there were, and they might have taken a cheque and walked away with the money. You cannot blame the Yeomanry officers, because many of them had never kept accounts.

20743. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There has been a Committee sitting in London upon that?—Is it on this point?

20744. Yes, Lord Scarborough's Committee?—He is only auditing the accounts.

20745. Yes, trying to put them in order?—Yes, but it is not a committee taking evidence and reporting, to correct mistakes in the future, and that is why I mentioned it here.

20745. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Was this case of £1,000 just an even £1,000?—When I say £1,000, I mean just about that.

20747. Is it not a question of a clerical error?—No.

20748. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) A combatant officer is not supposed to be an accountant?—No.

20749. (*Chairman.*) Did the men have difficulty in getting their pay under those circumstances?—Yes; certainly Lord Scarborough is doing extremely good work, and any case you bring to his notice is dealt with at once. I do not think anyone can complain now. I can only speak from knowledge of my own men; I made complaints about some of my own men, and the complaints were at once listened to. To return to South Africa, and how impossible it was for officers on

trek to keep accounts or returns, when a column went away on trek for six weeks and came back, there was a whole file of documents waiting; we had as many as 164 documents when we came in for a day to attend to. In 24 hours you had to get the whole of your provisions, refit, etc., so that you dealt out a few to some of the officers, who did not look at them, and out you went again for four more weeks. These blue papers were to the effect that John So-and-So had got £5 from the officer at the base, and please put it to his account. There are still accounts coming in from the other side which we never got at all. With pack mule transport you could not carry letters about, and they were simply dumped into your box, and you might not return to the same place for three or four months again. In the latter year no column stayed on the line for more than 36 hours, and I do not think there can be any question that a regimental paymaster at a fixed base would have saved the country large sums.

20750. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Did you make any suggestion to the War Office about having a regular paymaster?—No, because I saw in Lord Roberts' statement before Mr. Akers Douglas' Committee that they proposed having it for the Regulars.

20751. I do not mean now, but in the early part of the war?—No, I did not make any suggestion, and I have not since I came home, simply because I saw Lord Roberts had made some statement that he thought it would probably go back to the system of the regimental paymaster, and if there is a paymaster for the Regulars there will certainly be one for the Yeomanry. Another point on the subject of wastage of public money is not remounts, but it is a branch of the same thing; in some of those departments there seems to be no sort of interchange of orders or responsibility in carrying out work. For example, about 6,000 horses, mares, and foals were near a place called Burgersdorp, and there was no apparent reason that they should not all have been used for His Majesty's forces. They were good mares and young horses; there were few absolutely fit to ride at once without training, as the mares in South Africa, although broken to harness, were never broken to riding. These mares were all kept in this place, and apparently no one seemed particularly interested in the matter, and the remounts had them in charge; they were left to run over two or three small farms, and they gradually pined away and wasted from lack of food. No one was allowed to take what they wanted of those, and at the end of the war these 6,000 horses had diminished to about 700 or so. I only wished to quote that as an example of the way in which many things were not looked after, and through lack of officers to supervise and lack of system, thousands of pounds were thrown into the sea.

20752. (*Chairman.*) Were these captured horses?—They were cleared off farms; I have seen perhaps 1,500 or 1,200 sent to this farm in one drove.

20753. And they were chiefly mares which would not have been used for cavalry?—Yes, mares; but there was no reason why they should not be used; they only required to be broken and to get a little condition on, and they would have done as well as horses, but for some reason before the war the Boers did not ride mares, and it was supposed to be a sign that you were a poor man if you rode your own breeding stock. By the second year I know that every stallion in South Africa had been caught up; no mares were in foal, and therefore all were fit to ride when conditioned.

20754. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) During that time were you not in want of horses?—Yes, and I took them when I passed there, but I was not allowed to take them. I asked leave on one occasion, and I was refused.

20755. That is how they were reduced in number?—I do not think many did that, as there were only about three columns there, and later on the mares were not worth much, as they lost condition rapidly. I have no doubt the Boers helped themselves too. I only quote that as an example of many instances of stock being thrown away. I know that one brought in 11,000 head of stock one day, and it would vanish down to 7,000 or 8,000, and by the time the selling began, with fictitious bargaining the public got short profits out of it. I give that example of the 6,000 horses at Burgersdorp as a concrete example of what was going on in greater or less degree at various places, not through the officers wishing to do injustice, but from

Major
The Lord
Lovat, C.B.,
D.S.O.
24 Mar. 1903.

there being too much work for an insufficient number and little system or co-ordination.

20756. (Chairman.) Is there any other case?—Those are the four headings in different lines of waste of money: 1. Transport. 2. Equipment. 3. Pay. 4. Lack of co-ordination of departments.

20757. Is there any other point you wish to mention?—No.

20758. (Sir John Hopkins.) With regard to the telescopes, were they the regular stalker telescopes that were supplied latterly?—Yes; we had a grant of telescopes given us by the Government for the second contingent, and the remainder of the telescopes I bought myself. The Government telescopes were quite useless; one was a one-draw telescope, which was so weak in power that it was really not very much better than a Zeiss. I do not know what number of magnitude it was, but it was very much worse than the worst ghillie's glass, and the other one when standing up was about 5ft. long, and no man could carry it about. The War Office did help us by giving us telescopes.

20759. What would a good stalker telescope cost?—I should say you could get for £5 a very fairly good glass, what they call a keeper's glass or ghillie's glass, but we had to pay a good deal more at the time, because there was a great rush for telescopes, and we could not even get a great many firms to offer for them.

20760. They are those that pull out in sections?—Three draws.

20761. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Had your men to pay for any portion of the clothing or other necessaries supplied while they were on service?—No.

20762. It was all supplied by the Government?—I take it you do not mean the original grant which was given to the men to begin with. The Yeomanry and Irregular corps at the beginning were given a grant by Government for their horses, and for the men's clothing, and these grants, of course, did not cover what the officers expended in equipping them, but they went in a very great measure towards doing so. After the initial expense of buying the horses and fitting out the corps, the men of my corps had no further expense.

20763. We have been told, I think, by an officer of one of the Highland regiments—a Regular regiment—that his men had to pay for a good many other things, and, among others, for boots or shoes supplied?—Yes, I know the Seaforths had to pay for hose-tops.

Mr.
J. B. Atkins.

20775. (Chairman.) You went out to South Africa for the "Manchester Guardian," in October, 1899?—Yes.

20776. And you were in Natal?—I was in Natal up to the relief of Ladysmith.

20777. And then you went from Bloemfontein to Pretoria?—Yes, with Lord Roberts, with a slight deviation with General Ian Hamilton, to Lindley.

20778. And after that?—After that I returned to England.

20779. You have also had some experience of other campaigns, I think?—Yes; first of all in the Greek War against Turkey, I was on the Greek side; and secondly, I was attached to an American regiment of infantry in Cuba in the war against Spain, and I saw something of the fighting in Porto Rico, in the same way; and my third experience was not on active service, but during the Swiss manoeuvres.

20780. From these experiences there are certain points on which you are willing to give your opinion?—Yes.

20781. In the first place, as to the rifles, do you think the rifle we had was defective?—I would not go so far as to say that, but I certainly found that in the hands of the ordinary soldier it was a slow-firing weapon compared with some others I have seen. For instance, it requires to be filled separately; one puts in the cartridges one at a time, and I noticed incidentally a good deal of carelessness about that. The cartridges are made up, not in the neat little clips which the Boers used with the Mauser rifle, but in brown paper parcels, and one frequently saw that the

20764. But it was not so with your corps?—No; nor with any Irregular corps I know.

20765. Were your men drawn exclusively from the class of ghillies and stalkers in Scotland?—Yes; practically entirely, with the exception of men like shoeing-smiths, tailors, and men from Inverness.

20766. But you select them for their general intelligence, and for their keen sight, I suppose, too?—Yes.

20767. You had plenty who offered, and you were able to select those you really wanted to have?—Yes.

20768. From what part of Scotland chiefly did you draw your men?—Just under 50 per cent. from Inverness-shire, then Ross was the next, Perth, and Sutherland, in that order.

20769. Had you any from the West Coast?—Yes; from the West Coast of Inverness I had a good many; I had an officer who came from North Uist.

20770. From Argyre?—No; very few from Argyre shire—not more than a dozen anyway. I had a good many from the West Coast of Inverness-shire, Skye, and the outer islands.

20771. You consider it essential that there should be a body of scouts, well trained, attached to each division or brigade?—Yes; I think it is more important in the existing state of military affairs than ever to have a properly trained corps of scouts—men not taken from one class only. We could draw men like our own Highlanders, Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders, who have particular characteristics, one man being good at using the telescope, another peculiarly fine eyesight, another a fine horseman or tracker, making among them a combination of all the points so essential for scouts. If you had some means of working together all those picked men, you would have a body of scouts unequalled in the world.

20772. Having such a body of scouts adds greatly to the comfort and convenience of the other men; that is to say, they are not always on the *qui vive*, expecting that the enemy may be upon them; the scouts are looking out for them?—Yes.

20773. Had you any opportunity of acting with any over-sea Colonials as scouts?—Yes.

20774. And you found them to be good, intelligent men?—Yes; first-rate individually, and distinctly above the ordinary class of intelligence. I think our regiments were better in officers and the Colonials better in the initiative of the individual men.

Mr. J. B. ATKINS, called and examined.

brown paper parcels wore away with friction in the man's pouch, and the cartridges would slip out. I often used to see the cartridges lying about on the veld after an action.

20782. The pouches we have heard were defective?—I suppose they were defective, too.

20783. That may have caused some of it?—Of course. As long as the magazine was being used, it was a rapid-firing rifle, but when the magazine was exhausted, of course the cartridges had to be put in one by one—an operation which takes up a certain amount of time, so that when the magazine is exhausted, for all purposes it is a slow-firing rifle.

20784. With the clip?—I should say for a man who is not a highly-trained marksman the Mauser rifle is the best that could be obtained; but in talking to marksmen who had got used to our own rifle I found that they certainly preferred it with its defects. Some day I have no doubt whatever we shall have an automatic rifle which will eject its own cartridges, and when using which a man will not have continually to change his position, as we do now. Each time a man wants to reload he must change his position. A man with an automatic rifle, which, of course, has not yet been brought to a high enough state of perfection, would be able, without changing his position—and it is essential that he should be in a comfortable position for accurate firing—to fire continually without exhausting and worrying himself. The only question in my mind now is whether in the intermediate state in which we are at present, not having perfected the automatic rifle, the clip is not the best. Of course, the clip is very neat; a man just puts it in and the five cartridges are in place without putting them in individually; on

the other hand there is the weight of the clip; and I have no doubt it will be superseded some day. My only point is whether in the intermediate stage it was not the most handy rifle for the average man.

20785. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) It has been said with reference to the clip as contrasted with our system of loading, that if you have the magazine fitted you have it always in reserve, and you can load cartridge by cartridge independently of the magazine; whereas, if you have the clip, you must always fire from your magazine?—That is certainly so, but when we have held our magazine in reserve and have exhausted it, then it is extremely difficult to fill it quickly enough for rapid firing, and, of course, one might wish to go on pouring a rapid fire into the enemy for an hour or two hours. I admit the advantage you describe, but I think the disadvantages override it.

20786. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other defect you noticed?—The other was rather in the use of the rifle; the chief point in my mind is that I could not see anything really to be said for the keeping up, which was done so very generally in the Army, of volley firing. And I should like to say that I watched very carefully while I was with the Swiss Army the system which has, as it seems to me, all the advantages of volley firing without the defects. There they give the order for a company or a certain line of men to fire a volley, and when the order is given each soldier brings his rifle up to his shoulder, but he does not wait for another word of command; when he has got the aim—which will probably be within two or three seconds—he fires; whereas under our system—at least as it existed during a large part of the war—we give another word of command when the volley is to be fired—namely, “Fire.” Each man is waiting for that shout, which is an extremely distracting thing to wait for, and the result is, I think, that generally the man at this sudden shout, which distracts him, pulls his aim off the object; or, secondly, he fires without having got any aim at all; or, thirdly, he does not fire at all, because he has missed the occasion, and he is, of course, afraid of getting into trouble if he fires long after the others. Now, the Swiss system, it seemed to me, gave an absolutely concentrated fire, not a volley, as we should call it, but in every respect the equivalent of a volley. They fired within two or three seconds invariably, I found when timing them, of the word of command.

20787. They got all the advantages without the defects?—Yes; it seemed to me so. Of course, I thoroughly recognise the virtues of a concentrated fire, but it seemed to me that this was not impairing those virtues at all.

20788. You think there is the need of cheaper practice ammunition?—I found in the Swiss Army that they supplied ammunition at just a fraction under 4s. in English money for 100 rounds; whereas, I may be wrong now, but the last time I inquired in England the price was, I think, 1s. for ten cartridges, which, in a great many cases, the class of men among whom we want to extend rifle practice is prohibitive. I believe that private firms have offered the ammunition at a cheaper rate, but the War Office, I fancy I am right in saying, at all events at that time, would not allow them to supply it. It was to be supplied officially, and at the official rate.

20789. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) That is, 10s. 100 rounds, instead of 4s.?—Yes.

20790. (*Chairman.*) How do they manage to sell it so cheaply in Switzerland?—I did not inquire.

20791. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Is it not an inferior powder, which would damage the rifle?—I did not inquire carefully enough into that, but there were no complaints; I asked if there were complaints, and they said no.

20792. If you used inferior ammunition you might damage the grooving or rifling of the barrel?—I may have taken an extreme case, but it would still be an important point to get it more cheaply.

20793. Did you notice that the Swiss used Morris tubes much?—I did not see them use them at all; but they do to some extent. I think there is only one rifle range which in this country we should call “safe,” but they have an extreme confidence in their fellow-countrymen’s marksmanship, and I have seen the village public-house keeper or sometimes his wife sitting quite near the target drinking beer all the afternoon and marking in a position which nobody would be allowed

to go into here. There are very often houses behind the range without any screen. That arrangement would not be passed by the War Office in this country; but in every case I saw the practice it was with the full service rifle.

20794. It struck you as good practice?—The practice was good; they were extremely careful, and I might mention here that every soldier in the Swiss Army takes his rifle home; he has it, it is his toy, just as we keep our golf clubs or cricket bats; and just in the same way every cavalryman in the Swiss Army takes his horse home; he has to pay for its feed, which is not expensive there, and a certain amount towards the capital of buying it—a very small sum. With that State aid his horse is practically a cheaper toy to him than it could possibly be in this country—I think as cheap as a bicycle is for a poor man in this country. He therefore probably prefers a horse to a bicycle, and it being the fact that any damage to the horse will have to come out of his own pocket, he becomes a good horse-master, which I think extremely important. I saw the short time that horses lasted in South Africa.

20795. (*Chairman.*) Is that all you wish to say about rifles?—Yes, unless any question occurs to you.

20796. Then as to the artillery?—As to artillery, certainly it was my experience that the short range guns which were so much abused at the beginning of the war were the really effective weapons. I have no doubt of that whatever—chiefly the 15-pounder firing shrapnel. I think a considerable impression was made upon most people in this country at the beginning of the war that our artillery was bad because it was hopelessly out-ranged, and every disaster in the war was attributed to that. I should like to say that not too much attention should be paid to that because I noticed during the war three distinct stages in which the public entirely changed their minds. First of all, they attributed every mistake to our out-ranged artillery; secondly to the stupidity of our officers and when they had forgotten both of those they attributed it to our want of mobility. I have no doubt there was some element of truth in all three, but none of the three is a sufficient explanation of anything.

20797. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Did you find that the shrapnel shells did much damage?—Oh, yes, I did. I noticed that particularly from the guns that were taken from us when the Boers turned them on us; it seemed to us that the bursting power of the shell and the accuracy of it was certainly better than that of the Boers’ own ammunition. What I should like to say is that we undoubtedly ought to have a judicious mixture of the long range and the short-range guns. At the long range I could never find that the practice was very accurate or very deadly.

20798. (*Chairman.*) Do you speak of the Boer fire?—On both sides. But long-range firing has a great effect on the moral of the men; it is a great thing for them to feel that you are 8 or 10 miles away from your enemy and that you are able to say, “I have you in my grip.” It appeals to them, and having been with other armies I think I can fairly say that I have not seen any army yet in which the trust of the men in their artillery is so extraordinarily deep as it is in the British Army. The men feel that the artillery is going to prepare the way for them, and that then under a sort of ceiling of shells, as it were, when the artillery has battered the opposing kopje they will advance, with a fair chance, in comparative safety. It seems to me that that being the fact in our Army, it is extremely important that we should preserve it, and I think if the long-range gun does appeal to them we ought to use it in a judicious mixture with the short-range gun, at the same time understanding ourselves that it is the short-range gun which has done most of the killing.

20799. The Boer long-range gun shells often did not burst?—That is quite true. I think on the whole our ammunition was a good deal better in quality than theirs—very distinctly. At the same time these things are always deceptive. I have noticed in each campaign that each side supposes its artillery fire to be better than the other, the fact being, of course, that when the shell falls wide to right or left you can see it, but when the line is good you cannot tell at a long distance whether it is within a hundred yards or right on the spot, so that there is always this observable—a feeling on each side that it is doing better than its enemy—a very satisfactory feeling.

Mr.
J. B. Atkins.
24 Mar. 1903.

Mr. 20800. Of course, in the other campaigns you had not seen anything like the ranges that were used in South Africa?—No.

J. B. Atkins. 24 Mar. 1903. 20801. (Sir John Hopkins.) You did not see anything of the Meux battery where the range was better?—No.

20802. (Chairman.) Will you proceed?—If I might make a remark about the grouping together of the artillery in the open, that seemed to me one of the things that the common sense of every man was condemning, and, as I said, it is the fact that our men do trust our artillery and are greatly helped by it. It is important that they should not lose confidence in it in any way. They all used to say, and I cannot see where they were wrong, that if it was sensible for an infantryman to take cover and hide himself it should be equally sensible for a gun. Certainly we used at the beginning of the war—I believe it altered later—to draw up our guns in an open place; no doubt the major would look for some slight rising ground, and would measure the paces backwards from it according to rule, to get what shelter he could according to his necessities, but in practice it amounted to very little. And in an open country of that sort it was very difficult to get any kind of shelter for six guns at regular intervals, whereas it very often was quite possible to get very good shelter for one gun or two guns by themselves. The Boers always scattered their guns, and although they did not carry out the principle we have been taught about a heavy concentrated artillery fire, theirs seemed to me relatively to their number of guns more effective, and we could not find their guns. We very often allowed the virtues of our smokeless powder to be defeated by the great cloud of dust which the recoil of the gun threw up. I do not know how the Boers managed to do without that, but I was told that they used to water the ground on which the gun stood, and I fancy that must be true, because one never saw the clouds of dust. It was quite useless to have smokeless powder if you had the equivalent of a great cloud of smoke—the dust which everywhere nearly, except in the wet season, blew up from the ground. Later, in the more irregular warfare, I am told they found the converging fire, firing at a point between two points, making an angle in the apex of 45 degrees or something of that sort, extremely effective. The old saying about one gun being no gun is very considerably modified in my mind.

20803. As to the intelligence of the officers and men?—I should say, first of all, that that is a large question, but the general criticism that I hear in this country is that the Boers had a great deal of intelligence, and that we had nothing to match it, and that we ought to have the kind of intelligence which they have got. Putting that forward in that form has always seemed to me to be the merest nonsense. The form which their intelligence takes is that the ordinary Boer will argue with his General and say: "You see, Commandant, you tell me to go to that hill, but the English are there; you have not seen them, but I have, and I shall be killed"; then the Commandant says: "That is quite right, Jan or Piet," and he modifies his plans. With a very small number of men going about a vast country like that, knowing one another well, and all having the sporting instincts of farmers and big-game shooters, that kind of chaos is possible, and may even be profitable; but to try to imitate anything of the sort in this country would obviously be the greatest folly.

20804. (Sir John Jackson.) How did you get the information as to the Boers' plans?—Simply talking with Boer prisoners, and, of course, when we marched up the country, a great deal of it which we left behind us was surrendered country, and I made friends with the Dutch and talked to them about their system. It seemed to me that the kind of equivalent which we might get begins in a recognition of the quality of our own material, which, of course, in point of intelligence and individual initiative, is inferior to theirs. I think we must recognise that, and that the nearest equivalent we can get—as we must have an equivalent—is to get a real confidence between the company commander and his men, and to devolve authority so far down the Army that it would come to the company commander. For that point I think it is absolutely essential that the company commander should have the whole of his men at a time—he has often only about half—for drill, that the men should not be continually changing, but that he should have as often as possible the same men together, so that they should get to know him. And in active service the commanding officer should take his captains, and,

in fact, every officer, including the non-commissioned officers, into his confidence and explain plans to them—not let them decide what is to be done, but let them know what he has decided, so that they may have an intelligent view. I was astonished in South Africa to find colonels who did not in the least know what part they were playing; they knew they were a unit playing a part in a great game, but what it was they did not in the least know, and it always seemed to me that in carrying out particular operations an idea in reserve in the back of a man's mind as to what relation they bore to the whole, would really have been of great value.

20805. (Chairman.) The company officers improved in intelligence during the war?—I think extraordinarily, and it always seemed to me that the young man, very often the boy just from school, was far more ready to jump into a position of responsibility than the man who had spent his whole life in the Army. The latter's position was too great to be risked. This is partly the fault of the public at home, who will not recognise after failure that risks have to be taken, and that good generalship is often only good judgment in the selection of risks.

20806. (Sir John Jackson.) He was afraid of making a mistake?—Yes. Can I just speak from a few notes I have made?

20807. (Chairman.) Yes.—It seemed to me that at the beginning of the war there was an enormous amount of over-confidence which had its natural counterpart and reaction later in that kind of mental paralysis which I think overtook a few senior officers. I traced a good deal of the over-confidence to the great number of small wars which we have had with savage races, and the ease with which victories were won; in fact, in Natal it was a regular saying that So-and-So was an Egyptian soldier. Not only did the over-confidence extend to the view he took of the enemy, but I think it made him, being satisfied with his own method, less respectful to methods which really would have been of use to him—I mean the methods of Colonials. It seemed to me that the Colonials were half soldiers by their upbringing, just like the soldiers I was with in Cuba who were under Mr. Roosevelt—the "cow-punchers," and people from the West; Mr. Roosevelt made them into excellent soldiers in about ten days, simply because they were extremely handy-men already. It was so with the Colonials; later they were used, but at the beginning they were not trusted enough to act independently.

20808. Are you speaking of the oversea Colonials or of the Africans?—Both; the Australians and New Zealanders particularly. One difficulty, I know, is that the average Colonial is of a different type from the average Imperial officer, and one must recognise these difficulties.

20809. (Sir Frederick Darley.) You are speaking of the officers now?—Yes, they have not always settled down well in their social relations; that is a difficulty, I know, because I know a good many Colonials, and I have talked to them about it. Some of them have stated that their life is not easy and pleasant. But if we are really to have a great Imperial understanding, and if we are to get the full results from it—to draw fully on all the resources of the Empire—it is necessary that difficulties of that sort should be overridden. I think with the Imperial officer it should be a point of honour and patriotism.

20810. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did you find in the later period of the war that that feeling had died out somewhat?—I was there in the first year of the war; I cannot say what happened later.

20811. (Sir Frederick Darley.) May it not have been that the Regular officer was a highly trained officer, and in the majority of cases perhaps the Colonial officer had not that training?—Yes, that was very often the reason of the mistrust; he felt the Colonial had not been trained as he had himself. My point is rather the broader one that in the peculiar circumstances the Colonial's natural readiness and resource could have been turned to even greater account than the more inflexible drill of the soldier who had been trained at home. If I may go to another point, I say to get the equivalent of the Boer intelligence we shall have not only to devolve authority and responsibility, but get better education right through the ranks, and that I think should come very largely through the non-commissioned officers.

20812. (Sir John Jackson.) Do you think the average Boer is a better educated man than the average British

soldier?—From the literary point of view he is worse, I think, but as a man who has practised what I may call nature study he is much better—he is five times better. I should certainly like to see the non-commissioned officer taken to some extent into the confidence of the officers; with the present extended order we have not got the old sense of support, each man shoulder to shoulder with his neighbour; under modern conditions for better or worse a man is more isolated than he used to be, and if we cannot hope to get a high degree of individual intelligence in the ordinary soldier, I think the next best thing we can get is to make the non-commissioned officer more highly trained, and therefore less dependent. I should like to see him—what one practically never saw—using field glasses. If I had not had field glasses in South Africa I should not have known what was happening, and I might as well have come home; things began to develop at such enormous distances, and the non-commissioned officer often knew nothing of them. The field glass, with some exceptions, was regarded as the adjunct of the commissioned officer.

20813. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything else under that head?—I should like to say that although, under modern conditions, the men are more isolated, their trust in their officers in another sense will have to be greater than ever. If we get men rather more intelligent, the results of intelligence—a few of them rather disastrous results, I fear—would begin to appear. I found in the Greek Army, where the people are mercurial and quick in all their habits of mind, they could not distinguish soldiering from politics, and when anything went wrong in the field they thought they were betrayed; they cried out, “We are betrayed,” in the same way as a good many of the French did in the Franco-Prussian War. Therefore if non-commissioned officers and men begin to think for themselves it is essential that the education of the commissioned officers above them should increase in proportion, so that the non-commissioned officers and men really may have in a new form the old faith in the commissioned officer. They trust him now, you may say, because they regard him as a gentleman.

20814. You must maintain discipline, all the same?—All the same, yes; it would only be rather a new aspect of it. I believe that everything, so far as I was able to judge from these three campaigns, lies in leadership. I think it grossly unfair, although there is some truth in it, to say that one nation is a nation of incompetents or cowards, and that another nation is a nation of good fighting men. I found in Cuba, for instance, that one regiment of Volunteers lay down in a lane where there was a very heavy fire, and, as often happens when once men have been allowed to lie down—men who would have gone on if they had never lain down at all—it was impossible to get them up again. Actually some of the men coming up behind walked over their bodies. Then, when it looked as though they were absolutely lost for the day, one captain jumped out of a sort of jungle close by and called to his men by name, and they got up one after the other and followed him, and they joined in the charge up the hill, but the rest of the battalion remained. It always seemed to me that unless one is to assume a miracle, which I do not, you cannot suppose that all the brave men were in one company and all the cowards in the rest; it was purely a question of trust in the one man's leadership. Might I say in conclusion that I think in all wars there has been a tendency not to appreciate sufficiently the methods of people who might be of great use simply because their method differs from that which we ourselves have been accustomed to practise. I noticed in the Greek War certain foreign Volunteers who could have managed the whole Greek Army, and would probably have protracted the war for some weeks if they had been allowed responsible positions. They were given no responsibility. In the same way the Cubans were despised simply because the American soldier, who had been brought up in his own way, more or less our way, could not conceive that a man who crawled through the bush on his belly, and did not know what a division or a brigade or a battalion was, could be of any use. We, again, made no serious use of the fine Turkish soldiers in the Crimea. I think to some extent one can apply these points to our relationship with the Colonials, who were not used enough in scouting, in which they would have been peculiarly good.

20815. You wish to speak about the use of cycles?—I should like to say about cycles that, although I generally used a horse myself, I did use a bicycle, and I was astonished to find on the whole how well you could get about even in Natal in the wet season. I often used

from the front to send my servant down with a message for supplies to Pietermaritzburg, and he would travel 50 or 60 miles in the day, choosing a track for himself even in the rainy season. Then later on, when I was with Lord Roberts, I saw the City Imperial Volunteer cyclists, and they astonished me by the way they got about on the veld.

20816. Of course, it is a very unenclosed country, which would help them?—It is a very unenclosed country, but the more enclosed a country the greater the number of roads in every case, so that in this country I think it would be far easier even than in an open country like South Africa. I would judge also from the number of bicyclists who follow hounds now; they generally seem to me to be there or thereabouts at the end of a run, but the great point is that the principle involved is really an important one; we cannot get other people's intelligence, but we can get the equivalent of it. Here is a great national pastime—the use of the bicycle; people do it extraordinarily well; they ride bicycles better than they ride horses; they understand their bicycles, and most of them can make temporary repairs, and I certainly think this accomplishment ought to be laid under contribution.

20817. You have not seen it used for military purposes?—I saw the City Imperial Volunteer's using it; they had a bicycle company.

20818. But not on a large scale at all?—No, just one company, and they were used chiefly, I think, as gallopers.

20819. I think we have been told that for any large number of men it takes up so much more room, a corps on bicycles, than a corps mounted on horses?—I am not prepared unreservedly to insist on bicycles for expeditionary work; what I had in my mind was rather the use of the bicycle in this country for the purposes of home defence, in which I hope the Auxiliary Forces will play a predominant part. Certainly the use of a bicycle does give a man the sense of direction, and that is a kind of nature study; he gets his geographical sense developed.

20820. The next heading on your *précis* is balloons?—I did not go up in any balloons, but I have talked a good deal with officers who used them. I found they praised very much the goldbeater's skin which was used, and they said how extraordinary the difference was between it and varnished silk—the power of retention was so much greater. In one case I was told the balloon remained inflated for 13 days, which was a very long time in that climate, and was usable on the 13th day. Of course, the great difficulty with balloons is the intense vibration. The Swiss I found had a balloon built on the principle of a kite; the balloon itself was a kind of aeroplane in the shape of a bolster; it was tethered near the middle, and when the wind caught it, instead of lying right over, as our ordinary balloon is inclined to do, it was lifted, so that the movements of the balloon (of course, this is speaking in a general sense) in the wind were rather vertical than horizontal. I was told that the vibration for that reason was less. I believe vibration is the great difficulty in connection with taking observations. A Boer gunner told me he found it impossibly hard to gauge the distance of a balloon when it is above a certain elevation. Of course, I need hardly say that balloons should be kept far enough back. In the Spanish-American War the American Army advanced through the jungle with a balloon in the van of the advance, and the only thing which showed the Spaniards where they were was the balloon and the rope hanging from it.

20821. Is there any other point you would wish to mention?—I think that is all, unless anything occurs to the members of the Commission.

20822. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) With respect to the Colonial officers and the Regular officers you spoke of had you in mind the oversea Colonials?—Yes, I was including them—Australians and Canadians.

20823. Did the Australians complain about what you have mentioned?—I have distinctly heard Australians complain of that.

20824. There were a good number of Australian officers who were attached to the Regular regiments, were there not?—Yes; I think it is rather since the war that I have heard the complaints of attached officers, and I fancy that in the rough kind of life out there there was unbounded good fellowship.

20825. I knew a good many of the Australian officers,

Mr.
J. B. Atkins.
24 Mar. 1903.

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J. B. Atkins.
24 Mar. 1903.

and the evidence you have given about the Australians took me very much by surprise?—I should have guarded myself against misunderstanding; I do not think there were difficulties in a social sense on the veld; I have been told since of those. Of course, being in England, I have not been able to go over a wide field of evidence on the point. But in some cases it was undoubtedly said that Colonial officers who had accepted commissions were not as happy as they might be. In South Africa, I think, the feeling of Colonials went no further than that their peculiar capabilities were not used enough.

20826. I always understood that the Colonial officer

owed a great deal to the Imperial officer for his good feeling towards him in every way?

20827. (Sir John Hopkins.) I have only one question to ask, and it is with respect to the short-range guns which came out much better really than they were given credit for; of course, you will admit that if you have a long-range gun, which does not entail greater weight nor any other disadvantages in its use, it will be better to be able to use that both as a short-range gun and as a long-range gun than to be satisfied with a short-range gun?—Certainly—a gun of interchangeable ranges would meet the case—certainly.

FIFTY-FIRST DAY.

Wednesday, 25th March 1903.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT-ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary*).

Sir ANDREW NOBLE, Bart., K.C.B., called and examined.

Sir Andrew
Noble,
Bart., K.C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

20828. (*Chairman*.) You are the Chairman of Sir William Armstrong, Whitworth and Company?—I am.

20829. We asked you to be so good as to come here to-day to give us information in your possession with regard to the supply of guns for the Army. I believe you are prepared in the first place to speak to the state of preparation of the Transvaal and of our own troops at the outbreak of the War?—Yes, to a certain extent. Naturally, I heard a good deal, from Continental makers of Artillery, and from other sources, of what was going on in the Transvaal; but I believe that information was open to almost everyone who cared to take an interest in the subject. Having, moreover, served in South Africa myself, I knew something of the country, and I saw the authorities at the War Office, and pointed out that the guns that were being imported into the Transvaal could be intended to be used against no country except this country.

20830. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) About what date was that?—That was about two or three months before the breaking out of the War. I also pointed out, I think, when I saw one of the high officers at the War Office, that we were perfectly justified in enquiring for what purpose these guns could be intended, as I stated from my own knowledge during several Kaffir wars in which we had been engaged (I was in South Africa at the close of the last large Kaffir war), that in no case had even a position, garrisoned by 20 men and a subaltern been taken by the Kaffirs, and that formidable six-inch guns could never be intended for use against the natives, as the Boers must have quite well known our experience. However, I was told that it was quite impossible to do anything without making difficulties, in fact without rendering war certain. I said that I thought that in that case war would be certain, and I think I cited the case of Frederick the Great when he invaded Saxony because he could get no answer as to the preparations that Austro-Hungary and other nations were then making. If I remember rightly, that General said that, if he did not get a distinct answer, he would consider an evasive answer equivalent to a declaration of war. Well, he did get an evasive answer, and within a week he had 100,000 troops in Saxony, and obtained proof of the combination against him. I think that a strong measure like that on our part might have saved a great deal in the long run. When this country made active preparations Mr. Kruger acted as did Frederick the Great.

20831. (*Chairman*.) It would have taken us more

than a week to have put 100,000 men in the field?—No doubt, but still I had known, certainly for three years, of the preparations going on, and I had supposed, perhaps ignorantly, that the same information was at the disposal of the Cabinet.

20832. If that information was at the disposal of the Cabinet, do you think they ought to have made some further preparations earlier than the time at which you spoke?—That was what I pressed. When I did speak, Lord Wolseley was very kind to me, and I believe they had actually given instructions about bringing a division from India; but I am not quite sure whether that was so or not—it is nearly four years ago now. At the same time I may say upon that subject that I do not see how it is possible, unless our policy is changed, that we can ever be sufficiently prepared in the case of a war suddenly breaking out. I need not point out that in the great campaign to which I just now alluded, Frederick had his army chest full, and at his own disposal. We know further that at this moment Germany have a very large sum of money, over which the Parliament have no control, and which can be spent immediately, without going to Parliament. It seems to me that the only way in which efficient preparation for war can be made, seeing the questions to which every Minister is now subjected, is that the War Office and Admiralty should have at their disposal a very considerable sum of money, not to be spent, of course, except with the authority of the Cabinet, but at the same time so that it would not be necessary to proclaim the fact to all the world; as things are now, all the world knows the next day what preparations you are making, if the present system of questions as to raising money is allowed to go on.

20833. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Could they buy guns and other warlike material without its being known?—Yes. My firm have done that more than once for other nations.

20834. (*Chairman*.) To that the best reserve of material would be in the money chest; that is what you mean?—Yes.

20835. There are difficulties, I suppose, in maintaining a sufficient reserve of material always available for use?—Yes. I think there was that difficulty, but I suppose that also was from want of money. We were making, I may mention, for the War Office, shrapnel shell for field guns at the time the war broke out. I think we were manufacturing at the rate of about 200 or 300 a

week. About five weeks, I think, after the War broke out, I was sent for to the War Office, and asked what I could supply. I said that I thought in time we could get up to 7,000 a week. But we might have been doing 7,000 a week at that moment, if they had told us of their requirements six or seven weeks before. You see for manufacturing at that rate it is necessary to increase enormously your tools, and in the case of shrapnel shell your moulds for the production of the bullets and other details, which of course take a very considerable time. We did get up very quickly to near that quantity. But when the demand was made, I was told that there was not a single shrapnel shell in England except what was in the limber boxes of the Artillery, and I think I was told that there were only six field guns available.

20836. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Small guns?—Yes, small field guns. I mean guns not in the hands of the Artillery or the Navy.

20837. (*Chairman.*) So that you think for the field and heavier guns a suitable ammunition was very deficient after the outbreak of the War?—Yes.

20838. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is it not the case that day after day so many improvements, at least what are considered improvements, are made in guns that it would be undesirable to keep a large stock of any particular type?—That is perfectly true, but you must have a sufficient reserve also to replace guns or other stores that may require replacement. For example, in the case of a ship a very considerable change might be required if you were to take a new pattern, and for an old ship it is probable that a gun the same as the other guns mounted in the ships would be required. In the case of garrison guns, of course, that is not quite so certain, but even there it may be necessary to replace a gun by one of the same pattern. But there is a very great deal of truth in the question you asked.

20839. Of course, each nation is endeavouring to keep pace with, or to get in advance of, other nations with regard to its guns?—Well, I believe I have had a longer experience than most people of these changes, and I know that in this country we have sometimes fallen more or less into the back ground, simply because the authorities wished to wait for a finality which can never be attained.

20840. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) When you suggest the Government having a considerable sum in hand for the purchase of material have you given any consideration to the amount that you would consider necessary?—Well, I have. I do not pretend in any way to be an authority upon these subjects, but I have thought that if there was a sum of ten millions at the disposal of the Admiralty and the same sum at the disposal of the War Office, not to be spent at all, except when privately informed by the Cabinet that they might go on, efficient preparations could be made. I am only an outsider and do not trouble myself much with political things, but so far as I can see the license that is given to questions in the House renders anything like efficient preparations by the two great War Departments practically impossible for great contingencies.

20841. And in forming this idea you must no doubt have considered in your mind to what extent Parliamentary control from time to time would be necessary over that sum?—Yes. I think that the Cabinet should be free to make necessary preparations without going to Parliament, without an Act of Indemnity. I suppose a strong Government might spend money, and hope to get an Act of Indemnity, but a great many people, I imagine, judging by myself, would be rather afraid of that step. I think they should be quite free to spend the sum I have named on preparations if they should consider it necessary.

20842. But you would, I suppose, assume that they would every year in the Budget give an account of the expenditure?—You might make a limit of years within which they should give an account, but of course I do not mean that the amount held in reserve ought ever to be expended unless they thought there was a very considerable reason for so doing.

20843. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You would always keep up a reserve of ten millions?—Yes, that must be done.

20844. And you consider, although that is a large sum that it would be insignificant compared to the enormous cost involved in entering upon a great war when unprepared for it?—Yes.

20845. And when money is invariably expended lavishly?—Yes. We need only go back to the Crimean War and others; there was two or three times as much wasted on the Crimean War as would have been necessary if we had been in a state of efficient preparation.

20846. (*Chairman.*) You have told us about the Government approaching you for additional ammunition. Did they also ask you for guns at that time?—Yes, they did to a considerable extent.

20847. And did you supply them?—Yes, we supplied them; we were manufacturing a good number for the Government at the time, but of course to manufacture for the Government is always a very slow operation compared with when we are left free to ourselves. I daresay you have heard of what was generally called the Elswick Battery. That battery was bought by Lady Meux and presented by her to Lord Roberts. Lady Meux wrote to me on the point and asked what we could do. I said that the most effective gun I thought that we could give was our Naval 12½-pounder, and we had some partly in course of preparation, but we had no field carriages for them; however, we made the field carriages in six weeks and finished the guns, and I should say that the battery itself was sent out in about six weeks after Lady Meux wrote to me. I was anxious about the battery, because the guns were very much more powerful than the ordinary service guns; they had a velocity of about 2,200 ft. a second, whereas the service guns only had a velocity, I think, of about 1,600 ft. a second, or rather less—1,560 ft. But we were a little anxious, because I was afraid that when that battery got out it would be put in store, that nobody would know anything about it, and there would be no horses for it. We were sending out from Elswick a battery of men and horses which were raised by the County of Northumberland, and I telegraphed on a Friday to Lord Roberts suggesting that as the guns were his he should allow them to be handed over to these men who knew more or less about them. He did so. I telegraphed to him on Friday night, and on Saturday before 12 I had his answer, in which he highly approved, and accordingly that was arranged. The battery went out to South Africa, being horsed and manned by the county, and it was found exceedingly useful. It was found specially useful because they could use the guns for obtaining distances and firing at long ranges which the others could not reach, that they finally broke up the battery and attached the guns to six separate divisions, so as to give one of these long-ranging field guns with each; and the whole time that the battery was there no gun was put out of action, and Lord Roberts and everybody spoke of it in terms of the highest praise.

20848. We have had evidence to that effect. You give that illustration as showing that you could send out a battery which you had full control of quicker than you could supply guns to the Government?—Yes. You will fully understand that I am not objecting to the rules of the Government. I have been Inspector of Artillery myself when I was in the Government Service; I decided questions off my own bat, so to say, which now are referred to a committee, and it often takes a long time to get a decision, and in that way there is great delay. That is one fault I find. The Navy are freer from it than the Army. I think myself that many questions are now referred to committees which had far better be left to the Heads of Departments themselves to settle; it kills everything like independent judgment in the men. There are some instances that one could mention where a man considers himself bound by certain rules which are generally very right and proper, but become ridiculous when applied to particular cases. I think there should be more freedom left to the intelligence of the officers than is now the case.

20849. I should have thought that when the country was in the state you describe at the beginning of the War, with only six guns in reserve, an order would have been placed with your firm, and it would have been left very much to yourselves as to the making of the gun?—In one or two cases I obtained a relaxation of the rules, but

Sir Andrew Noble, Bart., K.C.B.

25 Mar. 1903.

Sir Andrew Noble, Bart., K.C.B.
25 Mar. 1903. not generally. I will give an instance of what I mean. In manufacturing a gun where there are numerous parts, it frequently happens that you find some defect in a piece, when you come to machine it, for which it must be rejected. I more than once have tried to be allowed to manufacture extra pieces, so that when one failed we might go on with the manufacture without a stop, but the moment the Crown stamp is put upon it we are stopped. I pointed out that we are not paid, that the material is our property, and that the Crown stamp means nothing, but as a matter of fact we are not allowed to do it except in some special instances, when I went straight to the War Office and said, "I must have it because I cannot do what you require otherwise," but it costs the Government nothing our making an extra piece or two; it is at our risk. But then the Inspectors say that if they have stamped it they will not have it used for anybody else. I have pointed out, "It can do no harm, we will cut off your stamp and then it is done with." You will understand that if a piece be rejected we have to commence again *de novo*; we have to cast, forge, and machine up to the same point, whereas in the other case we could go on at once. And that might make a delay of some months, which might all be avoided.

20850. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Is that the only objection they have, the question of the stamp?—I cannot conceive any other, because the piece is not War Office property.

20851. You do not charge them for it?—No, we cannot charge them for it. We are to supply the gun at so much. All we ask is, "Will you test and stamp on one or two pieces extra in order to avoid delay."

20852. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) What is the longest effective range of the guns of the battery sent out by you?—I think you would get very fair shooting with it 8,000 or 9,000 yards.

20853. And what would be the weight of the gun?—These particular guns weighed 12 cwt. The total weight behind the horses, if I remember rightly, including limber, ammunition and all, was, I think, 41 cwt., but the officers of the battery wrote to me to say that whoever else wanted for horses their guns never wanted; the commanding officer always saw that they were efficiently horsed.

20854. And what was the weight of the gun the Boers had which they spoke of as Long Tom—their large gun?—Their large guns would weigh about six tons nearly; they might be a light pattern, in which case they would be about five tons; but that is the gun

by itself without its mounting. The Boers did wonders in the way of conveying their guns about; they used 16 to 30 trek oxen for dragging them about; and then they put in an amount of hand handling, using drag ropes and putting on 100 or 200 Kaffirs to pull them up difficult points.

20855. And what was the range of that gun?—With that gun and that altitude, I think, if I remember right (I forget now) the Transvaal is some 5,000 ft. above the level of the sea, you would get easily 12,000 yards or so.

20856. (*Chairman.*) In your précis you say you would speak to the powers of production of field and heavy guns of your company. Will you please do so?—I have gone into that rather carefully since I got back from Italy, and I have prepared a table, if I may read it.

20857. If you please?—I ought to explain that in doing this, not to burden it with too large a description of the guns, I have taken only five or six sizes, but it is easy for any expert to know if the quality and calibre of guns vary what variation in the production that will make. You will understand that the statement gives the rate of production per year; it does not mean that we could commence to deliver at that rate to-morrow; we must be in course of production to do it. In 12-in. guns we could supply 16 guns a year, and the number of mountings for 24 guns. You will observe that our power in mountings is considerably more than in guns, for this reason, that we make mountings for a good many guns, for the Navy especially, that we do not make. Of 9·2-in. guns we could make 24, and mountings for 25. Of 7½-in. guns we could make 36 and mountings for 30. Of 6-in. guns, 140 guns, and mountings for 144. Of 4·7-in. guns, 168 guns and mountings for 180. Of smaller guns, including garrison, field and Hotchkiss, 900 guns and mountings for 900—all these being per annum. Of the ammunition for the 12-in. guns we could produce 4,500 rounds; for the 9·2-in., 7,500 rounds; for the 7½-in., 9,600 rounds; for the 6-in., 51,000 rounds; for the 4·7-in. guns, 40,000 rounds, and for the smaller guns, including garrison, field, Hotchkiss, Maxim-Nordenfeldt, and so on, about, I might say, a million rounds, but the figure is 930,000. As regards armour, we could manufacture about 9,000 or 10,000 tons a year, but as that quantity is not likely to be required we could at present only machine between 5,000 and 6,000 tons a year. Of course, it would not take us very long to put up additional machines and so machine the whole quantity we could make.

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9·2 " - - - -	24	25 "	7,500	
7·5 " - - - -	36	30 "	9,600	
6 " - - - -	140	144 "	51,000	
4·7 " - - - -	168	180 "	40,000	
Smaller, guns including garrison, field, and hotchkiss.	900	900 "	930,000	Shrapnel or common shell.

For each 12-inch mounting not required, two 9·2 inch or 7·5-inch mountings could be provided extra, and for every two 6-inch mountings not required, three 4·7-inch mountings could be made extra.

For every two 12 inch projectiles not required, three 9·2-inch or four 7·5-inch could be supplied extra, and for every two 6-inch projectiles not required, three 4·7-inch could be provided extra.

With regard to our production of ships we could commence and launch in one year from Elswick shipyard the following vessels: Two battleships of 17,000 tons each, one first-class cruiser of 15,000 tons, one first-class cruiser of 10,000 tons, two second-class cruisers of 4,000 tons, two third-class cruisers or gunboats of 2,000 tons, and four or five torpedo boat destroyers, or other small ships, of 500 tons; that is all at Elswick. Our Walker Shipyard is devoted to merchant ships together, but in case

of emergency we could do two or three first-class cruisers there. That is our power of production. But to show you that I do not speak altogether without something to go upon, in the year 1896, which was the busiest year we had, we had at one time under construction no less than 20 men-of-war. I hand to Sir John Hopkins a list giving displacement and indicated horse-power. There were two torpedo-boat destroyers, there was a battleship of 12,300 tons, six cruisers varying from 3,500 to 7,000

tons, two small armour-clads for Norway of 3,500 tons each, the armoured cruiser "Higgins," of 8,500 tons, the "Asama" and "Tokiwa," two first-class cruisers of 9,700 tons, and some other ships.

20858. Were any of those for our Government?—I do not think we had any important vessel.

20859. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) There were two torpedo-boat destroyers, the "Swordfish" and "Spitfire"?—Yes. At that time we preferred our own construction, if we could get it, our own design. Mr. Watts, the present Director of Naval Construction, was our designer.

Sir Andrew Noble, Bart., K.C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

20860. The "Pactolus" you had too?—Yes.

LIST OF VESSELS UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT ELSWICK AND WALKER SHIPYARDS DURING 1896.

Name.	Type.	Where Built.	Displacement.	I.H.P.
"Swordfish" - - - -	T. B. D. - - - -	Elswick - - - -	270	4,500
"Spitfire" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	270	4,500
*"Yashima" - - - -	Battleship - - - -	" - - - -	12,300	14,000
*"Ministro Zenteno" - - - -	Cruiser - - - -	" - - - -	3,400	6,500
*"Barrozo" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	3,400	7,500
*"Amazona" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	3,400	7,500
"Buenos Ayres" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	4,800	17,000
*"Esmeralda" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	7,000	18,000
"Albany" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	3,400	7,500
"Harald Haarfagre" - - - -	Armour clad - - - -	Walker - - - -	3,400	4,500
"Tordenskjold" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	3,400	4,500
"O'Higgins" - - - -	Armoured Cruiser - - - -	Elswick - - - -	8,500	16,000
*"Pactolus" - - - -	Cruiser - - - -	" - - - -	2,200	7,000
"Takasago" - - - -	" - - - -	Walker - - - -	4,700	15,700
"Chacabuco" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	4,500	15,700
"Asama" - - - -	1st Class Cruiser - - - -	Elswick - - - -	9,700	18,000
"Tokiwa" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	9,700	18,000
"Hai Chi" - - - -	Cruiser - - - -	Walker - - - -	4,500	17,000
"Hai Tien" - - - -	" - - - -	Elswick - - - -	4,500	17,000
"Don Carlos" - - - -	" - - - -	" - - - -	4,500	12,500

20861. (*Chairman.*) That table shows your power of production. Can you say in what way that great power of production is available for the purposes of the Government in a case of emergency?—The whole place including ships building could be at the disposal of the Government. There could be immediately an Order in Council prohibiting the exportation of warlike stores or war vessels.

20862. You say that it all would be at the disposal of the Government subject to the observation you made at the beginning, that they gave you a sufficient notice of any big demand that they wanted?—Yes. It is not always understood that we cannot bring our full powers of supply into operation till some months after we receive the order, although the exact time depends on the particular nature of store required. In the first place, if it were required to double production by working night shifts you cannot get the men trained immediately, you cannot get always the number at once, and there are innumerable difficulties of that sort. There are the tools and gauges to provide, and fifty different things to be done, and all these take a great deal of preparation. When once you have them, you can go on quite easily. But the general course with Government orders, especially in emergencies is that you come up to a rapid rate of production, and then the demand stops dead short. We have no such trouble, of course, with outside orders, because we can arrange, but if you go on producing a large number of stores, and then the moment the emergency is over everything stops, you have your hands all sent away about their business, and when the next supply is wanted they have all to be got together again, and fresh hands taught, and so on.

20863. And in order to get the full assistance which you would be able to give there ought to be relations between you and the Government which would enable timely notice to be given of large orders?—Yes.

20864. Then you are prepared to speak to the most suitable ammunition to be used in heavy and light field guns?—As regards field guns, I may say that, taking field guns alone, the shrapnel shell is the most effective you can have. I am not quite sure that a certain proportion of shell (I will not say at present with what explosive) should be used, but there is a very great difference of opinion upon certain points among artillerymen, and it is natural this should be so. One is the angle of dispersion that you are to give to shrapnel on bursting; another is whether there should be common shell or not carried by field and horse artillery. You are, of course, aware that a large number of shell charged with what they please to call lyddite were used in South Africa, but the English Government insist that no fulminate shall be used in any shell fired from guns. Now you cannot, at least, it has not been done up to the present, obtain a satisfactory detonation with small lyddite shell without the use of a fulminate. I do not know that much is required, but you cannot do it without. I daresay everybody has seen accounts in the papers of how the smoke of the lyddite shell was either green or yellow. If it is either green or yellow, that simply means that it is not detonated. If a shell is detonated the smoke is a dense black, and there is no trace of yellow at all. In certain experiments which we made, of which Sir John Hopkins is well aware, we succeeded in detonating perfectly with mercuric fulminate shell of the larger calibres charged with lyddite and the effect produced was very

Sir Andrew Noble, Bart., K.C.B. great. I thought it might interest the Commission to see what can be done with cast and wrought iron shell, and I have brought a very small portion, but a fair portion, of a small shell detonated with fulminate; and you will see in the cast iron shell that most of what is produced is of the very finest dust. (*Handing round some samples.*) In this one the picric acid was lightly pressed, not melted, and you will observe that there is a great quantity of dust, but not so much as there is in another, where you see that the cast iron has been reduced, the greater part of it, into absolute dust. Again, this is a steel shell. You fully understand that I have only brought a small portion of it, but a fair representation of the burst. But there is a portion of the steel shell, and you see there is a little dust in it still, but the shell is perfectly detonated.

20865. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) We have heard that the charge in the steel shell will only practically rend it, and will not go further than that?—That is simply because it is not detonated.

20866. This (*pointing to a bottle filled with small pieces*) points to a very conclusive burst of the whole shell?—Yes, that is one of the biggest bits of the shell.

20867. That is the ordinary shrapnel, is it?—No, that is common shell, steel common shell. In fact, it is the shell you use in the Navy. To finish about the shrapnel, there is a considerable difference of opinion among artillery officers as to what should be the cone of dispersion. Here are rough sketches of three varying examples. (*Exhibiting one sketch.*) There are here roughly, excluding splinters, about 250 bullets. That shows with the service muzzle velocity a cone of depression of about 10 degrees.

20868. At what distance in front of the target was the burst?—I forget at this moment. I think about 10 yards. That—(*exhibiting another sketch*)—has about 13½ degrees, and that—(*exhibiting another*)—has about 19 degrees. What you have to consider is now what that dispersion would be at 6,000 yards. You must remember that the rotation hardly decreases, and the bursting charge does not decrease at all, while the velocity decreases greatly. At 6,000 yards the velocity will have decreased to something like 620 feet, and that causes considerably greater dispersion, the cones at that range being 50 per cent. greater than I have named, but these three targets represent the difference of dispersion at the muzzle without altering materially the number of bullets you can get into the shell.

20869. In the case of the lyddite charge for the shrapnel shell it is kept down to a very small quantity, is it not?—I do not think you would ever put lyddite in a shrapnel shell.

20870. That is burst by ordinary powder?—Yes, just the ordinary powder.

20871. Because we heard a great deal about the failing of the lyddite shell—those must be Naval ones?—Yes.

20872. Because the artillery shell is all shrapnel?—Oh, no, they had batteries carrying common shell charged with lyddite, but, so far as I have been able to learn I do not believe many of them detonated completely. I do not say that it follows that because they did not detonate, they might not be more or less efficient—that is quite possible; but if you are firing against a stockade or anything of that sort, in that case, you want the complete effect, and that you would not get unless with complete detonation.

20873. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What is the objection on the part of the Government to having a fulminate—is it because it is dangerous in carriage?—Because it is set off with so slight a blow that, unless you take proper precautions that there should be no risk of any friction in the shell, and no risk of even a slight blow it is unsafe, as if the lyddite shell burst in the gun, the gun is destroyed. At the same time, I am bound to say that England is the only nation that I know of that absolutely prohibits fulminate in the shell. I myself think that a moderate quantity, with proper precautions, might safely be used. In the experiments to which I have referred, and which Sir John remembers, including the Admiralty experiments, the experiments at Lydd and those at Silloth—I am speaking from memory—but I think we fired more than 300 rounds of common shell charged with melinite. (I call it melinite because they had not invented the name of lyddite then). They all

had—I forget whether it was a gramme or two grammes—I think two grammes, or grains of fulminate, and we never had a single accident. But, then, the French primer which we got at first I considered so dangerous that I would not use it, and we used one that was modified from Abel's primer; but I would not use the first primer because there were three cones, one within the other, and I was afraid that the fulminate might get between these cones, and would fire.

20874. What are you using now as the fulminate, a charge of mercury?—Mercuric fulminate.

20875. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is the composition of the different explosives, that is the different varieties of lyddite and the others, in each case always alike, or are they different—take the melinite, for instance, or any of the other fulminates?—Fulminates are perhaps the most certain detonators, but also the most dangerous.

20876. Is there a difference in the strength of these different explosives?—The one we use, what is called lyddite, is simply picric acid, and that you have to get of a certain purity, and it is simply melted and put into the shell. In my opinion, picric acid, as far as I have seen, is so efficient an explosive that I cannot conceive anything being wanted much better. It is as safe as any of these high explosives can be; I know of none safer at least, and it is easily manipulated. The strange thing is that picric acid, as you are aware, is used very much for colouring, as a colouring matter, and it has pleased the authorities to say that if picric acid is being conveyed by rail for the purposes of colouring, it passes as an ordinary substance, but if it is coming to be filled into shell, then it passes as an explosive, and why that peculiar difference should be made I cannot understand. If it were in the shell, of course it would be a very different thing.

20877. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) With regard to these lyddite shells, how is the charge exploded now if they use no fulminate?—They have got a mixture in a tube, it is called picric powder, and if you can get enough of it in a big shell you can get a fair detonation, although I do not know that it is quite as certain as the other. But you cannot in a small shell.

20878. What do you call a big shell—six-inch?—Yes.

20879. But not a twelve-pounder?—No, you cannot detonate perfectly in a twelve-pounder, although the Explosives Committee, I suppose I may say, have been making experiments to try and get something that will detonate. I do not know that we have succeeded perfectly yet, although we have approached perfection. We are very much better than we were.

20880. That rather points to these lyddite shells in the field guns being ineffective so far as the detonation goes?—They were ineffective so far as complete detonation went, but it is quite possible that they broke up sufficiently.

20881. Then in your mind it is clear that if you fulminate the lyddite charge in the 12-lb. shell it bursts in to a certain number of pieces?—Yes, there is no question about it.

20882. While we are on the gunnery question I should like to ask you this: As a gunnery expert we shall be glad of your opinion on the accuracy of the 4.7 gun and the 12-pounder naval guns at extreme range. We shall also be glad to hear from you any of the causes detrimental to their accuracy; because we have had evidence alleging a want of accuracy in the practice with those guns? The 4.7 gun is an exceedingly accurate gun. I can easily conceive, especially with people who did not understand it, that at the commencement of firing, especially if the officers used the range tables that were furnished to them, they would find that they were very much out; because I need not tell you that the resistance of the air at 5,000 feet above the level of the sea will be a very different thing from what it is at the level of the sea. They would have difficulties also with the fuses which would burn a great deal slower, and I should say myself that if they were firing at long ranges their fuses might easily be a second, or two seconds longer than they should be. The 4.7 gun and the 6-inch gun are both accurate. I must say also that I have been astonished to see the Admiralty Returns, at least the Returns we have sent to us occasionally, of

the prize firing of the Navy. The firing of many ships is wonderfully good.

20883. I mean the guns on shore more than anything else?—With the guns on shore the advantage will all be in favour of accuracy.

20884. Quite so?—I am only going to point this out. As you know the prize firing is this; A vessel starts firing on reaching a buoy; she is 2,000 yards off the target; she steams for three minutes, approaching to 1,500 yards, she ceasing firing at a buoy at 2000 yards. I remember (again I am speaking from memory of a certain ship, whose name I forget) her ten 6-inch guns fired, if I remember right, in the three minutes 148 rounds, at varying distances you will observe, and so far as I remember 114 rounds hit the target. I cannot consider anything much more perfect than that for effectiveness.

20885. I think that the individual who said that was not quite cognisant of the effects as you say of the atmosphere, and also even the conditions of the heat as affecting the charge and also distinctiveness of vision and other points; I do not think he had taken that into his calculation at all. But we are glad to hear your views as an expert, as to what may be considered good practice from a gun of that sort, and what is in the way of good practice?—That is my opinion. Of course, I need not tell you that a very great deal, as well as the gun, depends upon the form of projectile, and there may be something in that. I may point out however for the Elswick Battery we took Naval guns and I have had sent to me again and again remarks on the wonderful accuracy of these guns under conditions the officers were altogether unused to.

20886. It is the fact, is it not, with regard to practice from guns of all sorts that where the firing is at a very long range you find variation from day to day in the distance that you have to lay those guns for?—I never carried on practice on two consecutive days, where I could use on the two days precisely the same elevation and the same length of fuse; you had always to vary them.

20887. Even in this country?—Yes.

20888. The difference of temperature, of course, acts on cordite more or less?—You might get a gun, if it was in the sun in South Africa, very hot, and they had the habit (I do not think it was the right thing) of carrying the guns loaded. However, it was done unquestionably, and some of those curious effects in the guns that we have been utterly unable to reproduce here may have been due to that. But, as a matter of fact, it would make an immense difference between the first and second round. It is perfectly possible that you might get the cordite up to 150 degrees if the cartridge was carried in the gun exposed to the sun, but if it was carried in limber boxes it might be only 70 degrees or 80 degrees, and that would make great difference in range.

20889. I would like to ask you this question. I do not think we have got it quite clear yet; the necessity for a supply of common shell is urged by some of the commanders in the field, that is the military commanders and generals and others in South Africa, but we are told, on the other hand, that shrapnel supplies all conditions essential for modern warfare. Do you concur in that view?—No. If you are firing against a fort or stockade a common shell would be most effective where shrapnel would not be, but for fighting in the open the shrapnel is the more effective.

20890. And the difference of the bursting charge is very great, is it not?—Yes. If you got a common shell into a stockade, the shell being charged with lyddite, it might kill or wound every one in it.

20891. But, of course, not with shrapnel?—No.

20892. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Is the Elswick Battery of 12½-pounder guns the design of your firm?—Yes.

20893. And with respect to the 7·5 gun, is that the design of your firm also?—Yes, we have made a number of them.

20894. Are they your designs?—Yes, they are our own designs; we have made also to a design given us by the Government, but we have made a certain number to our own design.

20895. You spoke of the atmosphere being much less dense, as we know it is, of course, at an elevation of 4,000 or 5,000 feet; does that affect the range very much of the projectile?—Yes, it does affect it.

20896. Take the range at sea level and the range at 3,000 feet above sea level; the difference between the two ranges would be pretty well ascertained?—Yes, it could easily be calculated what the difference would be.

20897. It is a question of the pressure of the atmosphere?—Yes. There is perhaps not a great difference, but at long ranges the laying is sometimes thrown out by refraction, you see the object in a different place from where it really is; you do very often in the hot sun, if there is moisture.

20898. (Sir John Jackson.) Do you get orders for stores during times of peace to any great extent from the Government?—Yes, variable; till late years most of our work has been foreign; perhaps you may judge by looking, at that list of ships; you see the larger number is foreign.

20899. What I mean is that the Government, of course, in the event of war in any emergency must rely to a great extent upon your works; and with a view to assisting you to have larger facilities for manufacture do they give you a fair proportion of their stores required during peace times, or are they all dealt with at the Government Arsenal?—No, we get a fair proportion. We were requested once to expend a very large sum in providing facilities for much longer guns and so on, and so far as I remember we spent £250,000 in plant and building and other things, and that at the termination of that we were getting hardly anything from the Government at all. So far as we were concerned it happened fortunately that just at that time we had a great deal of foreign orders, so we did not suffer so much, but if we had depended upon the Government the shops would have been nearly entirely idle and they were built at their special request. I may say that in the last seven years we have spent 2,842,822*l.* in additions to our producing power.

20900. That is to say, if the Government were giving out more work to private manufacturers during peace times it would certainly encourage the private manufacturers to lay out more capital?—Unquestionably. But then there is another very serious evil, and that is this, that, except for the Navy, most of the Government work is done in about eight months of the year, and that is the cause of the very great and considerable increase of expense. You see, they have had a bad habit in the Treasury, if any Vote is not exactly spent the remainder goes back to the Treasury; it is not carried on, and you are pressed to deliver your stores six weeks or so before the termination of the financial year, and to insure inspection you frequently do not get the fresh orders till six or eight weeks after the termination of the financial year. The consequence is a want of continuity of steady work, which increases very considerably the cost. I may point out—I merely mention it because it is an interesting point—that the range of torpedos has increased so very much that it has become much more important than before to have very high velocities in guns. The consequence of that is that an action will have to be taken at a much greater distance than formerly, and the importance of high velocity has increased so much that it is probable that the newer vessels will be armed with very much more powerful guns.

20901. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Is not the 7½-inch gun a very powerful gun in muzzle velocity?—Yes, the new 7½-inch gun, and also the new 10-inch gun. The muzzle velocity of the 7·5-inch gun is, I think, over 3,100 ft., the 50 calibre gun.

20902. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Does your company manufacture small arms—rifles?—Only for machine guns. We make the barrels for a great many small arms.

20903. What is the effective range—the longest range of any rifle at present used?—I think the effective range with a good shot is well up to 1,000 yards. You have an advantage, you see, in artillery, which you have not with the rifle; you can see with artillery where your shell is striking—you cannot see it with a rifle.

20904. (Chairman.) Is there anything you would like to add to your evidence?—Nothing.

Sir Andrew Noble,
Bart., K.C.D.
25 Mar. 1903.

Lieutenant ARTHUR TREVOR DAWSON, R.N., called and examined.

Lieut. A. T.
Dawson, R.N.

25 Mar. 1903. 20905. (*Chairman.*) You are managing director of Messrs. Vickers, Sons, & Maxim?—I am a director and superintendent of their artillery.

20906. We asked you to be good enough to speak to the supply of guns?—Yes.

20907. You would wish to point out that you had opportunities of supplying guns and ammunition to the Government; is not that so?—Yes. I wrote a letter in which I wished to represent that during the war we were instrumental in supplying a very large amount of artillery, and that amount is also attached to my memorandum. What I wish specially to represent now is that had we been in a better position, through having the necessary machinery for the very large production that was required during the war, we should have been in a far better position to supply quickly, and, perhaps, possibly at a less cost, had we manufactured many of the articles before the war. I would specially refer to the supply of field artillery, in which we were asked during the war to supply an entirely new pattern of which we had never made any of these equipments before, the result being that before we could start the regular supplies to the Government, it was necessary to manufacture all the gauges, jigs, etc., and to get all the machines set up ready for the proper production of so important a store like the quick-firing field equipment, which it was necessary to be in every respect interchangeable. I would like to submit to the Commission that, in connection with the supply of such stores, we should have been in a far better position had we manufactured and supplied such stores before the war. This consideration, I think, bears on nearly every warlike store, and I am sure the Commission will see that for large firms like my own, who are capable of a production of field equipments in every branch, as well as large ordnance installations, such as 9·2-in. guns, and guns of smaller calibre, that if our machinery is kept going during peace time it is very much easier to increase the output, and give greater satisfaction to the Government, if we have been manufacturing the stores before the advent of the war. I have no doubt that during the war the Government found it difficult to obtain their field material at the rate that they would have liked, and I understand for that reason they had to go abroad for material, on account of our being so full up with work that we could not manufacture it. That is perfectly true; but, as I say, had we known what the Government required in the way of field material, and been in a position to turn it out, by having previous experience of the manufacture of such stores as were required, such a state of things would never have existed. And, therefore, I would submit most respectfully to this Commission that during peace time we and other large firms should always have an opportunity of making every warlike store for the Government, manufacturing it not in very small quantities, but in fairly large regular quantities, so as to keep at all events our principal men and foremen continually employed, and in a state of efficiency for producing the work, which would render in time of war our works far more valuable to the Government. In fact, I would respectfully submit that such works as my Firm's would really add to the country another arsenal, capable of producing every warlike store necessary, and capable of assisting the Government in time of war with very rapid production to make good deficiencies which must occur, owing to the very large expenditure of ammunition and the wearing out of material during such times.

20908. Did you make warlike stores for the Government before the war?—Yes, we had very large orders, for Naval stores principally, and for a large number of heavy guns, but in connection with field artillery, although we had been supplying it to foreign countries for some considerable time, we had never received orders from the Government at all for field guns, except experimental equipments, before the war.

20909. You did supply field artillery during the war?—We supplied a very large amount of field artillery, which I mentioned in my statement attached.

20910. You have sent in a statement regarding your

evidence here which you would like to put in?—Yes, I would.

20911. And you have also put in that statement the amount of guns and material that were supplied by your firm during the war?—That is so.

20912. At what date did you begin to supply this material during the war?—Practically at the commencement of hostilities, but more especially after the serious reverses which occurred in Natal.

20913. The list I see is made up of army guns, mountings, etc., supplied during the Boer War, October, 1899, to May, 1902; so those were the dates within which you supplied them?—Yes, those would be the dates.

20914. Had you any notice from the War Office before October, 1899, of a probability of a demand upon you?—We had no notice in regard to a probability of any special demand, only the normal quantity that we get from year to year.

20915. And your point is that if you had had notice you could have adapted your works sooner?—Of course that would be so, but at the same time we should have wanted rather more than notice, because we could never have made the very large expenditure on machines and new shops that were necessary for the production during the time of war unless we had been quite sure that orders would come to us. The position now after the war is of course very different, because we have all the machinery that was necessary for this greatly increased output of nearly every warlike store, and some of that machinery, as well as a large number of the machine shops which we have added to our works, are to a very great extent standing idle. In fact, during the war we utilised our experimental factory at Crayford for the production of a large amount of field artillery of every sort, and the supply of small shells, shrapnel, etc. That small factory enabled us to increase our normal output of shrapnel shell from 2,000 per week to 9,000 per week, and in order to do that we naturally had to increase our machinery, and that machinery is now lying idle, and the workshops are lying idle, in fact the experimental factory at Crayford is virtually closed, there being only enough men to keep the machines in order. I have mentioned in my letter the state of the Erith factory, which, as you know, is bad.

20916. There are two stages of the matter. In the first place, if the Government had foreseen before the war that a large extra demand would have been made upon your firm, and would almost necessarily have to be made upon your firm, it would have facilitated the production if they had given you some previous knowledge of that, because, as you state in your letter, it was necessary for you to expend £7,000 in the adapting your departments?—Yes; that was in connection with the supply of Maxim guns. Our normal output of Maxim guns is 30 per month; during the war it was necessary to increase it to 60, and the extra expenditure of £7,000 was solely for the production of Maxim guns, which, after all, is a very small supply in connection with the whole of the Artillery requirements.

20917. I do not think you quite follow what I want to get at. In a case of emergency when the Government are face to face with a case of emergency, if they can give previous knowledge to a firm like yours they would have much greater assistance from all the powers of production under your command than they will if they do not give previous notice to you?—That certainly would have been the case before this war, but I do not think it will be the case now, because we have all the machinery and all the appliances for the rapid turning out of existing material. Should the Government change the types of materials or should they wish a large production of material to be made of which we have not a manufacturing knowledge and experience then early knowledge of their requirements of course would enable us to increase at a more rapid and efficient rate.

20918. And the state of things now is that you have got these works, and adaptations of the works, but you have got no work to do?—We have really no work. We have not got a sufficient amount of work relative to

our enormous capabilities of output, which, as I say, were rendered necessary by the urgent demands of the Government. I do not know whether I might mention that perhaps the Government could help us very materially indeed by not giving quite such a large proportion of the work to the Royal Ordnance factories, having special regard to the enormous expenditure that we have been put to, and the position we are now in in having these very large extra shops, and the large amount of machinery standing idle. In our case, of course, we had to expend the money belonging to our shareholders, and we are responsible to them that these machines are kept, so far as possible, regularly and effectively employed. With the Government, on the other hand, they might perhaps consider it is only necessary to keep the Ordnance factories as a reserve in time of war specially, and employ such facilities as exist now in the trade for the production of their main requirements, having special regard to the fact that we made such a sacrifice in capital and had to obtain the money from the shareholders for that purpose to meet this urgent national circumstance.

20919. And what would happen supposing you do not get work. I suppose you would have to consider what is to be done with these machines?—Of course that is a very serious question to us. We hope and think that it will be necessary before long to alter the Field and Horse Artillery, possibly to add many more heavy batteries to the Army, and in that case our works would for a moderate number of years be employed, providing always that we received a sufficient number of orders from the Government; a sufficient proportion of that work to enable us to fill our shops. That would help us materially for the moment. But what would help us in the main more than anything would be by giving more work to the trade, so as to enable us to keep our shops going at such a rate as would enable us to pay a fair return on our very heavily increased capital invested.

20920. (*Sir John Edge.*) How long did it take you, when the requirements of the Government necessitated the increase of your works, to bring yourselves up from the normal condition of manufacture before the war to the state of manufacture to comply with the Government orders?—The time varied in accordance with the store to be produced. In the case of the increase to Maxim guns it was done in a very few weeks owing to the machinery necessary being small. In the case of the small shrapnel shells the same consideration applied; it was only necessary to run up somewhat inexpensive constructions at the time in the way of shops, and to instal the machinery as quickly as it could be obtained, the machinery being obtained from anywhere where it could be obtained quickly, to enable the production to be arrived at in a very few weeks. But, in so far as the heavy installations of guns, such as the 9·2-inch and below, were concerned, the obtaining of the machinery was a much longer process, and before we really got into thorough working order in regard to that manufacture it took us, I should say, at least a year. In regard to the production of the small artillery stores a rapid increase could be made quickly, owing to the machines being unimportant, and, generally speaking, being kept in stock by the respective manufacturers of machinery.

20921. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What motive power do you employ for these new machines?—In regard to the motive power we employ electricity almost entirely at our works, especially in regard to the new machinery installed.

20922. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) In regard to a demand for stores you have taken into consideration that the demands for warlike stores in South Africa have naturally ceased. That, of course, curtails to a very large amount the stores required that would have been taken from the private firms during the war. Take for instance the shell alone for firing in the field, or projectiles; the demand for them has ceased?—That is so.

20923. Therefore naturally the manufacturing demands would cease also?—But I take it that in time of peace it is always necessary to make up a certain amount of ammunition that is utilised for practice purposes, of which I presume there is a good deal. In so far as the Navy is concerned it is a considerable amount, of course, and in regard to the Army it is also considerable. Therefore, there always exists a certain demand for stores which would give us a certain amount of work for the employment of these machines now that the war is over. I

would like to say in connection with the supply of stores which were ordered during the war that we supplied them practically at our ordinary prices; we made no increase over the ordinary prices, excepting where it was absolutely essential, owing to the increase in the cost of material and the special increase of production due to working very exceptional overtime.

20924. Yes, that is so of course, but the demand for these stores must have necessarily ceased to an enormous extent. All the projectiles that were fired away in South Africa, and guns to replace other guns, and so on, that is at an end now, and that would considerably modify the orders given to you. Are you back to your normal?—By no means; we are much under the normal. The actual orders we have received in connection with small artillery are far less, and our works are far less employed in connection with that particular class of work.

20925. Yes, I think that is natural, because as you know (nobody knows better), they are bringing out a new field arm?—Exactly.

20926. Therefore all supplies for the former Artillery have probably ceased?—That I cannot say, because I only know what orders have been placed with my firm. I do know that large orders were placed during the war with other firms, and perhaps a distinction should be made between the supply of Ordnance by such firms as my own and possibly Armstrong's, who supply artillery in every stage, and make complete armaments for arming ships and fortresses complete, and are always ready to supply designs of every store in competition for general consideration by the Government. There are firms who only supply one class of store, necessitating possibly only cheap machinery and no very expensive staff, and certainly not requiring a real staff of designers. Such manufacturers could and did in time of war manufacture a very large number of shrapnel and stores such as that, but they have not got the same expensive staff to keep going that we have who supply everything complete, and that being so I think a difference should be drawn between such firms as ours who, as I mentioned previously, are really capable of giving to the Government an additional arsenal in which they will have the absolute control and right of every supply that is made in time of war. We, of course, feel the slackness of orders for war material much more perhaps than the smaller firms, who only have unimportant machinery and no expensive staff such as is absolutely necessary for the production of war material of the highest classes.

20927. Yes, I quite see all that, but when there has been an unprecedented demand, and you have risen to the occasion and met that unprecedented demand, there is no doubt a re-action will come afterwards; it is bound to be so?—That is why I make special reference to the possibility of the Government allowing such a re-action to be felt more by the Government factories, where the loss is for the whole of the country, whereas in our particular case, where you say we rose to the occasion during the war, and we spent our money to meet an urgent National demand, I submit that we may consider perhaps that our position is one that should receive special consideration from the Government.

20928. I quite see your argument.

20929. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Did you get any special prices for what you supplied during the emergency of the war, or only your regulation prices?—We obtained the regulation prices plus, in some cases, an amount to cover the actual additional expenditure which we were put to in regard to working overtime and owing to the increased price of materials; but we were specially careful not to put on special prices for the Government during the war, because we felt that such a procedure would be to some extent unpatriotic. Our Maxim guns were supplied at the ordinary price.

20930. If the Government were giving you a fair proportion of their orders during peace times, would your firm be prepared to come under an obligation not only to place your factories at the entire disposal of the Government in the event of an emergency, but to keep the charges down to the ordinary peace time charges?—I would say that my firm is quite prepared to do that, and we would be also prepared to give the whole production of our factories for the use of Government at prices which should compare in war time with prices in

Lieut. A. T. Dawson, R.N.
25 Mar. 1903.

Lieut. A. T.
Dawson, R.N.
25 Mar. 1903.

peace time, excepting that should we have to make special extra additions to machinery, or should we have to pay very much increased charges for material, or should we have to work very much more overtime than is usual, during the meal hour and such times as that, then we should have to ask Government to pay an addition which we should be quite prepared to calculate on the basis of cost price plus a fair percentage to be added for profit, say 10 or 15 per cent. I may say in connection with some of the Admiralty work that we resort to that procedure now, that is to say, charging cost plus a percentage of profit after the shop charges and indirect charges have been added; and I think the Admiralty find that such a procedure works very satisfactorily.

20931. Of course, in a special emergency like that you would be found to have some extra cost, owing to the extra push?—I think that that extra cost and extra push would be very much less expensive if the Government utilised our factories in times of peace permanently and kept us better employed than they have done up to the present time. We are quite prepared on our part to be in as close touch with the Government as is possible; but, of course, if the Government did give us some form of indemnity in the way of always guaranteeing that we should have a certain amount of work to pay, say a fair interest on our capital, we should be able in time of war to turn out stores much more rapidly, and certainly to prevent the necessity for Government having to go abroad to order stores which possibly are not nearly so efficient as could be made in this country.

20932. In the event of an emergency?—In the event of an emergency. Perhaps I might on that question refer to the production of powders which my company has a large interest in—a somewhat indirect interest. At the present time the manufacturers of Cordite and Cordite M.D., are practically producing their powder at cost price, because the competition is so very great for the small orders which are placed with the trade. My firm and the Chilworth Gunpowder Company and the Nobel Company, have powers of production of over 3,000 tons per annum. Therefore such production in time of war is of great importance, and what the powder companies want more than anything is to have in times of peace a fair amount of orders for powder at a reasonable price, instead of the Government factories working, as I believe they now are, on three shifts continuously, in order to keep their prices as low as possible, while the trade is suffering tremendously for want of orders; and for that purpose we think it might be possible, or rather fairer, if the Government manufactured say a quarter of the total supplies required, and gave the other three-quarters to the seven firms at present interested in the production of smokeless powders.

20933. Have Messrs. Armstrong and yourselves your own ranges for proving guns?—We have altogether three ranges—one on the coast of Cumberland, for the proof of heavy artillery, where we are now proving all the 9·2-in. installations which we are manufacturing for the British Government. The range is fully equipped for the proof of every class of gun, mounting, armour plate, and projectile. Then the other ranges are in the south of England, where we prove the machine, rifle, calibre, pom-pom, and other class of small artillery, and we have another range near London, where we experiment with the long range firing of field artillery.

20934. Are these used by the Elswick people as well?—No, I think Elswick have facilities of their own. They have equally good gun ranges as ourselves; I have never seen them, but I have always heard so. We should be quite prepared to do all the proof of guns and mountings manufactured by ourselves. In fact, during the war, I think I may say we assisted the Arsenal considerably, which was in a very busy state, in the proof of 37-millimetre pom-poms, and some other small artillery. I would like to mention, in connection with that question, that I think in time of war the Government would be much assisted by the delivery complete of guns and mountings proved at our works as well as the ammunition, because, if the ammunition is inspected at our works and proved at our ranges, we then can pack it and ship it direct to wherever it has to go, and that I think in time of war might be a very great advantage to the Government, because it would enable them to get their ammunition quicker and

their guns quicker, and would relieve any extra press upon the ordnance factories.

20935. Do the Government authorities ever use your ranges?—They are now proving all the 9·2-in. installations at our range, and we have carried out experiments on their behalf at our heavy gun range, and we are continually experimenting ourselves with armour plate trials, which are directly for the interest of the Admiralty.

20936. (Chairman.) Do you know of any case of a foreign Government having relation with private firms in the way you have spoken to?—In regard to the supply of heavy artillery by Messrs. Krupp in Germany, I believe that they do all the proof for the German Navy at their own range at Meppen, and supply it direct to the ships.

20937. I was referring more to what you have put before us as to the necessity of the Government giving you a fair share, as you call it, of the orders. Is that done elsewhere?—I think that in France to some extent it is done, but I know that in Germany Messrs. Krupp are greatly helped by the Government, as they guarantee to take a very large proportion of the whole of the output of the Krupp factory.

20938. Then you would represent that what you are putting forward as a claim here is not unprecedented?—In no way. I may say, in connection with the production of Maxim guns for the German Government, that they are ordering a very large number, as well as pom-poms, and the whole of the output is obtained from the trade. On the other hand, in this country we really obtain about one-half of the production necessary, but during the war we turned out over 400 guns per annum. Our normal production of Maxim guns is 500 per annum, and I believe this year our allocation of guns will be, roughly speaking, about 100 per annum, something like one-fifth only of the total number that we are able to produce. Unfortunately, the prices for these Maxim guns that we had to supply were, to our way of thinking, very inadequate, and during the war we were obliged to divert a great deal of our foreign trade to Germany in order to meet the increased demand of the British Government. The actual number of guns made, which we were not able to take owing to our having to produce Maxim guns at a rapid rate for the British Government, amounted to 405 Maxim guns delivered to 11 different countries. Our having to divert these orders abroad lost, during the time that we were meeting the exceptional demands for the British Government, £50,000 to my firm. Of course, we got small royalties, but you know that the manufacture of a gun is better than getting a small royalty: you are able to keep your men together and your machinery employed, as well as getting the fair manufacturing profit, which we lost. Another serious result of our having to divert our orders from abroad is that we are not likely to get the business back. I am sorry to say that our experience, after the lapse of time during the war, is that, in connection with Maxim guns, a large part of the foreign Maxim guns are now being manufactured abroad instead of at our works, and we attribute that to a very large extent to our having to place the whole of our Maxim factory at the disposal of the Government, which we did very readily and very willingly, and we hope now that the war is over that those sacrifices that we have made will be considered.

20939. (Sir John Hopkins.) What was your opinion of the Boer pom-poms in the field from what you have heard?—The opinions we have had have been very curious. By some very good officers who have actually been using the pom-pom we have been told that the gun was invaluable—that it was invaluable for scouting purposes and for special purposes in regard to skirmishing, or where there was a chance of being suddenly attacked. The pom-pom, which utilises a projectile weighing only 1lb., cannot be compared with the 12-pounder or 15-pounder shrapnel, the projectile for which is so much in excess of the weight, and a great many officers seem to wish to compare this very small projectile with a heavier one. That comparison is unfair. But there is not the slightest doubt whatever that the pom-pom, properly directed, is an extremely good gun for moving people away from cover, making them run, and, furthermore, for protecting a particular position, like a bridge, or any other tactical important position at which the rate of fire of a pom-pom would be invaluable. I am also told that during the war it was found to

be the very best range finder they had, and I should be inclined to think myself that a pom-pom, worked in connection with rifle calibre Maxim guns having the same range as a pom-pom, would be an exceedingly useful weapon; but to compare the effect and use of a pom-pom with the effect and use of a field gun is unfair, and does not give the gun a chance. Had they been able to have brought pom-poms to the top of Spion Kop on pack saddles, I believe we should never have had to have left Spion Kop. The moment we saw that the pom-pom was an important gun in the field, we set to work and made an equipment so that the pom-pom could be carried on pack-saddles and be moved to positions which otherwise would be impossible to get to with ordinary heavy field guns or heavier calibre guns.

20940. You had orders for the Government for pom-poms in the latter stage of the war, had you not?—We supplied at a very rapid rate a very considerable number of pom-poms.

20941. (*Sir John Jackson.*) I suppose as a matter of fact there are very great advantages in the modern quick-firing gun over the old field gun?—I think that the nation that has not got the modern quick-firing field gun will be very much at a loss as compared to nations with it. The old field gun was capable of an effective fire of about four rounds per minute, and the Horse Artillery gun that we supplied to the War Office, which was tried last summer at Okehampton, obtained a rate of fire on service of 10 rounds in 32 seconds or 19 rounds a minute. As to that I should like to say that other field guns we have made have fired at the rate of 10 rounds in 22 seconds or 27 rounds a minute, and I feel sure that an army without a rapid firing gun will be at a most serious disadvantage in regard to an army with it.

20942. We have had it in evidence, I see that the difference was between four and six to eight; that must be too low for aimed fire?—My reference is in regard to the Government trial, which no doubt can be confirmed, at Okehampton. With a Horse Artillery gun we fired 10 rounds in 32 seconds, or 19 rounds a minute, and I have shown to many officers a field gun known as our "Mark L.," which we have fired at the rate of 27 rounds a minute. I am not going to say that the fuses can all be set from zero to the point at which you wish the shell to burst in that very short time, but it is well known in France where they have nothing but quick-firing guns, that in their wagons which come alongside their guns they have the fused shell set for different ranges; some are set to go off like case-shot, others for ranges varying up to the maximum, so that in case they come across an enemy at a particular range they always have a certain number set very near the range at which they wish to attack, or if the enemy is close they have their shells set to go off very close to the muzzle and act like shrapnel. And with that type of firing with guns which we ourselves have made we can get 27 rounds a minute, and a comparison between 27 rounds a minute and four rounds a minute under those conditions is almost unnecessary to discuss. In time of war you always get a chance at which the very rapid discharge of shrapnel may turn the day, and for this opportunity the rapid fire field gun is all important. It is like a ship, the first few rounds will probably decide the action, and now that foreign armies are supplied with modern quick-firing guns, the army that has not got the modern quick-firing guns had better stay at home. We have been told that the fire of the long range Boer guns was not effective at long range. Can you account for that?—I should say that the guns were not really very modern guns that the Boers had.

20943. I thought they had large modern Creusot guns?—I thought you referred to the field guns. The heavier guns were no doubt modern, and there is no difficulty whatever in getting effective fire at very long ranges. The Germans at the present time use for their heavy guns a fuse burning for 35 seconds which can easily attack up to 10,000 yards and beyond, and not only attack, but attack with great precision, because their fuses are so good that they burst within a very small percentage of error, in the place at which the fuse is set. And that also applies to their field guns in which they have the 22-second fuse, and which burst with an absolute precision, for covering the advance of Infantry, and with no variation to speak of at all!

20944. So that your suggestion is that if these big guns have been inaccurate it has been mostly owing to their not having satisfactory fuses?—I should say that had a very great bearing on the effect of the Boer fire. *Lieut. A. T. Dawson, R.N.* 25 Mar. 1903.

20945. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) With respect to the Government Arsenals, can the Government produce the ammunition of war cheaper or as cheaply as it can be produced in private establishments, such as yours or Armstrong's?—I should say that the cost of production in the Government Arsenal and in private firms would be practically the same in both places. On the other hand it is not fair to compare the price as scheduled in the official catalogues of the Government stores with the private stores, because the Royal Arsenal has its land free of charge and has not to pay interest on capital; that is not taken into account in the schedule of prices; and so the actual prices as scheduled cannot be compared with the trade prices. Of course, the trade have other considerations, such as bad debts, and having to pay a certain amount for obtaining orders, and then of course there is the element of profit that must come in; but speaking generally I should say that the Government really obtain their stores at about the same price from the trade as they do from their own Government factories. In fact, I may say that in connection with some stores I think it will be borne out that the trade supply cheaper than the Ordnance Factories.

20946. You spoke of charging cost price and a profit. I suppose in estimating the cost price it is material, wages, and rent of machines?—What we should prefer to do in a case of that sort would be to take wages, materials, plus an indirect charge for the rent of machines, and a general charge, which is a well-known thing in a factory, over that total, and then we should have to put on profit. That consideration, I think, would be the same in Government factories.

20947. But in the Government factories they would not charge a rent for machines in the schedule of prices?—Because they have not paid anything for the machines, but it belongs to the country, and the country has had to supply the money really.

20948. In the quick-firing guns how is the enormous quantity of ammunition required for them provided in the field?—That is provided by having enough wagons and limbers with the gun equipment as will be reasonably necessary for the service on which the guns are employed.

20949. You could not possibly carry it in the limbers?—You could not possibly carry it in the limbers. Every quick-firing modern gun requires a certain number of wagons and limbers attached to it to move with the general equipment.

20950. To be, in fact, alongside the gun or close to?—To be brought up to the gun when it is wanted. In the French quick-firing Artillery they bring the wagon right up to the gun and leave it there. The wagon really forms a sort of shield, and the men who are taking the ammunition out of the wagon supply it to the gun practically under cover of their own wagon, which is protected by steel plates, and in that wagon the fuses are set to various distances so that the moment they come up to the firing point they find the range and take the shrapnel shell nearest to that range and set it as quickly as they can; and they practically supply the ammunition at the necessary speed to come somewhere near the speed of the gun. Of course, the maximum speed of the quick-firing field guns would only be necessary when attached by Cavalry or taken by some surprise or possibly finding troops in a position which you would want to direct the whole force of your Artillery at the greatest possible rate. I think certain occasions arose during the late war in which that very rapid rate of fire might have been most successful to our own troops, where they found the Boers suddenly and wanted to direct their whole force of Artillery on to them.

20951. Was any inconvenience found from the great heating of the gun in quick firing?—I have seen a very large number of rounds fired from a field gun, 300 and more at a time, without stopping, but the effect is unimportant. I do not know what would happen if you went on to a thousand, but that hardly comes into real practice.

Lieut. A. T. Dawson, R.N. 20952. Up to 300 rounds you have not found any inconvenience?—No. I myself do not see why you should not go on firing a great many more rounds than that. What really happens is that the chase, which is the thinnest part of the gun gets the hottest, but where

the cartridge goes this part does not get nearly so hot owing to the thicker mass of metal around it.

20953. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything else you would like to add?—I think I have brought out all the points I wished to.

APPENDIX TO THE EVIDENCE ON LIEUTENANT ARTHUR TREVOR DAWSON, R.N.

Letter.

LETTER referred to in the foregoing evidence.

Bernard Holland, Esq.,

Secretary of the Royal Commission on the War in
South Africa,
St. Stephen's House,
Victoria Embankment, S.W.

Sir,—With reference to your favour of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to enclose for the Committee's information a list of Army material supplied by my company to the War Office during the Boer War, from October 1899 to May 1902, together with details, etc., of the same.

The very large production of material to meet the British Government requirements necessitated a great increase in machinery, plant, tools, etc., to enable us to carry out the demands, and, in connection with the supply of Maxim guns alone, it was necessary to spend some £7,000 in this department, for the purpose of increasing our output from 30 guns to 60 guns per month.

As an example of the amount of capital which it was necessary to spend in order to meet the very heavy demands, it will perhaps be of interest to the Committee to know that my company's expenditure on new machinery etc., during the last five years amounts to:—

Barrow-in-Furness	-	-	-	£1,465,472
Erith	-	-	-	283,570
Sheffield	-	-	-	492,408
				£2,241,450

I would point out that this enormous expenditure of capital was primarily for the purpose of putting our factories in such a state of preparedness that, should any future occasion arise when large amounts of ordnance stores would have to be produced, we should be capable of meeting the demand without serious undue strain. The necessity under which the British Government found itself of placing orders abroad to meet the urgent demand for stores would, we believe, in the future be avoided, owing to the heavy sacrifices my company has made by the expenditure of capital for the purpose of putting their works in a state of thorough efficiency to meet urgent requirements.

Notwithstanding the very large amount of machinery which my company have put down, I regret very much that the Government is continuing to extend the Ordnance Factories, as, according to information contained in a report in "The Times," Colonel Bainbridge uses the following expressions:—

"Now that the War was over it might have been expected that the output would have considerably decreased, but new territory has been added and modern machinery had been given them with no niggard hand in order that they might prepare the organisation for that expansion whenever pressure, which might arise at any time, was put upon them."

We trust, however, that this very large expenditure of capital on the part of my company will have the sympathetic consideration of the Government, and whilst we are sure that the consideration exists in the minds of the chief officers of the departments, my firm would esteem it a favour if these circumstances could be strongly represented to the Government in order that such expenditure of capital should be, if possible, rendered productive of profit now that the War is over, and who, notwithstanding the fact that they spent their capital freely to meet the urgent wishes of the Government in the time of emergency, are now at their wits' ends to keep their men and machines employed.

It would perhaps interest the Committee to know that

at our Erith works alone, during the War, our weekly wages cheque was for £7,000, whereas to-day it is within £2,800. Our factory at Crayford, for the manufacture of field material for Maxim guns, and which was to a large extent instrumental in admitting of our greatly extending our deliveries during the War, are entirely closed for want of work. During the War these small works helped in enabling us to increase our output of field artillery shrapnels from 2,000 to 9,000 per week, and to greatly increase our production of field material and Maxim guns.

In regard to the Erith factory, at the present time we have some 1,505 machines in the factory, and of this number 616 are standing idle, and some of the remainder are only being worked half time.

In connection with the supply of land service material, I would represent that with our present plant our production is as follows:—

9·2-in. or 10-in. garrison guns and mountings, complete with full equipment of ammunition, at least 24 equipments per annum.

7·5-in. garrison guns and mountings, complete with full equipment of ammunition, 30 equipments per annum.

6-in. garrison guns and mountings with full equipment of ammunition of every class, 100 equipments per annum.

Heavy howitzer equipments, such as 4·7-in. and 5-in. guns, and guns of position, with wagons, limbers, ammunition, etc., 24 complete batteries per annum.

12-pounder and 18-pounder gun equipments, with wagons, limbers, ammunition, etc., 30 complete batteries per annum.

R.C. Maxim guns, complete with mountings, appurtenances, etc., 500 equipments per annum.

Pom-poms, with full equipment and 30,000 rounds of ammunition for each gun, 200 equipments per annum.

This output does not include our enormous powers of production of sea service artillery, hydraulic, and electric mountings, etc., and in considering this production it should, of course, be understood that any particular nature of store could be increased, providing a proportional decrease is made in some other equipment.

Considering the enormous powers of production which my company's own works now have, it would seem that providing during peace time we are supplied with orders for every class of store which it is likely might be necessary to be obtained in a hurry during war, there is little likelihood that in future so large a quantity of material would have to be ordered from foreign countries. In order that warlike stores may be turned out quickly in an emergency it is necessary for the firms to have ready the necessary jigs and gauges for their production, and that, to some extent, their manufacture should be organised for quick supply.

I think I am right in saying that such firms as Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company, and Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim are capable of entirely arming fortresses and artillery equipments of every kind, as well as ships, complete practically in every respect, at their own works. Furthermore, it is of course understood that such firms are prepared to come to an arrangement to place their manufacturing facilities exclusively at the command of the Government in time of war or emergency. In return for these facilities it would seem only right that some special consideration should be given in peace time to enable the staff and machine shops to be kept running in such a manner that a fair financial return should be possible.

Had my firm received orders previously for the supply of 12-pounder and 15-pounder field equipments complete to Government designs before the War, there would not have been the great delay there was in the preparation of the necessary special tools and gauges, which in itself caused serious delay, and furthermore, it is

probable that the shops would have been in a position to have dealt with the work in a quicker and more satisfactory manner.

I have the honour to be, Sir

Your obedient servant,

A. TREVOR DAWSON.

Letter
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ARMY MATERIAL SUPPLIED TO WAR OFFICE DURING BOER WAR (OCTOBER 1899 TO MAY 1902).

571 Maxim guns	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Erith	-	-	Total Value	731,134	-	-	
299 „ „ carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
260 sets of spares	-	-	-	-	-	-									
76 37-mm. guns	-	-	-	-	-	-									
127 carriages and 127 limbers	-	-	-	-	-	-									
140 sets of spares	-	-	-	-	-	-									
30 75-mm. mountain guns and carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
7 12-pr. 12-cwt. guns	-	-	-	-	-	-									
23 „ „ „ garrison carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
122 15-pr. field guns	-	-	-	-	-	-									
127 „ „ „ carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Barrow	-	-	-	371,563	-	-	
486 „ „ „ limbers	-	-	-	-	-	-									
246 „ „ „ wagons	-	-	-	-	-	-									
70 6-inch garrison carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
32 9·2-inch garrison carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Barrow	-	-	-	371,563	-	-	
42 4·7-inch travelling carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
42 limbers for ditto	-	-	-	-	-	-									
50 5-inch howitzer carriages	-	-	-	-	-	-									
35 „ „ „ wagons	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Sheffield	-	-	-	444,700	-	-	
45 „ „ „ limbers	-	-	-	-	-	-									
64 4·7-inch guns	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Sheffield	-	-	-	444,700	-	-	
45 5-inch howitzers	-	-	-	-	-	-									
69 6-inch guns	-	-	-	-	-	-									
2 7½-inch guns	-	-	-	-	-	-									
29 9·2-inch guns	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Erith and Dartford	-	-	-	856,656	-	-	
1,560,000 37-mm. cartridges	-	-	-	-	-	-									
345,000 15-pr. shrapnels	-	-	-	-	-	-									
13,900 75-mm. mountain cartridges	-	-	-	-	-	-									
6,000 5-inch shells	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	Barrow	-	-	-	-	26,020	-	-
6,000 4·7-inch shells	-	-	-	-	-	-									
400 6-inch A.-P. shot	-	-	-	-	-	-									
2,000 4·7-inch shrapnel	-	-	-	-	-	-									
												£. 2,430,073	-	-	

(After a short Adjournment).

Major-General Sir EDWIN COLLEN, G.C.I.E., C.B., called and examined.

20954. (Chairman.) You have had a long experience of the Military Department in India?—Yes.

20955. And you were Military Member of Council at the time the Indian Contingent was sent to South Africa?—Yes.

20956. We have had before us the correspondence which took place between the India Office and India in regard to the details of the arrangements for sending out the Contingent, but we should be very glad to hear from you what you have to say with regard to the arrangements which were made and the manner in which the Contingent was sent out?—There were various communications which passed between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy previously to the dispatch of the troops with regard to the preparation of the troops and their equipment in case their dispatch was necessary. The instructions given were that the shipping was not to be taken up until final orders were received, and these were sent to the Government of India on the 8th of September, 1899.

20957. When did you first hear of the preparations?—It was some date in August. Meanwhile, before the final instructions were received, a scheme for the organisation of the Force was drawn up in the Quartermaster-General's Department, under instructions from the Government of India in the Military Department. Those instructions were given on the 16th of August. I had various conferences with the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Lockhart, during that time, and with the chief officers; and, of course, knowing what was going on, I had privately warned the Director of Marine that a call might be made upon him to take up shipping. And after the scheme for the organisation of the Contingent had been drawn up a copy of it was sent to the Director of Marine. Those were the preliminary arrangements which were made.

20958. Up to that date in September?—Up to the 8th of September.

20959. And was the composition of the Force settled from Home or did you settle it in India?—As a matter

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collen,
G.C.I.E., C.B.

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collett,
G.C.I.E., C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

of fact it was suggested from Home; that is to say, it was suggested that we might be able to send an Infantry Brigade of four battalions, a Cavalry Brigade of three regiments, and a Brigade Division of Artillery of three batteries; and that was accepted by the Government of India.

20960. You accepted that as a Force which you could spare from India at that moment?—Yes.

20961. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was there any question as to the safety of diminishing the Forces in India?—Yes; we said that a certain risk might be incurred in removing a considerable portion of the British garrison, but that we thought the risk under the circumstances should be run.

20962. It was not to be advocated as a general rule?—No, not as a general rule; but I think circumstances might arise in which the Government of India would be quite justified in sending a portion of the British garrison to the help of the British Government.

20963. Only you would prefer a system under which the Empire could defend itself without calling upon India?—Yes, certainly.

20964. (*Chairman.*) At what date did you warn the troops for service?—We actually warned the troops for service on the 7th September. It was the day before we received instructions; they were not ordered to be mobilised, but simply warned that their services might be required.

20965. And you ordered them to mobilise after that date?—Yes, the day after we received instructions, on the 9th September.

20966. Up to that date you had done nothing with regard to transports, except privately to the Director of Marine?—No, we had done nothing as regards transports except to inform the Director of Marine that they might be wanted.

20967. Perhaps you would inform the Commission how transport is taken up under the Military Department in India?—Certainly. But may I just complete what I have said by mentioning that the date on which the troops were actually ready was from the 11th to the 14th or 15th September, that is, they were ready at their stations to move.

20968. Three or four days after the notice?—Three or four days after the notice. With regard to the arrangements for the transports they were taken up at Bombay by the Director of Marine, Captain Goodridge, and at Calcutta by the Deputy Director of Marine, Captain Gwyn. At the time the monsoon was not over, and there were very few vessels really in port, and most of those either had cargoes on board or were discharging cargoes. If we had had all the vessels ready in port I think the dispatch of the troops might have been effected at an earlier date; but by very remarkable and extra ordinary work on the part of the dockyard and of the staff, who worked from seven in the morning till midnight, the vessels were got ready. Taking as an example the Bombay Dockyard, the orders were received by the Director at 1 p.m. on the 9th September; the "Secundra," one of the vessels chartered, was inspected the same day, and having been fitted and coaled and surveyed she left on the 17th with a field battery and a Veterinary Field Hospital. Again, taking Calcutta, the Dockyard there received the order on 9th September, and the "Purnea," which was then discharging cargo, was moved to the troop jetty, coaled on the 11th, fitted on the 11th to the 15th, finally surveyed on the 17th, and embarked the 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifles on the 18th. Altogether 22 vessels were taken up, 18 in Bombay, 13 of them being horse-ships, and four in Calcutta, two of them being horse-ships. The ships were all sent off in 16 days.

20969. The horse-ships would take longer to equip probably?—Yes, in the way of fittings.

20970. Had you the fittings in store?—We had large numbers of the fittings in store, of course not enough for the whole of the ships, but still the reserve store that we had, enabled the procedure not to be retarded.

20971. You said with regard to mobilisation that the troops were ready to move at their stations within three and four days after the notice was given to them?—Yes.

20972. Is that about the time you would be able to

reckon upon for the mobilisation of any unit?—It would depend very much upon the number of units you had to mobilise, because if there are a very large number the provision of transport both pack and wheeled would take a longer time; but the actual completion of the unit with its equipment and stores, most of which it has in its possession, would not take a longer time than three or four days.

20973. As compared with Home mobilisation, that is because the troops in India are practically on a war footing?—As to the strength they are.

20974. And as to stores?—Yes, and as to equipment undoubtedly.

20975. The regiment is equipped?—Yes, it is ready; it receives certain stores but only minor details. May I say that I thought of explaining later the mobilisation plan if the Commission desire it; the regiment has its equipment at a particular station as a general rule; but there are exceptions to that rule.

20976. Then within 16 days the first contingent did embark?—Yes, in succession.

20977. Can you give us the actual numbers of that contingent?—The actual numbers were: 259 Officers, 1,564 Cavalry, 653 Artillery, and 3,427 Infantry; the total being 5,903.

20978. (*Viscount Esher.*) How soon were they replaced?—That is rather a difficult question to answer, because additional troops were sent from India, and certain numbers were brought back. They certainly were not replaced during the war.

20979. (*Chairman.*) Additional troops were sent at later periods?—Yes.

20980. To what extent?—My figures are from the Adjutant-General's Return of the 11th of July, 1902. From the 11th of October to the end of July, 1900, 132 Officers, 713 Cavalry, 376 Artillery, 670 Infantry and Mounted Infantry, total, 1891, were sent from India; and then from the 1st of May, 1901, to the 31st December, 1901, 108 Officers, 1,206 Cavalry, 2,543 Infantry and Mounted Infantry, a total of 3,857 were sent, making, with the previous total of 5,903, a grand total of 11,851. During that period troops were sent back to India, but I am sorry to say I have not the actual record.

20981. (*Viscount Esher.*) But was it anything like an equivalent number?—I mean sent back from South Africa.

20982. I only asked you the question because you originally stipulated that when you spoke of the risk, that that might be incurred up to the end of the year?—Yes, that was rather a pious intention.

20983. (*Chairman.*) But to what extent, generally speaking, roughly speaking, were troops sent back during that period from South Africa?—I should think perhaps between 3,000 and 4,000 during the whole period.

20984. That would leave you with about 7,000 or 8,000 troops diminished garrison?—Yes.

20985. There were non-combatants who went with this force?—We sent at different times 469 native soldiers as non-combatants and 5,846 native non-combatants; and then again, later we sent 756 non-combatants; this was up to April, 1902. That came to 7,071. The native soldiers were sent as non-combatants to help in the remount depôts, and to act as orderlies. In that number of native non-combatants there was a transport corps about 500 strong; that was sent in January, 1900; and a bheestie, or water-carrier corps 1,000 strong sent in March, 1900, and a corps of Syces 1,000 strong in March and May, 1900; and there was also a very useful corps of Dhubies, or native washermen, sent in May, 1900.

20986. Did the force take horses with them?—The force took their horses with them.

20987. The Cavalry took their horses?—Yes.

20988. But, I suppose, for remounts, they depended upon the service there?—Yes; but we sent a considerable number of horses from India to South Africa apart from those that went with the contingent. We sent 6,761 up to the 15th of June, 1900; I am not quite sure whether others were sent after. They asked us for 2,000 horses for Mounted Infantry on December 23rd, 1899, and the first batch left India on January 8th, 1900. The horses

were drawn from native Cavalry Regiments, and they were also given by native States with great loyalty and generosity. The Maharaja Scindia, for instance, gave 300 Artillery horses, and other States, like Mysore, Hyderabad, and Jodhpur, and the Punjab States, each sent a contribution of horses.

20989. What class of horse?—They were chiefly country bred and Arabs.

20990. A good class of horse?—Yes, they were all very carefully inspected.

20991. Do you know how the horses of India stood the climate in South Africa?—I believe they stood it well. With regard to the Australian horses sent from India, I think there is rather conflicting evidence; I am not certain; I could not speak on that subject.

20992. Did the force take its transport to any extent?—Only the regimental transport.

20993. Does that mean both lines of regimental transport?—It means in India the transport for ammunition, entrenching tools, *pakhals* or water bags, and small medical requirements.

20994. Nothing to do with supplies?—Nothing to do with any quantity of supplies.

20995. Does the organisation of regimental transport in that respect differ in India from what is understood to be regimental transport in this country?—I think the expression regimental transport means the same thing in India as in England, but, the details are somewhat different.

20996. You are, no doubt, aware that there has been a discussion with regard to regimental transport, and the value of regimental transport, as a consequence of the war?—Yes.

20997. And our attention has been directed to the difference between the first line of regimental transport, which is what you have spoken to, and the second line, which means the first provision supply of the regiment. Does that also exist in the regimental transport in India?—A great deal of discussion has also taken place in India on this subject. At one time nearly the whole of the transport of the Indian Army was regimental, but within the last few years, when I was Military Member of the Council, we introduced the system of corps transport, and a system of detaching transport from the corps to be with regiments—that is to say, a military corps of transport that furnished the regimental transport.

20998. That means keeping up a cadre of corps transport in peace time?—Not only that, but we keep up corps of transport, and cadres which can be expanded and become full corps of transport.

20999. That means a separate organisation, separate from the regiment?—Entirely; in fact, it may be said that, so far as the regimental transport is concerned, it no longer exists, because the idea is to detach a troop or half troop to the regiment, with which it remains so long as it is required.

21000. And you regard that as the better system of the two?—On the whole I regard it as the better system of the two. As I stated, in India, during the discussion of the subject, I should prefer to have both systems, if I could. I should like to have the regiments fully equipped and to have a large corps transport; but it is impossible, with due regard to economy, to keep up both systems in times of peace; and, therefore, I would much rather have the large and expansive organisation of corps transport than merely regimental transport, recognising that the regimental transport is really the easiest transport that there is to organise, because you have the officers, non-commissioned officers and men, whom you can employ directly you hand over a certain number of animals and equipment to them, and carts, and so on; whereas corps transport, which is absolutely necessary for the supply of troops generally, is a very difficult thing to organise.

21001. It is said that the interest taken by regiments in regimental transport is an argument for maintaining that system: do you have that view?—I do not think we have that experience in India, except, perhaps, in the case of special corps, like those of the Frontier Force; and we consider that, under the new system, quite as much interest would be taken in the transport by the regiment, knowing how the regiment depends for its mobility and efficiency on the transport under the corps system.

21002. Under the corps system you must have a sufficiency of officers to detach in this way with the separate regiments in charge of the transport?—We have not a large number of officers in the corps transport; they detach certain portions of that, and possibly only native non-commissioned officers would go to the regiments. There is a regimental transport officer told off at the time.

21003. From the regimental staff?—Yes, from the regiment.

21004. And that, you think, will work well?—I think from all I hear the system works admirably in India.

21005. Has it been tested on service?—No, it has not, except, I think, in China, where it was partially tested, and there it answered well.

21006. Then you said you were going to speak to the equipment and stores that were sent to South Africa?—May I mention the subject of mules and ponies?

21007. If you please?—We sent 1,280 mules and ponies up to the 15th of June, 1900, and 340 Burmese ponies for the Mounted Infantry from that province.

21008. Were the Burmese ponies specially suited for Mounted Infantry?—Yes, I think they did very well. They were rather small sometimes for the very heavy weights.

21009. Now on the subject of stores, what have you to say?—There were large quantities of stores and equipment sent with the troops and with the Ordnance Field Park and Hospitals, with the Field Veterinary Hospital, and also subsequently and separately. I think that if it had not been for the amount of small-arm ammunition we sent with the Ordnance Field Park and the gun ammunition we sent and the supplies we sent for the hospitals, and generally with the Force, the situation at Ladysmith would have been much more precarious than it was. We always send with Indian Forces beyond sea a very large supply of stores and equipment of all kinds. But in addition to the ample supply sent with the troops we sent to South Africa from India, saddlery, field veterinary chests, signalling lamps, fuses and tubes, helmets, warm coats, blouses, and numerous articles of clothing, 45,000 jhools or coverings for bullocks, 200,000 pairs of boots, and some 16,000 sets of saddlery from the Government Boot Factory, which is in charge of Messrs. Cooper, Allen and Company. We also sent reserve supplies of three months with the troops, and one month's supply for horses and mules, and large quantities of medical comforts. Some little difficulty was caused by the War Office not having sufficient and precise information on the subject of Indian equipments and organisation, especially in connection with the Ordnance Field Park and the hospitals and veterinary equipment. Then it was said at first that no followers were to be sent, and no transport was to be sent except for regimental ammunition, but we explained that the regimental transport that we proposed to send would provide for ammunition, medical panniers, signalling equipment, and entrenching tools. There was also some question as to whether full hospital equipment and the Ordnance Field Park and veterinary hospital should be sent, but it was ultimately decided that they should go. We sent a larger quantity of ammunition than the ordinary War Office scale. I think that the whole discussion rather shows the necessity for full information regarding India being available at the War Office.

21010. It was not so before the War?—It was not so before the War.

21011. (*Sir John Edge.*) You sent a greater number of rounds per gun, did you not?—Yes, we did; we sent 500 rounds instead of 350.

21012. (*Chairman.*) Is that all you wish to say about the equipment and stores?—Yes.

21013. Are there any special features of the Indian Army Administration to which you would refer?—I think I can briefly indicate the special features of the Army Administration in India if it would be of interest to the Commission.

21014. If you please?—In the first place, the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council is the supreme head of military affairs. The Military Department of the Government is the Central Office of Army Administration, and the military member of Council is in charge of it.

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collett,
G.C.I.E., C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collett,
G.C.I.E., C.B.
25 Mar. 1903

All the matters which have to be referred to the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council pass through this bureau, which has a secretary and a staff of Deputy and Assistant Secretaries and some 80 to 100 clerks. The actual command of the Army is vested in the Commander-in-Chief and he is assisted by the Departments at Army headquarters. Thus it may be said that there are two leading military authorities in India, the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Member of Council. The former is the executive commander, and the latter what one may call, perhaps, the administrative agent; both are members of the Viceroy's Council. Then following out this division of work under the military member of Council and the Department of which he is in charge there are the following: the Ordnance Department, the Supply and Transport Corps, the Military Works Services, the Military Accounts Department and the Army Remount Department. The Military Member of Council is also responsible for the Royal Indian Marine and the Dockyard, but the Director of Marine is at the head of this service, and is the administrative chief. Each Army Department in India has a chief who is responsible for its administration and for carrying out whatever work it may have to perform.

21015. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Is the Medical Department represented at all?—The Military Medical Department is under the Commander-in-Chief. I was first dealing with the Departments which are under the Military Member of Council. The Military Member of Council is responsible for Army Finance, and through the agency of the Military Department or Secretariat for laying all military questions before the Viceroy and his Council. Then under the Commander-in-Chief there are three chief officers: the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, and the Principal Medical officer. Under the Adjutant-General there are the Inspectors-General of Cavalry, Artillery, and Volunteers, the Judge Advocate-General, the Principal Veterinary officer, the Director of Military Education, and the Inspector of Gymnasias; and under the Quartermaster-General in India are the Intelligence and Mobilisation branches. I do not think I need elaborate this description any further except to say that as regards the supreme Government and Army headquarters, the leading principles of the Central and Supreme Military Administration are the distinction between the business comprising the work of the Army Administrative Departments, including Finance, and the executive command of the Army; and the responsibility and direct control exercised by the heads of departments over their own work. There have been naturally, in the course of years, many changes, but the leading principles of the Army Administration in India have, I think I may safely say, remained the same throughout a very long period.

21016. (*Chairman.*) One moment. Did you mention the Commissary General-in-Chief?—I mentioned the Supply and Transport Corps. He has now changed his title and he is now Director-General of Supply and Transport.

21017. That is under the military member?—Yes.

21018. I knew him as Commissary General-in-Chief?—Yes. I did not mention the heads of departments, but I might say that the head of the Ordnance Department is the Director-General of Ordnance. The head of what was known as the Commissariat, and is now known as the Supply and Transport Corps, is the Director-General of Supply and Transport. The head of the Military Work Services which used to be known as the Military Works Department is now called Director-General of Military Works, and the Military Accounts Department has as its chief the Accountant-General, who is an officer also of the Military Department, and the Army Remount Department has a director at its head.

21019. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) There is just one question that I would like to ask on the Quartermaster-General's Department of Intelligence and Mobilisation; it is a purely thinking Department. Has it any administrative work?—No, it has no administrative work. The two branches, of course, are distinct.

21020. Quite distinct; but there is no administration; it is planning and scheming?—They gather up the information and apply it in the preparation of various schemes and proposals. Then passing on from the

Central Administration, India is, from the military point of view, divided into four great compartments of Commands, Punjab, Bengal, Bombay and Madras. And Burmah is about to be made a separate or fifth Command. Each of these has, at its head, a Lieutenant-General commanding the forces with a military and administrative staff, including the Controller of Military Accounts, who acts as his financial adviser, and I think I may say that the keynote of the whole system is decentralisation. The Lieutenant-Generals have considerable powers; they have to carry out their duties on the general lines laid down by the Government of India and the Commander-in-Chief, but the detail work is in the hands of the Lieutenant-Generals commanding. I may say that a further progress in decentralisation is to be looked for, because before I left India certain proposals were made which have been further elaborated, and though I have not heard (not being in office now) of the state at which the business has arrived, I should hope that there was every probability of decentralisation going even further than is actually the case according to regulation at the present moment. I think that the Chairman is acquainted with the fact that the discussion has been going on for a good many years. Perhaps, before I conclude this portion of my evidence I might say that I think that one of the great difficulties, and almost dangers, in our Army system, is that the Indian and Home Army Departments are not organised on similar lines. Of course, it is impossible that you can have exactly the same organisation of a great Supply Department identical in England and in India, in the Home Army and the Indian Army, but a great deal could be done in my humble opinion to bring them on to the same lines. We have had experience on various occasions when troops from home and from India have been associated, and there has been, I think, a considerable difficulty in working the Departments together, and practically the benefits have not been as great as they might have been if one system had prevailed. In South Africa, at Ladysmith, there were difficulties with respect to the Ordnance Field Park which we sent there, and with regard to the Supply and Transport Corps. If a large body of Indian troops were employed with troops from home these difficulties, which are not so great when it is a comparatively small expedition, would be accentuated. The great advantage would be if you had them organised on the same lines you would have power of reinforcement of the Army departments in the event of any large campaign occurring either in India or in any other part of the world.

21021. (*Chairman.*) You have mentioned the Controllers, have they any connection with the Finance Department?—Yes, they have certain relations with the Finance Department. Although they are not actually in the Finance Department they are responsible with regard to the form of accounts, and for the accounts, to the Comptroller and Auditor General, but in all their military and financial duties they are under the Accountant-General in the Military Department.

21022. Are they classed as officers of the Military Department or as officers of the Finance Department?—As officers of the Military Department, not of the Central Military Department but of the Military Accounts Department as an Army Department; it is classed as an Army Department and is staffed very considerably with officers drawn from the Army.

21023. Do they correspond with the Army Pay Department at home?—Their subordinates do, but controllers have a special function because they are practically the financial administrators and auditors of very large bodies of troops, there being one for each great Command.

21024. It was because I thought they had special functions that I asked the question. Perhaps you would explain exactly how they stand in that matter?—In each great Army Command in India, these four or five Commands which I have specified, there is a Controller of Military Accounts, although probably in the fifth or Burmah Command, which is about to be made, they will not employ an officer of so high a standing as a Controller. The Controller, besides being the financial adviser of the Lieutenant-General commanding the Forces, is at the head of the audit and accounts of the whole of the troops in the area of the Command. Under him there are a certain number of officers of the Military Accounts Department

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collett,
G.C.I.E., C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

21025. Civilian officers?—No, military, and a few drawn from the subordinate ranks who are civilians.

21026. Is the Controller himself a military officer?—Yes, the whole of the officers of the Military Accounts Department are drawn from the Army, but within a comparatively recent period certain members of the Subordinate Accounts Service have been promoted to the higher ranks. Then under the Controller there are all the various officers of account and audit, the pay branches, and audit branches for supply and transport, the audit branch for the ordnance, and so on, so that he has really a complete staff of financial assistants to help him in dealing with all the accounts and audit of the troops in that particular big command.

21027. (*Sir George Taubman Goldie.*) What is roughly the annual cost of all that control system, do you think?—Do you mean the Controller's offices?

21028. Yes?—I am afraid I cannot answer the question off hand. I could get the information.

21029. Is it a large sum?—Yes, it is a very considerable sum. Before I left India I took up this question particularly of reducing what I thought was the burden upon the Army of the Indian account and audit system, and a Committee was assembled; a Controller, a very experienced officer, Colonel Anderson, was made chairman, and their Report has been rendered and I understand that a great deal of work has been reduced so that the burden upon the Army has been lightened without, as I believe, relaxing any of the necessary safeguards of audit.

21030. But on the whole you consider some such system is advantageous?—Absolutely necessary.

21031. (*Chairman.*) Is there any other matter with regard to the Army administration to which you would refer?—I might perhaps mention that all the appointments in the Army Administration and the Army Departments are filled by officers of the Army, and that constitutes a difference between the Home and the Indian administration.

21032. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Apart from the question of transport and the question of control, which you have entered upon, are there any other serious differences between the Indian and English systems. You said that there was a disadvantage in having a difference between the two systems?—They are different in that the working of their Departments is entirely different.

21033. In what main particulars?—It would be a little difficult to detail them, but in their methods of business and in their organisation. I do not think for instance that there is any actual counterpart to what we have in India in the Ordnance Department. We have arsenals which are not only receptacles for stores of all kinds and in which we have all the mobilisation equipment stored that is necessary, and that comes under Ordnance Supply but also a certain amount of repairing and manufacturing power. I do not think that there is an analogous institution in England. Of course you have the great arsenal at Woolwich, but that is a very large manufacturing and storing department.

21034. But in the Commander-in-Chief's Department things are very much the same, are they not, as they are here, only under different names?—No, I think there is a good deal of difference. For instance, here the Quartermaster-General is an officer who is charged with supply and transport, and pay, &c.

21035. I say under different names, but the Director-General of Intelligence and Mobilisation here really fulfils very much the same duties as the Quartermaster-General in India performs?—Exactly, but I mean that the Quartermaster-General at home has different functions from the Quartermaster-General in India.

21036. The Quartermaster-General at home corresponds to the Director-General of Supply and Transport in India?—To a great extent, but in India he has those single duties to perform while we have other men at the heads of the Remount and Pay Departments, for instance.

21037. (*Chairman.*) But the Intelligence Department in India is entirely under the Commander-in-Chief?—Entirely under the Commander-in-Chief and under the Quartermaster-General.

21038. You said it was the business of the Director of Intelligence to prepare schemes?—There is no actual Director of Intelligence; there is only an officer, a Colonel,

at the head of the Intelligence Department, who is an Assistant Quartermaster-General.

21039. And his business is to prepare any scheme for any military operation?—Yes, in this way, that he does it in conjunction with the mobilisation branch. He would draw it up in the rough with all the details necessary, and then the Quartermaster-General, who is the head of both branches, comes in.

21040. And through him it goes to the Commander-in-Chief?—Then it is discussed by the Commander-in-Chief and Adjutant-General, or any officers who are brought together for the purpose.

21041. And it would be through the Commander-in-Chief that any scheme of that kind would come to the Government of India?—Yes, through the Commander-in-Chief; it would be submitted by the Commander-in-Chief to the Government of India.

21041*. Through the military department?—Through the military department.

21042. And thereafter for discussion in Council?—And thereafter for discussion in Council. But there is one stage which perhaps I may have omitted, and that is that the General Mobilisation Committee might be assembled possibly to discuss some particular scheme; it has not always been done, but it might be done.

21043. Is that a body that exists?—It is a body that exists. I may give an example. In the winter of 1899–1900 Sir William Lockhart was ill and was unable to take the matter up, but with his consent and concurrence, I assembled the Mobilisation Committee in Calcutta to discuss various important questions which were then pending, and to make certain proposals with regard to the defence of India. We sat continuously for many days; but that was, perhaps, somewhat exceptional.

21044. I do not know whether you would wish to refer at all to any relations with the Finance Department in the administration of the Army?—I have considerable experience of those relations. I think that on the whole the system in India works very well. You have a strong Finance Department to which every proposal of the slightest importance is submitted, and is there subjected to a somewhat severe criticism.

21045. The Finance Department may correspond roughly to the Treasury?—Yes. It is only after often very prolonged discussion that the Military Department, as representing the Army in the Government of India, is able to sanction some particular proposal, say some change in organization. It may happen that the Military Member of Council and the Financial Member of Council cannot agree. The Military Member of Council may, perhaps, be unable to give way. Then the question comes to the Viceroy, as the arbiter, and if the Viceroy so pleases the case is brought up and discussed in Council. In fact we had very large proposals before I left India in 1901 up for consideration involving considerable expenditure, and every one of those was discussed in the Finance Department first, and then between the Financial member and myself, and subsequently in Council. We prepared what I think is a very useful document, a schedule of all our proposals, showing their initial cost, the recurring cost and any particulars that might be necessary as to whether the expenditure would fall on India, that is to say the Indian Estimates, or on the India Office, the Home Estimates. Those schedules gathered up all the proposals which the Commander-in-Chief and I considered should be discussed by the Government as a whole in their relation to the defence and security of the Indian Empire; they were at that time absolutely comprehensive.

21046. But even individual proposals have to go to the Finance Department. For instance, if the Military Department wished to establish a gun factory or anything of that kind it may come from the Commander-in-Chief, or not; at any rate it is discussed in the Military Department, but it has to go to the Finance Department?—Undoubtedly any question involving expenditure.

21047. And it is there fully discussed simply from the financial side of the question?—Fully discussed from the financial side.

21048. And then it is returned to the Military Department?—Yes, it returns then to the Military Department.

Major.
Gen. Sir
E. Collett,
G.C.I.E., C.B.
25 Mar. 1903.

The Military Member of Council, if it is a matter of great importance and he does not accept the conclusions of the Finance Department, can then refer it to the Viceroy, and the Viceroy either gives his decision or remits it for consideration in Council.

21049. But the point I wanted to bring out was that there was full discussion between the two separate Departments of the Government of India, the Military Department and the Finance Department each having its say and each knowing what the other thought upon any individual proposition?—Very full discussion.

21050. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Are the Commander-in-Chief and the Head of that Finance Department both Members of Council?—Yes.

21051. So that they can present their views to the Council?—Yes, the Military Member of Council is generally charged, in fact always so far as I know, with presenting the case to the Council. The Secretary is there, he states the case briefly and then the Military Member of Council takes up the question and deals with it, and after the Commander-in-Chief has spoken the Financial Member would be called upon by the Viceroy to speak.

21052. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Would that be the course in a case relating to the Commander-in-Chief's Department, such as Intelligence; supposing some more money was wanted for Intelligence, would the Military Member of Council still fight the battle?—Yes, he would fight the battle, but the Commander-in-Chief would be a powerful ally and would represent his own case. Or it might happen that the Military Member of Council might not agree with the Commander-in-Chief.

21053. (*Chairman.*) But it is brought up by the Secretary, who is in the Department of the Government of India, and the Commander-in-Chief is an extraordinary member, he is not the head of a Department?—That is so.

21054. Then you have something to say as regards the plan of mobilisation?—The plan of mobilisation in India is based on mobilisation by divisions. We have, as I explained, the great Commands and we draw the divisions for mobilisation for the field army from those Commands. We gave up mobilisation by Army Corps, because it was not suited to the requirements of the Army in operations which we might be called upon to engage in in India. A division comprises three Infantry Brigades of four battalions each, Divisional Troops, a Cavalry Brigade, Field Hospitals, Veterinary Hospitals, Ammunition Columns, Ordnance Field Park, Field Telegraphs, Survey Party, and Engineer Field Park, so that it really forms a small and compact unit of about 15,000. The mobilisation of Divisions and Brigades is carried out, if possible, from one area, that is one division is taken say from the Punjab, another from Bengal, and so on; but one of the particular features of our mobilisation is that while we have our battalions and regiments and batteries at high strength in peace times our field service strengths are lower. Now the British Cavalry strength in India is 627, the Horse Artillery and Field Artillery Battery, 178, I think; the British Infantry Battalion is 1033; Native Cavalry 625, and the Native Infantry 912 in Bengal and the Punjab, and somewhat lower in Madras and Bombay. The field service strengths are, as I have stated, lower than the peace strengths. We use the reserve of the Native Army not to fill up the battalions going on service, but to fill up vacancies caused by wastage and also to form additional provisional battalions. Then another feature of the Indian mobilisation is that it is by stations: we take such and such a station as a convenient one from which to draw troops for mobilisation, and the reliefs have to be arranged, as far as possible, so as to give efficient troops at those stations; after long experience we came to the conclusion that we must have, considering the long distances and various other drawbacks in India, fixed stations from which to draw the troops. In most cases those are also what we call the equipping stations of the troops; but in some instances where troops are stationed, for example in the hills, the equipping station is on the line of rail. Umballa would be the equipping station for troops stationed in the hills round Simla, that is they would receive the bulk of their equipments at that particular station, but that is rather an exception to the general rule. The equipment is in possession of the corps generally, but there are certain reserves of field

service clothing and supplies that are kept stored in great mobilisation stores at various centres. Every corps has its instructions as to what it has to do in case of mobilisation, and the transport is furnished if the regiment is not already in possession of transport, as it might not be, in the Hills for example, from the Transport Corps, by a detachment of a portion of the corps, as I explained before. The transport, if I may allude to that again, consists of so many transport corps; for Cavalry five corps; nine corps, to be increased to 12 I believe, and seven or eight cadres; then we have pony cart trains, and silladar camel cadres, which are the nucleus of camel corps, with men who are under an obligation to join. Then, besides that, we have a large number of officers who have to investigate the resources of the various military districts in the way of transport. Our peace transport in India consists of about 4,000 camels, some 16,000 to 18,000 mules, 7,000 bullocks, and 7,000 carts. Besides that there are the transport trains of the Maharaja of Gwalior, and of the Maharajas of Jeypore, Mysore, and Bhurtpore. I mention these details with regard to the transport because it is really one of the first essentials of the mobilisation plan. Then all our equipments are laid down in the Field Service Equipment Tables, and we have certain Field Service Manuals which are drawn up for the guidance of officers on field service. The staff is all detailed for mobilisation, confidential lists being kept up by the Adjutant-General, and plans of movement are also worked out. For the general railway concentration of troops, tables have been drawn up showing the stations at which corps will entrain, the dates on which they will move, the rest camps where corps have to halt on their long journeys, and the number and composition of the trains of each unit; and the whole of the arrangements are worked out between the Quartermaster-General and the railway authorities. Then for this mobilisation we keep up equipments and reserves of all kinds of supplies, the reserve of rations for men and animals, reserves of clothing, large numbers of field hospitals which are mobilised at equipping stations, field medical store depôts, general hospitals; regimental and medical establishments are maintained, and proceed with the corps on movement. And we also maintain veterinary field hospitals and store depôts. The Ordnance Field Parks are always kept ready. In the arsenals they are all, as it were, ticketed for a particular mobilisation. The lists of Ordnance officers are kept up, and instructions prepared. We have the Telegraph department, which is a Civil department, ready to despatch its telegraph parties. The Postal Department has its field offices post ready to start in two days; and the Survey Department and the Military Accounts Department each have their arrangements made for the mobilisation. The large reserves of stores and supplies have been gradually worked up to during the past 15 to 17 years, and I think the despatch of the Indian contingent so quickly, in spite of the difficulty as to the ships, was really due to the working out of the mobilisation requirements, and all requirements and supplies were ready. Of course, the despatch of a small force like the Indian contingent did not test the mobilisation scheme in any way, but the troops were ready to move, because even if they were not on the mobilisation list everything was ready for them. In that particular case the general officers commanding at ports arranged for the movement of the troops in direct communication with the general officers commanding the districts from which the troops were drawn. The general officers at the ports again arranged for the receipt of all stores, and were given full powers to hire whatever accommodation was wanted, and so forth. The Lieutenant-Generals Commanding the Forces made all the arrangements with regard to rest camps, which is rather an important feature in Indian mobilisation, because they have to be used in these very long journeys by rail, and they have to be fully supplied. We keep up, and have kept up for many years, large reserves in India, which are on certain scales, and the heads of departments are charged with the responsibility of at once acquainting the Government if there is any depletion of these reserves.

21055. And you think they have been kept up?—They have been kept up. I have not gone into the question of the great manufacturing power there is in India, but we have large factories in India which are able to turn out military equipments of all kinds

Major-
Gen. Sir
E. Collen,
G.C.I.E., C.B.

25 Mar. 1903.

21056. We have had some evidence of boots being sent from India?—Yes, I mentioned in my evidence to-day that 200,000 pair of boots were sent from Cooper, Allen & Company, which is what is called the Government Boot Factory.

21057. We had one criticism from the Colonel of the Gordon Highlanders that the shoes that came from India were very bad?—I know that as a rule the boots have answered uncommonly well in India. The complaints have been very few, and we think that their lasting power is great.

21058. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) There was a difficulty in getting ships for transport even for those 5,000 men?—Yes, because, as I mentioned, the monsoon was not quite over, and therefore there were few ships in port.

21059. So that in the event, as has been suggested in certain quarters, for our keeping one or two army corps in South Africa ready for operations in another part of the world, India could not furnish a very large quantity of shipping?—No; that would depend, of course, upon the season of the year.

21060. But in some seasons of the year it could not?—No.

21061. (*Chairman*.) Had you any difficulty in obtaining staff officers for the expedition, with regard to the selection of the staff?—No. I think there was a difficulty afterwards, after they had been selected, with regard to the appointment of officers from home. I think there was something of that kind.

21062. Have you found that there were enough qualified staff officers for the various commands in India?—The question of staff training in India is a very large one. In my own personal point of view, I hardly think there is sufficient training for the staff even in India. They gain great experience in the constant manœuvres which take place, and the many small expeditions or campaigns we have had of recent years; but we have no particular system of training the staff in India as I indeed think there should be. That is a matter I took up some two or three years ago. The Indian officers go to the Staff College, but only three every half-year; and we have, in India, many officers of the British Army who have passed through the Staff College. I do not think there is any difficulty in selection of Staff College officers from the British Army, but, in regard to the Indian Army, I think there is some difficulty.

21063. You would like more officers of the Indian Army to attend the Staff College?—That is my view, provided, of course, that great care is exercised in the selection of

the men, and that the Staff College course is improved and made more practical, as I believe, indeed, it has been, from what I hear.

21064. Otherwise an officer has more opportunities in India of staff work?—I do not know that he has more opportunities exactly.

21065. I thought you said in the manœuvres and so on?—Yes, in that way undoubtedly he has.

21066. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) Would it be practicable to have a separate Staff College in India and train officers in India?—That is a subject which has been often mooted. I got the Staff College thrown open to Indian officers many years ago, and when I considered the question of a separate Staff College I always felt that it was a great advantage for them to come home and be trained in the climate of England, and associate themselves with officers from other branches of the service of the British Army, and from all parts of the world.

21067. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) And get into touch with European ideas?—And to get into touch with those ideas. But, at the same time, till the Staff College can receive a larger body of Indian officers, which I think would be a very desirable thing, I am inclined to think that there should be some system of training staff officers in India. Some years ago I put forward a proposition to this end which included a special study of military history.

21068. The conditions of service in India and in Europe are somewhat dissimilar?—Yes, they are.

21069. (*Chairman*.) Is there any other point you wish to draw attention to?—I do not think so.

21070. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) Has the Commander-in-Chief in India anything in the nature of an Army Board—what we know as the Army Board here, to consult with in reference to military matters?—No, there is the body which I spoke of, the General Mobilization Committee, which discusses any questions that are related to mobilization. There is also the Defence Committee of India, over which the Commander-in-Chief presides, but there is no body of officers exactly analogous to the Army Board, I think.

21071. The Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, and the Director of Intelligence, or at least the Intelligence Officers, do not meet to discuss matters as a distinct board?—Not as a formal Board, but they do, of course, meet day by day.

21072. Naturally; but they do not meet as a formal Board?—No.

FIFTY-SECOND DAY.

Thursday, 26th March 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA and MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
Sir JOHN EDGE.
Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of LANSDOWNE, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., called and examined.

(*In Appendices Band D to the Report Volume will be found all the Documents referred to in Lord Lansdowne's Evidence*).

21073. (*Chairman*.) As we know you were Secretary of State for War from 1895 to 1900?—Yes.

21074. And therefore before and during the early part of the war?—Yes.

21075. Do you desire to lay before the Commission any consideration that you gave before the outbreak of hostilities to what might be necessary?—Yes, I gave a great deal of consideration to the steps which might be necessary, in view of the possibility of hostilities and I

was in frequent consultation as to those steps with my military advisers.

21076. By your military advisers, whom do you mean?—I mean above all the Commander-in-Chief; you have no doubt before you the Order in Council of 1895 which then governed the procedure of the War Office, and you will see from that that the Commander-in-Chief is given a very well defined position as the principal advisor of the Secretary of State, but of course when I

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26 Mar. 1903

*The Right
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G.C.I.E.*

26 Mar. 1903.

say that my advice was mainly obtained from the Commander-in-Chief I do not mean for a moment to suggest that I did not communicate with other military experts connected with the War Office; the other heads of departments, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and the Director-General of Ordnance all had access to me and there were constant discussions with regard to these matters. Besides that I had opportunities of consultation with Sir Redvers Buller, who was designated in June, 1899, as the General who was to be in command of the operations in South Africa.

21077. And with the Director of Military Intelligence?—The Director of Military Intelligence had a position in the hierarchy of the War Office of distinct subordination to the Commander-in-Chief; it was his business to advise the Commander-in-Chief and it was the Commander-in-Chief's business to advise me. On the other hand, as I daresay your Lordship knows, Sir John Ardagh was with me five years in India, and was an old and intimate friend of mine, and I had many opportunities of talking to him, although perhaps that was not the regular official channel through which the advice of the Director of Military Intelligence should be given to the Secretary of State.

21078. But I think, speaking from recollection, Sir John Ardagh stated to us that he did consider that his functions put him into communication with the Secretary of State, although not perhaps strictly under the Order in Council, still as a matter of fact?—I adhere to the description which I have given of our relations, and as to that I would refer the Commission to the Order in Council and the Rules of Procedure.

21079. As to the Order in Council, I think you are going to speak to that later?—Yes. I may say for example that the Commission have seen some important collections of notes on the South African Republics which were prepared by Sir John Ardagh; those collections of notes were not put officially before me by the Commander-in-Chief, but I became aware of their existence and I asked the Director-General to supply me with a copy of them.

21080 (*Viscount Esher*.) Is that a little book you are speaking of?—A little buff book.

21081. (*Chairman*.) But the little buff book was practically a summary of the more detailed papers which were written in the Intelligence Department at that time?—I am afraid we are at cross purposes; I think the buff book you have in your mind is a later compilation which I have seen, which is of folio size.

21082. No?—The one I mean is a little duodecimo almost, or small octavo.

21083. That is the one I mean—Notes on the War.

(*Viscount Esher*.) Is that the one (*exhibiting a small book to the witness*)?—Yes.

21084. (*Chairman*.) That book is a summary of the more detailed papers which were in the Intelligence Department at that time?—Yes.

21085. You saw the detailed Papers I imagine, not only the buff book?—I may have seen some of them, but I have no recollection of any of those Papers having been submitted to me formally by the Commander-in-Chief.

21086. (*Viscount Esher*.) Would it have been his duty to submit them to you?—I think so.

21087. Distinctly his duty?—His duty, and not that of the Director of Military Intelligence.

21088. (*Chairman*.) Because the Papers begin—I hold them here in my hand—with 11th June, 1896, a Paper written by Colonel Altham and another longer Paper written by Sir John Ardagh in October of that year; you do not think you had those Papers before you in 1896?—I do not think so; I may have seen some of them.

21089. (*Viscount Esher*.) Would there not be a note on the papers themselves if they had been to you?—Probably, but the Commission, of course, has ample opportunity of calling for the papers.

21090. (*Chairman*.) It bears on the point at what time your attention was drawn to the possibilities of an outbreak of the war?—Yes, but I will not labour that point because I fully admit that during the summer of 1899 and before that little book came into my hands I was aware that there was a possibility of war and that I had often discussed it both with the Commander-in-Chief and with the Director of Military Intelligence.

21091. In 1899?—In 1899.

21092. But not earlier than that?—It is very difficult for me to tell you to-day the precise moment at which I became aware that there was a possibility of hostilities. It was a matter of common notoriety before 1899 that the Boers were difficult to deal with politically, and that they were making preparations.

21093. The paper I allude to of Sir John Ardagh's, in October 1896, is a long and able paper dealing with the whole subject historically and showing the preparations which the Boers were making, and it contains near the end the following sentence: "For the immediate present there seems to be a reasonable prospect of tranquillity in spite of warlike preparations, menacing language, and oppressive legislation," and the whole tenour of the paper was that we ought to have been making preparations also, or at any rate have the preparations of the Boers in our mind; do you think you did not see that paper in 1896?—I doubt whether I saw it in 1896; I am afraid I cannot now tell you the exact moment when I first saw it, but the Commission has no doubt been informed that we did in fact add to the strength of the garrison of South Africa before 1899.

21094. (*Viscount Esher*.) Must there not be something radically wrong with a system under which a paper of that degree of importance does not automatically go to the Secretary of State? In no other Department would a paper of such importance not go to the head of the Department as far as I know?—The question I think would be whether the paper was one which the Commander-in-Chief thought it his duty to lay before His Majesty's Government.

21095. Do you not think that was a very wide discretion to leave to the Commander-in-Chief?—I do not think so; he might receive advice that he did not think worth passing on.

21096. (*Chairman*.) I do not want to press you, Lord Lansdowne, as to the actual fact of when you saw those papers, but I just want to get quite clear before the Commission whether you did see them anything approaching to the time at which they were written. There is another paper, therefore, to which I want to refer, written in the Intelligence Department by Colonel Altham in September, 1898, which is headed "Frontier Defence in South Africa in a War against the Dutch Republic." Have you any recollection of that paper?—I have a recollection of it because I have had it amongst my papers and have looked at it lately, but I am afraid I cannot tell you the precise moment it came into my hands.

21097. At the beginning it had this sentence: "At the outbreak of such a war we shall at first be in a decided numerical inferiority; moreover we should have to face the problem of protecting a very long frontier, and should be handicapped with a certain amount of disloyalty (passive if not active) within our own borders; at least a month or six weeks must elapse before any appreciable reinforcements could arrive from England or India." That summarised the situation very well?—Yes, we were always fully aware that a delay of that kind was inevitable.

21098. And at the end there were conclusions under five heads pointing out that it was necessary to provide for speedy mobilisation, for transport, for defence schemes, and for the despatch of reinforcements; that was in 1898, before the date at which you say you became fully aware that a war was possible?—Yes. Perhaps, the best way in which I can put it to the Commission is this, that I was aware not only in 1898, but before that, that there was a possibility of hostilities; it was really a matter of common knowledge. I do not wish for a moment to suggest that upon the mere point of the possibility of hostilities I required any special warning.

21099. But it was not brought officially before you by the proper channel—namely, through the Commander-in-Chief, as far as you know at that time? This detailed information in the Intelligence Department was not brought before you by the Commander-in-Chief before 1899, I think you said?—The information must have come before me much sooner than that, because we added to the South African garrison in 1898, and, therefore, I must have heard something about it before that time.

21100. May I put another question, as to which, of course, you will have to consider how far you can give us information? Did you consider it your duty to lay

that state of matters before the Cabinet at that time—in 1898, say?—I am sure that it was brought before the Cabinet in 1898, because the additions which were made to the garrison were made with the sanction of the Cabinet.

21101. So that the Cabinet were aware, as is brought out in these papers, that the Boers were making warlike preparations, which could only be intended for war with this country, as early as 1898 at any rate?—Certainly.

21102. Any earlier, do you think?—I cannot say.

21103. Because, as I say, in these papers written in 1896 the same danger is pointed out?—I am afraid I cannot say whether the Cabinet had that information in 1896 or not.

21104. Is there anything else you would wish to say with regard to the information which was laid before the Commander-in-Chief by the Director of Military Intelligence?—That information was very correct at certain points; that part of it for example which had reference to the Boer armament, was entirely confirmed by what came before our knowledge as hostilities progressed. With regard to the anticipations of the Intelligence Branch as to numbers, the first observation I am inclined to make is that those estimates varied very considerably; for example, in the 1896 memorandum by Sir John Ardagh, to which your Lordship referred a moment ago, I see in paragraph 33 he estimated the gross maximum numbers as totalling 48,000; of these, he wrote off a certain proportion as being untrained or wanted for administrative services, and he also pointed out that the districts bordering upon the Basutos, Zulus, and other tribes, could not be entirely denuded of the combatant burghers, so that the force would be still further reduced. There you have a total of 48,000 subject to considerable reductions. In Major Altham's memorandum of 1898, if you will look at paragraph 2, you will see that his estimate was a total Boer field force available of 27,000 men, and his anticipation was that any further serious advance into the heart of either Colony was improbable, but that raids of 2,000 to 3,000 men were to be expected, and that it was against such raids that careful preparation was necessary. Then there is a remarkable memorandum of Sir William Everett, who was acting for the Director-General in his absence in the year 1899; the last sentence in that is to the effect that the largest number of Boers which would be opposed to a British force in Natal was not likely to exceed 13,500. That is the low water-mark in these anticipations and you have to contrast that with Sir Redvers Buller's estimate, which he made in a telegram sent to us while hostilities were in progress, that he was confronted by 120,000 Boers in the field. So that I think you may say that the estimates of numbers varied very considerably, and I am inclined to add that it is extremely difficult to verify any of them. You can verify the number of guns that the Boers had with them in the field, but I do not suppose anybody will ever know how many Boer men confronted us.

21105. The list of guns was singularly accurate?—I think very accurate; in fact the only mistake they made was that they thought the Boers had a larger number of heavy guns; it turned out that some of the heavy guns they had ordered had not been actually delivered.

21106. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) May not Sir John Ardagh's estimate for 1896 have been correct at the time it was made, although it would not form a good estimate for 1899?—I think it may be fairly said that it was subject to revision.

21107. (*Chairman.*) We have it from Lord Kitchener that during the whole war they had 95,000 men out; that includes the Cape Rebels and a certain number of foreigners. That is all you wish to say with regard to that Intelligence Branch?—Yes.

21108. Have you any comments you wish to make about the anticipations of the military authorities?—I think that the point at which the military authorities failed to appreciate correctly the magnitude of the task that lay before us was rather this, that they did not sufficiently realise the fighting value of the Boers, if I may use the expression, their staying power in the field and the kind of effort that would be necessary to overcome them. No estimate of the field force necessary for that purpose exceeding one Army Corps was to the best of my belief ever put before us by our military advisers. In illustration of my meaning if you will look at Major Altham's Memorandum of 3rd June 1899, page 6, in the concluding part of Sub-Section 2, he speaks of the Free State as "an ideal terrain for mobile troops to swing round any position taken up by the enemy while a containing

force of infantry and artillery hold them in front. One defeat in this country would break up the enemy's forces on the wide open plains. The retreat of a force without cavalry and deficient in organization and discipline would be a slaughter from which no rally would be possible." I think those expectations must be regarded as rather sanguine when we consider them in the light of our actual experience. In the same connection I would call attention to a passage in Lord Wolseley's Minute of 8th June, 1899 which the Commission has already before it. Lord Wolseley then suggested that the operations should begin in South Africa as soon as possible so as to be over by next November. That also seems to me to show that military opinion was over confident. And then, of course, the Commission is aware of Lord Wolseley's, often quoted speech, delivered on the 6th November, 1899, in which he stated, with candour which does him credit, that, "We have found that the enemy are much more powerful than we expected."

21109. Your argument is that your military advisers did not appreciate sufficiently the difficulties of the situation?—Not fully.

21110. And that the strength of the force which they recommended was not adequate?—I think experience showed that it was not.

21111. Is that all you wish to say with regard to the strength of the field force as recommended?—The strength of the field force recommended was from the first one Army Corps with troops for lines of communication; the original recommendation is to be found in Lord Wolseley's Minute of the 8th June, 1899, paragraph 4. I never heard any doubt expressed as to the sufficiency of the force there specified, and perhaps at this point I may call attention to a Minute of my own, which I have ventured to lay before the Commission. It was written for the Cabinet in order to justify the demand which I was making, and which at the time seemed a very large one, for one Army Corps.

21112. Is that the Minute of the 3rd October?—Yes, I do not know that as you have it before you I need repeat what is there stated.

21113. You put in as your answer to that question, your Minute of the 3rd October?—If you please.

MINUTE BY THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE,
3RD OCTOBER 1899.

STRENGTH OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCE.

"Some surprise has been expressed at the magnitude of the force which will be collected in South Africa if, in addition to the troops now there or on their way, an Army Corps with cavalry division and troops for lines of communication is also sent out.

The troops now in or on their way to			
Natal number about	15,000
Those in or on their way to Cape Colony number about	7,000
There is some reduction in the numbers of the Army Corps in the latest proposals of the Commander-in-Chief, and, though it is impossible till the Reservists have rejoined to give accurate figures, the total is not likely to exceed			
			45,000
			67,000

I called the Commander-in-Chief's attention to the magnitude of these numbers in a Minute, dated the 13th September, in which I wrote:

"When the reinforcements recently ordered reach South Africa we shall have about 23,000 men in the Cape Colony and Natal. It is notorious that, if we do not come to terms with the South African Republic, we shall send a much larger force.

"I want to know whether any part of the force now in or on its way to South Africa is to be counted as part of the larger force. Whether it may be looked upon, so to speak, as a payment on account towards the satisfaction of the military demands?"

I pointed out that, if not, we should have about 70,000 men in South Africa, whereas Sir R. Buller had mentioned 50,000 as the force he would require in his Minute of the 5th September, which was circulated to the Cabinet.

In reply, the Commander-in-Chief recommended that we should, in any case, mobilize a whole Army Corps; but he indicated that, if we decided to adhere to the Natal route, the troops already in Natal might be taken as "equivalent to one infantry division and one cavalry brigade," and the Army Corps reduced accordingly.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

*The Right
Hon. the
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26 Mar. 1903.

We have now definitely decided to adopt the Cape Colony-Orange Free State route. It is intended that a force of 10,000 men should remain in Natal, on which side it will make a valuable diversion; that about 5,000 men shall be detached for service on the west side (Kimberley, &c.), and that the main force shall enter the Orange Free State from the south.

In these circumstances the Commander-in-Chief and Sir R. Buller hold that there should on no account be any reduction in the strength of the Army Corps to be sent from home, and that no part of the force now in or on its way to South Africa should be reckoned as part of it.

I believe they are right, and that we should make a grievous mistake if, from motives of economy, we were to reduce the number of troops for which we are asked to provide.

We are going to fight an enemy more formidable than any whom we have encountered for many years past, and we should see to it that we meet him under conditions giving us incontestible superiority in the field.

Moreover, the adhesion of the Orange Free State has added very largely to the Boer force.

I also think it right to point out when by merely counting heads we arrive at a total of 67,000 soldiers to be employed in South Africa, we greatly mislead ourselves if we regard that number or anything like it as representing the fighting force which we should be able to place in the field.

In reckoning the size of a force for the purpose of active operations we have to take account only of the number of sabres, bayonets, and guns which that force can oppose to the enemy. The staff of the force, the cavalrymen and infantrymen who for one reason or another are not in the fighting line, the Royal Engineers, Army Service Corps, supply and ammunition columns, hospitals, and the considerable numbers employed in various capacities at the base must be left out of account; and it is usual when dealing with artillery to take as the unit of calculation the guns themselves, and not the gunners who man them.

If the British forces in South Africa be dealt with in this manner we shall have the following result: the force of 15,000 now in or on its way to Natal, when stripped of Staff, Royal Engineers, Artillerymen, and Departmental Corps, should be shown as consisting of—

1,900 sabres,
9,800 bayonets,
42 guns.

The 7,000 in Cape Colony similarly treated will have—

450 sabres,
4,900 bayonets,
18 guns.

The field force—that is to say, the Army Corps cavalry division and troops for lines of communication—will probably number about 45,000 men.

Large deductions have to be made to arrive at the actual fighting force, for this figure includes some 2,800 Artillerymen and a considerable number of Royal Engineers, while the personnel required for the supply service of the Army Corps, the ammunition columns and parks, the hospital services, the Staff, and the general depot at the base, absorb 8,500 more.

The actual fighting strength of the field force may be estimated as follows:—

Cavalry Division—

3,000 sabres,
1,000 bayonets
12 guns.

Army Corps—

1,000 sabres,
21,000 bayonets,
102 guns.

Lines of Communication—

6,000 bayonets.

These added to the forces now on their way to South Africa, make a grand total of—

6,350 sabres,
42,700 bayonets,
174 guns."

October 3, 1899.

That Minute was written with only one object, which was to explain to the Cabinet why we were asking for what in those days seemed a very large Army with which to crush these two little Republics.

21114. This Minute of 3rd October of course was immediately before the declaration of war?—Yes, I merely put that in in order to show what was in the minds of my military advisers and in the minds of the Cabinet as to the strength of the force which was necessary for the purpose.

21115. Even up to the very day of the Ultimatum?—Yes, there was no question of anything more than that. That Minute, I ought to add, was prepared with the assistance of the Commander-in-Chief, and all the military figures in it were supplied by his department.

21116. And as to your other military advisers of whom you have spoken, did they concur in that estimate of the forces?—I think I may say so; I never heard a doubtful note on the subject in the office.

21117. We had from Sir Evelyn Wood that he mentioned 60,000 men as the force to you, which, I suppose, means practically the same thing?—Practically.

21118. On what supposition with regard to the two Republics did that force proceed?—Distinctly upon the supposition that we had to reckon with both Republics; the Orange Free State had actually declared itself against us on the 27th September, and as my Minute was written on the 3rd October it is quite clear that we had before us the prospect of hostilities with both Republics. I think, indeed, that all of us realised from the first that the Orange Free State would have to be taken into account. For example, in Lord Wolseley's Minute of June 8th he points out in the last sentence that, "In any case the great bulk of the young Boers from the Orange Free State would join the Transvaal against us." Again, Lord Wolseley in his later Minute of July 7th referred to the existence of the secret Treaty between the two Republics, according to which if either were threatened or attacked the other would assist it.

21119. I do not know whether you remember that that also appeared in the Intelligence Division papers even in 1896?—No doubt

21120. In Sir John Ardagh's Minute of October, 1896, he says: "As the shortest, flattest, and easiest railway towards the main objective is that which leads from Springfontein through Bloemfontein towards Johannesburg and Pretoria, that railway must be the obligatory main line of advance"; so that I suppose that was the idea in the mind of your military advisers at that time?—The only doubt in their minds was whether, owing to the attitude of the Orange Free State, any difficulties would be created on political grounds in allowing them to use the Orange Free State route, but that in one shape or form we should have to count with the Orange Free State as well as the Transvaal I do not think anyone doubted; at any rate, there was no doubt upon the point when my Minute of October 3rd was written, because by that time the Orange Free State had actually declared itself.

21121. We were told by Sir Redvers Buller that there was a doubt about the position with regard to the Orange Free State when he went out?—I remember a conversation which passed between myself and Sir Redvers Buller before he left England, and I remember telling him what I said a moment ago to your Lordship, which was that the attitude of the Orange Free State was doubtful and that if it so happened that after all President Steyn maintained an attitude of neutrality it might be difficult for us to force our way through the Orange Free State and thereby drive them into open opposition, but I certainly never suggested to Sir Redvers Buller that the Orange Free State had not to be reckoned with.

21122. Up to what date did that uncertainty continue?—An end was certainly put to it on the 27th September by the declaration of the Orange Free State, but I was very much impressed by the inconvenience of allowing that uncertainty to be prolonged, and it was in consequence of that that I wrote my Minute of September 25th which I think the Commission has. That is the Minute headed, "Line of Advance," which is accompanied by Minutes by Sir Redvers Buller and the Commander-in-Chief. The object with which I wrote it was to point out that it was necessary for us to compel the Orange Free State to declare themselves one way or the other, and as a matter of fact two days after the Minute was written the Orange Free State had declared themselves.

21123. You put in that Minute of the 25th September?—Yes.

See
Q. 1490
1492

LINE OF ADVANCE.

MEMORANDA BY THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE,
SIR R. BULLER, AND VISCOUNT WOLSELEY.

(1) Memorandum by the Marquess of Lansdowne.

"My military advisers have repeatedly impressed upon me: (1) the importance of an early decision with regard to the line of advance to be adopted in the event of war with the South African Republic; and (2) the superiority of the line leading through Cape Colony and the Orange Free State over any other line.

Sir R. Buller has spoken to me again upon the subject, and has, at my request, written the accompanying Memorandum, to which the Commander-in-Chief has added a few observations.

It is obvious that if we continue to make all our preparations for attacking by way of Natal, we shall find it virtually impossible to alter our plans should the Orange Free State at the last moment declare itself hostile.

The recent utterances of President Steyn may, I think, be taken as giving us fair notice that, if there is war, we shall have to reckon with both Republics.

The question ought, I think, to be faced without further delay; we cannot go on making our preparations in ignorance of a factor which should determine the strength of the force to be employed, the places at which land transport and supplies will have to be collected—in a word, our whole plan of campaign.

It does not seem as if in the present temper of the Orange Free State much would be gained by an attempt to arrive at a friendly understanding with it; but I trust that some means will be found of putting an end to our suspense, and letting us know whether we may proceed with our arrangements upon the assumption that it will be open to Sir R. Buller to make his way to Pretoria across the Orange River.

After all that has taken place, the Orange Free State will scarcely have a right to complain if it has to choose between treatment as an open adversary and an explicit undertaking of neutrality.

September 25th, 1899.

L."

(2) Memorandum by Sir Redvers Buller.

Now that money has been granted to make purchases in anticipation of the dispatch of an expeditionary force to South Africa, it is essential that the base should be selected from which that force is to start.

Durban, the base for an advance through Natal, is some 730 miles from Cape Town, the principal base of an advance through the Orange Free State.

From Durban to Pretoria is, say, 500 miles. The average distance of Pretoria from the three ports in Cape Colony is, say, 1,000 miles.

From the Natal frontier to Pretoria is 200 miles, and from the Cape frontier to Pretoria is 400 miles.

It is probable that the railway authorities in Natal will do all they can to help an expedition. It is doubtful if in Cape Colony we shall be at all certain of the same willing assistance, if, indeed, we can count on not being obstructed. So far, then, everything points to the Natal route being the best, and so it undoubtedly would be, were it not for two great drawbacks—the port of Durban and the position of the Orange Free State.

I have not been able to obtain precise information as to the facilities Durban now offers for the disembarkation of an expedition. I am told that the utmost speed would be three ships a day.* An Army Corps will require close on 100 days for its transport. If they can only discharge at the rate of three a day, disembarkation will occupy one whole month, and bad weather would make it still longer. This is a serious outlook.

The Orange Free State flank the line of advance by Natal for some 200 miles, viz., from Ladysmith to Standerton, and even farther.

Now the Orange Free State may adopt three courses:—

1. They may declare themselves neutral and evince a benevolent neutrality to England.

2. They may declare themselves neutral, with the determination of secretly helping the Transvaal as much as possible, and with the idea that the moment may come when it will be opportune to declare themselves on the side of the Transvaal.

3. They may openly side with the Transvaal.

A glance at the map will show that in the second case they will be dangerous, and in the third case that it would be unwise to offer them the advantages of an advance by Natal, which would mean a flank march of 200 miles across their front.

In my opinion, an advance by Natal in either of the second or the third cases would be a greater risk than ought to be incurred.

It must be recollected that neither Natal nor the Transvaal will provide food for the force that advances on Pretoria. All it eats will have to be brought up from behind it. To advance on Pretoria and leave a hostile Free State to take its own time and opportunity for cutting the communications and stopping the flow of supplies would, I think, be running an unnecessary and most dangerous risk.

I would, in such a case, far rather face the double distance and the possible hostility of the Cape Railway directorate than risk a march of 200 miles round a concealed enemy.

An advance through the Orange Free State would give three seaports or bases instead of one, and at the commencement enormously simplify disembarkation, concentration on the frontier, and supply when there.

The Orange Free State is open; the advance would be through its centre; the country contains a good quantity of supplies.

It would be almost impossible for an advance through the Free State to be opposed by all the Free State troops and all the Transvaal troops, while such a combination is quite possible against a force advancing by Natal. On the other hand, an advance through the Free State would have every chance of disposing of that State first, and settling with the Transvaal alone afterwards.

Consequently, I would most strongly urge that as soon as Her Majesty's Government decide upon an expedition they should force the Free State to declare for one side or the other. If they declare for the other side, our route to Pretoria should be via Bloemfontein; if they declare neutrality, they should be forced to give sureties that they preserve that neutrality. Failing to do this, they should be treated as hostile.

A decision in the matter is urgently required, as it is essential the stores we are now ordering should be collected at ports that serve the route which may be selected.

(Signed)

REDVERS BULLER, *General*.

September 24th, 1899.

(3) Memorandum by Viscount Wolseley.

Lord Lansdowne,

I fully indorse Sir R. Buller's opinion that our best line of advance upon Pretoria will be from the Orange River by the railway running through Bloemfontein, although I do not entirely agree in the reasoning upon which he apparently bases it.

The sound reason, in my opinion, for selecting it is, that in moving thus through the Orange Free State we should have no mountain range with difficult passes to force; that we should avoid fighting on the species of ground most suitable for Boer tactics and least suited for those of a regular army; that we should fight on a good field for our cavalry and horse artillery (an arm of which the Boers have none), and where our superiority in guns and in their handling would secure us a great advantage.

(Signed) WOLSELEY.

September 25th, 1899.

21124. I think Sir Redvers Buller's point was that when he wrote his Minute of the 24th September he was not aware, indeed, he had been told to leave the Orange Free State out of his calculations?—I am sure he had not been told by anyone to leave it out of his calculations; what he had been told was that for political reasons it might be desirable to adopt the Natal route instead of the Orange Free State route, the Natal route being one which had certain advantages, as you will have seen from some of Lord Wolseley's Minutes. I rather press the point because it might be suggested that this force which we were prepared to dispatch, the Army Corps, was sufficient if we were dealing only with the Transvaal, and was not sufficient if we were dealing with the two Republics. What I have said was intended to show that my military

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* This is in accordance with the information given by the Intelligence Branch.—L.

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26 Mar. 1903.

advisers must have been aware that we had to reckon with both the Republics, and I should like, as a bit of confirmatory evidence, to mention this—that some time after both the Republics were in arms against us, and after Sir Redvers Buller had actually gone to South Africa and was in command of the operations, we telegraphed to offer him another division, and he then refused that division on the ground that he did not want it yet. I think you may fairly infer from that that at that time, at any rate, the force already provided for was regarded as sufficient for the two Republics.

21125. What was the date of that telegram?—November 4th. You have the file of telegrams, and if you look at telegram No. 8, on page 10, you will see that he replied that the preparation of an extra division seemed desirable, “but I do not yet see need for its dispatch from England.”

21126. Did not Sir Redvers Buller acknowledge—at least he did acknowledge in his evidence to us—that he considered that practically whatever the Free State said our difficulty would be equal to the sum of the two states?—That is practically, if I may say so, the point I should wish to put to the Commission, that we felt that all through.

21127. Had you any information that a larger force would be necessary?—No.

21128. Not from your advisers at home?—No.

21129. But from your adviser at the Cape—I am alluding to Sir William Butler?—It was constantly said—I don’t know on what authority—that Sir William Butler had advised us that a very much larger force would be necessary; the number that was freely mentioned as having been proposed by him was 100,000 men or thereabouts. I took a great deal of trouble to ascertain whether there was any foundation for that statement and I could find nothing amongst the official documents. I asked the Commander-in-Chief to search amongst the papers in his possession. Lord Wolseley gave me this Minute, which I might perhaps read—it is dated 18th January 1900: “I have had all general Butler’s letters to me read, and the only one in which he refers to the number of troops we should require in the event of war in South Africa is in a letter dated the 10th May 1899. His words are, ‘All things considered I put the total of troops required in South Africa in the event of war between the English and Dutch races, for that is the real meaning of a war in the Transvaal, at 40,000 men;’” that is 40,000 men in the event of the struggle becoming a racial war and extending to the whole of South Africa.

21130. There is nothing to be found suggesting a larger number?—Absolutely nothing.

21131. Is that all you wish to say with regard to the strength of the force?—That is all.

21132. With regard to the composition of the force?—The composition of the force, as I said just now, was indicated to us by the Commander-in-Chief in his Minute of June 8th; it contained, in addition to a complete Army Corps, a Cavalry Division, and one Battalion of Mounted Infantry, with four battalions for line of communications.

21133. Was it ever suggested to you that there should be any different composition of that force?—No, I can call to mind no such suggestion.

21134. Particularly with regard to the numbers of mounted men?—No; I am under the impression that the number of mounted men allotted was in excess of what was usually allotted to an Army Corps, but that is a point upon which, no doubt, the soldiers would give you evidence.

21135. The conditions of South Africa were rather different from ordinary conditions in that respect, were they not?—No doubt.

21136. Was that not taken into account at the time?—I do not remember that point having been particularly mentioned—not so far as the need for a larger number of mounted troops is concerned.

21137. It was brought rather to a point by a certain telegram with regard to Colonial troops?—Yes. Do you wish for any information upon that point?

21138. Yes, if you please?—I do not know whether I should be out of order if, as my answer to that question, I read a short extract from a statement that I made in the House of Lords. On the 13th February, 1902, during the course of a general military debate, I referred to what I see I characterised as the venerable assertion that

on the outbreak of the war the Government had discouraged the Colonies from sending mounted troops. I went on: “It is put in this way, that the Colonies offered mounted troops, and that we snubbed them and said that we did not want any. That story is repeated in every military debate. I ask your permission once again to remind the House of the actual facts as they occurred. We sent out with the first troops that went to South Africa more than the usual proportion of cavalry, we also arranged that with each battalion of infantry there should be a company of mounted infantry, and when the question of making use of the Colonial troops came up we began by accepting the services of three small bodies of Colonial mounted infantry. That in itself is a proof that we did not set our faces against the employment of Colonial mounted troops. Then came the moment when from all over the Colonies offers of assistance, mostly in general terms, were received by the War Office. It was necessary to send some kind of answer to the Colonies at once. We consulted the General who was to have the chief command in the field, Sir Redvers Buller, and in consultation with him it was determined that we should inform the Colonies, who were at that moment offering in some cases cavalry, in others artillery, and in others infantry, that at that particular moment infantry would be most serviceable and cavalry least serviceable. Cavalry and mounted infantry are different things. The reason infantry were asked for was that it was proposed that we should attach small bodies of Colonial soldiers to the units of Imperial soldiers already at the Cape. It was a proposal very much approved at the time by the Colonies, and it was a reasonable one. At that time we were dealing altogether with a force of not more than 1,500 Colonial troops. A short time after, when the question of larger Colonial contingents was being discussed, I find that we took 4,700 mounted men from the Colonies, as against 2,400 unmounted men. It is, to say the least, a gross exaggeration to represent the then War Office as having repudiated the offers of mounted troops from the Colonies.”

21139. I think your attention has been drawn to the answer which Sir Redvers Buller gave us as to his advice on that subject?—Yes, that answer gives an account of a conversation that took place between Sir Redvers Buller and myself at the War Office. I remember that conversation. Sir Redvers Buller at that time was rather reluctant to accept the services of Colonial troops and I remember his expressing the opinion—which was expressed in the extract I read to you a moment ago—that the best way of employing them was by attaching small bodies of them to units of regular troops already in South Africa, but it was not upon the occasion of that conversation that the famous telegram was settled. Subsequently to that conversation we had to consider the general question of the manner in which these offers from the Colonies should be received, and on that occasion Mr. George Wyndham, who was then Under Secretary, went down to Aldershot to consult Sir Redvers Buller, and the result of that consultation was the often quoted telegram.

21140. He, as I understood him, thought that he would get a large number of men in South Africa itself who would be useful as mounted men, and he also adds, as you see at the end of that answer: “My idea was that all the Colonists could ride and that I could mount them and turn them into Mounted Infantry and pay them all alike 5s. a-day?”—I daresay that was his idea; I do not think he unfolded it to me at the time.

21141. Therefore I understand he meant that although they might come as infantry from the colonies he would use them as mounted infantry?—That is not quite consistent with my recollection that he proposed to attach them in small detachments to infantry battalions, but that is merely my conjecture.

21142. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) He counted on there being a large number of unemployed men in Johannesburg, connected with the mines, good riders, whom he could use, I think he said?—Very likely.

21143. (*Chairman.*) At any rate, you represent that that telegram to the colonies was sent distinctly on the advice which you got on the occasion that Mr. Wyndham went to Aldershot from Sir Redvers Buller?—Yes.

21144. We had some evidence regarding it from Lord Wolseley, and I just refer you to two answers because I think it perhaps brings out what was meant. He was asked: “And you recommended these words: ‘Infantry most, cavalry least, serviceable’?”—(A) Yes, I remember quite well saying that cavalry would be quite useless.

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(Q) But you did not mean by that to exclude mounted Infantry? (A) No, it was cavalry I had in my thoughts all the way through, because I know what irregular cavalry, if I may say so, our Yeomanry are. As cavalry they are of no use; they are very good mounted troops, but they are no use as cavalry?—If a civilian has a right to an opinion on the subject I entirely agree. I draw a very great distinction between Colonial Cavalry and Colonial Mounted Infantry.

21145. But I mean that was the intention, apparently, of the telegram—to throw a doubt upon their being sent as cavalry?—Quite so; that the gist of the telegram was a discouragement of cavalry, but not a discouragement of mounted troops, because on the contrary we showed by what we actually did that we were glad to take mounted troops.

21146. May I put the same question to you as I put to Lord Wolseley: Was it not a little unfortunately worded?—Perhaps; judged by the results, I think you may say so.

21147. Then as to the time for concentration of the field force?—There, if I may, I would put in my Minute of August 12th, 1899.

MINUTE BY THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE, DATED 12TH AUGUST 1899, FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE CABINET.

The Cabinet wished for information as to the time which would elapse between the occurrence of an event rendering hostilities with the Transvaal inevitable and the concentration in the north of Natal of the force which we should probably send out, viz., an Army Corps, and a cavalry division.

2. Assuming such an event to take place on the 1st September, a Proclamation in accordance with the Reserve Forces Act of 1882 would at once, say on the 2nd September, be issued by the Queen in Council declaring a "great emergency," and summoning the Army Reserve, or part of it. This Proclamation has already been drafted and approved by the Law Officers. Assuming that three Privy Councillors were available, it could be signed by Her Majesty within a few hours. Notices to reservists to rejoin would immediately be issued. These notices are ready, and are in the hands of the local military authorities, who would dispatch them on receipt of telegraphic instructions. The reservists would rejoin their units, say, by the 10th September. Parliament would, under the terms of the Act, have to be assembled not later than the 12th September. The infantry units forming the force would be mobilized on the 14th September, and the other units between that date and the 1st October, and the whole force would, *if the whole of their clothing and equipment were ready for them, and if ships were ready for the troops as soon as the troops were ready for the ships*, be embarked in instalments during the last fortnight in September. The first battalion would arrive at Durban in four weeks from the date of embarkation, and would be followed at close intervals by the remainder of the force. *If the troops could be provided on arrival with their transport, vehicles, and animals*, each unit would be immediately passed up the line on route for the place of concentration. I am afraid, however, that without preparations which the Cabinet has not authorized, and without incurring very heavy expenditure, a much longer period of time must be allowed for. To insure rapidity both in mobilization at home and in concentration in South Africa, the following conditions must be fulfilled:—

- (1.) The clothing and equipment must be ready for the units as soon as the Reservists rejoin.
- (2.) The vehicles which will be taken out from home must be fitted for mule and ox draft before being sent on board ship.
- (3.) The ships must be ready for the troops as soon as the troops are ready to embark.
- (4.) The vehicles and animals required to complete the transport of the force on its disembarkation must be ready for the troops as soon as they land.
- (5.) Provision depôts to supply food and forage for men and horses must have been established at the place or places of concentration in Natal.

3. With regard to (1) and (2), I am advised that it would take at least a month to procure certain articles of equipment and stores specially required for a campaign in South Africa, and to convert for mule and ox draft the vehicles to be taken out from home.

4. With regard to (3), it appears from information received from the Admiralty that more than a month would elapse before the whole field force could be embarked, though they expect to be able to embark some of the infantry units within about a fortnight of the orders being given to take up ships. It would accelerate their arrangements if they had authority to purchase horse fittings in advance at a cost of £13,800.

5. The retardation which would result from our neglect of the precautionary measures comprised in (1), (2), and (3), would, however, be insignificant compared with that which would be occasioned by a failure to provide beforehand the transport which should be ready in South Africa to render the force sent out mobile. For this purpose we should require about 14,000 mules and 900 vehicles. A part of these could be provided in South Africa, but the balance would have to be imported. All we have done in this direction up to the present has been to send officers to various places abroad to make inquiries about purchasing mules, vehicles, and harness, but the Quartermaster-General calculates that three months must elapse from the date of our order to purchase before the transport, vehicles, and animals could be landed in South Africa.

6. A similar period must elapse before we can accumulate at the point of concentration sufficient supplies of food and forage to maintain the force for two months, the minimum with which it is thought that the force should take the field.

7. These are, indeed, the governing factors in the calculation. The most fatal mistake that can be made is to place the troops in a country in which they are wanted to act before transport and stores have been accumulated there. The troops cannot act; all they can do is to consume in inaction stores which are being collected for the purpose of rendering them active.

8. Nothing, then, will be gained by landing an Army Corps in South Africa until all preparations to render it mobile are complete. I assume, therefore, that it will take 90 days to complete the transport requirements of the force, and that the voyage from home to Durban will take 27 days. Unless, then, steps had been taken beforehand for the provision of the required transport, there would be no object in completing the embarkation of the whole force until about 63 days after the Proclamation calling out the Reserves had been promulgated; it would then reach Durban 13 weeks after the date of the Proclamation, or about the 1st December.

9. If, on the other hand, all the necessary preparations were complete—and I would point out that it is necessary to complete them all, as the omission of one would vitiate the remainder—if the special equipment were ready for issue, the vehicles to be taken out from home converted, vehicles, mules, and oxen assembled in South Africa, if horse fittings had been provided beforehand for the ships, and supply depôts established up-country, then the first force could be landed in South Africa and be ready to move up-country at a much earlier date. It could under such circumstances reach Durban during the latter half of October and be dispatched to its destination as fast as the limited landing facilities and train accommodation would admit.

10. There remains the question of the landing accommodation at Durban and the railway transport from Durban to the point of concentration. The railway from Durban to the Transvaal frontier is a single line with steep gradients, and it is believed that its carrying capacity is very limited, but the landing capacity of the port is still more limited. It is calculated that the actual disembarkation of an Army Corps and a cavalry division could not be effected at Durban in less than a month. A margin of a fortnight at least should be allowed for troops to take over local transport on arrival and for the recovery of the horses from the long sea voyage from England. It may be estimated, therefore, that at least six weeks must elapse from the date of the first ship arriving at Durban before the whole force would be at the railhead ready to move.

11. The situation may be summarized thus:—

As matters now stand it would not be possible to place a mobilized Army Corps and a cavalry division in the North of Natal under about four months. If, on the other hand, all our preparations were complete, this period might be reduced by about one month; but in order to effect this it would be necessary at once to incur an expenditure which may be approximately estimated as follows:—

*The Right
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G.C.I.E.*

26 Mar. 1903.

PRIME CHARGES.

	£
1. Purchase of clothing... ..	20,000
2. " equipment for Maxims	950
3. " saddlery	4,400
4. " hospital equipment	22,700
5. Fittings for sea transport of horses	13,800
6. Purchase of mules and oxen	694,400
7. " vehicles and harness	161,000
8. Provision of supply depots, Natal*	176,000
9. Conversion of vehicles to mule and ox-draught	4,000
Total	1,097,250

CONTINUOUS CHARGES.

	£
Forage for 14,000 mules at 1s. a day	21,000 per mensem.
Wages for civilian drivers, leaders and conductors	35,000 "
Total	56,000 "

12. I add these additional observations:

(1.) It would be possible, without such preliminary steps as I have described, to send a part of the troops up-country to act as a sedentary force in garrison, or to relieve our own troops, but such a force could not leave the line of railway.

(2.) The force already in Natal, even when reinforced by the two battalions which we are now adding to it, might, if it were attacked by the whole Boer army, have to fall back, particularly if it were found in occupation of very advanced positions; but there is no reason to believe that it would run any danger of being overwhelmed. The long delay anticipated in this Memorandum would therefore not involve any risk of a military reverse, although its political effects might be serious and inconvenient.

With regard to the expenditure of £1,097,250 mentioned in paragraph 11, I may point out that should a large force be sent out to South Africa the money will merely have been spent in advance instead of after mobilisation; on the other hand, should hostilities be avoided, a part of the cost will be recovered by the sale of mules, &c., but the loss would, of course, be heavy.

August 12th, 1899. (Signed) LANSDOWNE.

21148. Did not that Minute bring out very distinctly that there were certain preparations which had been recommended by your military advisers which had not been made at that moment—in August?—They might have been desirable. Unless there had been political reasons for not making them.

21149. That is your answer—that there were political reasons?—Quite so.

21150. Because your Minute goes to show that in order to have the concentration as rapidly as possible those preparations costing over a million were necessary?—I think the sum of that Minute was to show that three months was the minimum period for complete preparations for landing a field force in a mobile condition in South Africa, including not only mobilisation but the collection of transport and the preparation of all the equipment necessary for it to take the field at once. The actual mobilisation, as you will have observed from this Minute, is a much simpler and briefer operation. Mobilisation would probably have taken two weeks; the embarkation of the force say two weeks more; four weeks, perhaps, for the voyage, making eight weeks, or, say, two months as against three months. I have dwelt upon that point, because I think it shows that the immediate need, if anything was to be done, was not mobilisation but the collection of transport—I do not mean sea transport but land transport—and various other equipment.

21151. You sum up the situation in paragraph 11 "As matters now stand, it would not be possible to place a mobilized Army Corps and a cavalry division in, the north of Natal under about four months. If, on the other hand, all our preparations were complete, this period might be reduced by about one month." That means that the expenditure of the sum of a million was necessary to reduce the time required by one month?—Yes.

21152. And that was what was recommended by your military advisers at the time?—Yes.

21153. And, as I understand it, you recommended it to the Cabinet?—No; I pointed it out to the Cabinet. I wished to lay the problem before the Cabinet. That must not be taken by the Commission as a recommendation of mine that the thing should be done immediately.

21154. Then would you explain exactly what that means; you, as Secretary of State for War, on the advice of your military advisers, looking at it from a departmental point of view, would have recommended it?—No, because I cannot dissociate my position as Secretary of State for War from my position as a member of the Cabinet. I placed the Cabinet in full possession of the problem which lay before us. I gave them this "time table," so that they might know what risk was incurred by the postponement of the expenditure, but I take my full share of the responsibility of the Cabinet for not having incurred that expenditure at the time.

21155. But for the most effectual use, that is to say at the most speedy moment, of the force which you had been advised was necessary for the operations in South Africa, the expenditure of that sum of money was necessary at the time at which it was proposed?—It would have curtailed the period during which it was impossible to make use of the field force as a fully equipped mobile army.

21156. And your answer to the question why that was not done, is that it was not done on political considerations on which the Cabinet came to a decision?—About which with your permission I should like to say a few words when we come to the Commander-in-Chief's minutes.

21157. I only want to get it here, that it was political considerations which delayed those preparations being made?—Certainly.

21158. But you did recognise in the War Office that there must be a considerable interval between the declaration of war, and the moment when the British Force would be ready to advance?—Clearly; that was very well put I think by Sir Redvers Buller in his Minute, which you have, of July 6th, 1899, second paragraph: "It is evident that in any case a considerable period will necessarily elapse after a state of war has been declared or established by one side or the other before the English Force can be ready to commence an advance on Pretoria."

21159. Then the question is what was the policy of the War Office with regard to that period?—Our policy was to take such measures as might be necessary for securing the safety of the Colonies in the interval.

21160. And do you submit that those measures were taken?—I submit that they were taken; the South African Garrison was increased, first from a normal of 2,000 to 7,000, and eventually to 23,000 when the larger reinforcements were sent out in September, 1899; those reinforcements, you will remember, arrived just before the War broke out.

21161. You mean the reinforcements from India?—Partly from India and partly from other places—a reinforcement of 10,000 men altogether.

21162. Is it your position that your advisers at the War Office represented to you that those precautions were sufficient and that the Colonies were safe?—With that force, yes.

21163. Is that recorded in any Minutes by them at the time?—Before you go to that may I say one word. You mentioned that a part of these reinforcements were taken from India; that has been a good deal controverted, and particularly so in some of Lord Wolseley's Minutes which have been put before you. Perhaps I might state briefly why the Cabinet decided to take the reinforcements from India, or at any rate a part of the reinforcements from India, rather than go elsewhere for them. In the first place, we could get them sooner from India to the Cape; in the next place these Indian battalions were seasoned battalions at full strength, and fit to take the field without shedding any of their young soldiers as a home battalion would have to do. In the next place we could get the battalions without calling out the reserves, which, as the Commis-

* This is the cost of one month's supply for the force; a second month's supply could, it is calculated, be dispatched to the point of concentration after the issue of the Proclamation in time to arrive there before the troops.

tion no doubt is aware, is a formidable operation for many reasons. The only alternative, to filling up a home battalion with reserves is to take two battalions, get rid of the young men in each of them and make one strong battalion out of the two; and I am bound to say that my experience of the War Office has always taught me to regard an operation of that kind with the utmost dislike. I believe it is bad for the regiments, bad for the officers, and it has always been to the best of my belief condemned by all high military authorities. Lord Wolseley's objections to taking these 5,500 troops from India are recorded in one of the letters to me, which has been put in—that of August 24th, 1899.

21164. Is that all you wish to say about the Indian reinforcements?—That is all.

21165. Would you now speak to the question of whether the Colonies were made reasonably safe or not, according to your military advisers, by those reinforcements?—I think there was a great weight of expert advice to show that the Colonies would be safe with those reinforcements; for example, Sir Penn Symons, on the 16th July, advised that a reinforcement of 2,000 men would put Natal in an efficient state of defence; on the 25th July he reported that 5,000 would suffice to make the defence complete; and, as a matter of fact, we sent more than 5,000—we sent over 8,000. Lord Wolseley, in his Minute of August 18th, begged the Government to consider the advisability of sending to Natal with the least possible delay an Infantry Division, a regiment of cavalry, and so on—altogether about 10,000 men—and with that force, the Commission will observe, he was prepared to hold the whole of the northern triangle of Natal. That is stated in the following paragraph.

21166. I think if you read that paragraph it would be useful?—"With such a force 'as the 10,000 men' added to the troops already in Natal the whole triangle I have named could be occupied and held. This would place us in a position to save the railroad tunnel at Laing's Nek from being destroyed, so that if war should take place in the end, by the time the remainder of our Army Corps had arrived, we should be able to move upon Pretoria without the serious loss of life which the assault of Laing's Nek, in the possession of the Boers, would probably entail."

21167. So that at that time the Commander-in-Chief had in view holding Laing's Nek with that force?—Evidently. Then again Sir Redvers Buller in his memorandum of July 6th apparently deprecated the idea of sending out as many as 10,000 men at that moment, but in his memorandum of September 5th he asked for 5,000 men for Natal. That is in a Minute addressed by Sir Redvers Buller to the Commander-in-Chief. He writes: "I think that to make Natal safe its garrison should be increased by 5,000 men. These need not be equipped with transport at once, as if they were in Natal they would set free the 10,000 men there, who have, I understand, complete transport"; and I think I am perhaps justified in adding to that, that although it appears from these Minutes that Lord Wolseley would have liked to have sent these reinforcements sooner than we sent them, he told me on the day that the decision to send the 10,000 men had been arrived at that he would "stake his reputation that after the reinforcements have arrived we shall be safe as to everything south of the Biggarsberg." I say that confidently because the statement impressed me so much that I at once wrote it to one of my colleagues; my letter was dated 9th September.

21168. I draw your attention to a note that has been handed in to us by Lord Wolseley; have you anything to say in regard to that?—I cannot recall the conversation referred to in this note; but I observe that Sir Redvers Buller is reported by the Commander-in-Chief to have said that the military authorities on the spot were the best judges, and one of the military authorities consulted was Sir Penn Symons, whose advice I have just quoted.

21169. Sir Redvers Buller replied that he had "complete confidence in Butler's ability and forethought, and as long as there were able men like Butler and Symons on the spot he did not think there was any necessity for sending out any troops in advance of the Army Corps to strengthen our position against any possible attack by the Boers on the frontiers"?—That agrees very much with the passage in the Minute of Sir Redvers Buller which I quoted just now, in which he deprecated the idea of sending the 10,000 men in advance of the main force.

21170. This conversation purports to have been in your room, but you do not remember it?—I do not remember it, but the record was evidently made at the time, and I do not question its substantial accuracy. Before I leave that question of the sufficiency of the reinforcements may I say a word upon another point, which is, that it might be suggested, and I believe it has been suggested, that these reinforcements were sufficient to take care of themselves during the interval; but that is, I am sure, not at all what was conveyed to me by my military advisers. What was conveyed to me by my military advisers was that they were sufficient to secure the safety of the Colonies, which is quite a different thing. I am not a soldier, but I never heard of sending out reinforcements to a country which might become the theatre of war merely in order that the reinforcements might successfully defend themselves against attack; they are sent there, I imagine, for the purpose of securing something or somebody.

21171. But do you mean by that that they were calculated to be sufficient to prevent the Boers from crossing the frontier?—I should say not sufficient to prevent raids and incursions, but sufficient to prevent the Colonies from being overrun.

21172. By the holding of particular posts?—Yes

21173. It has often been said that the frontier taken as a whole was so very large that it would have been impossible with a force of the kind which was in South Africa at the time to have prevented the Boers from crossing the frontier?—That seems to me obvious; if I may say so, you could not stop up all the holes, but you could do enough to prevent the Colonies from being overrun or invaded in force.

21174. Was it enough to prevent them from being invaded in great force?—Judging by the result it was not.

21175. Was there any idea at the War Office at that time that they might be invaded in great force?—I should say that the general impression was that what we had to reckon with was raids rather than invasion in force.

21176. There was not much idea in the War Office, or in your advisers generally, that an advance in force such as was made was practicable for the Boers?—I do not believe it.

21177. Looking at it now would you say that the Force that was sent was sufficient to protect the Colony in the sense you have described it?—I am not a soldier, and I do not much like giving opinions upon purely military points, but if you ask me my opinion I should say, No.

21178. Have you anything more to say about the reasons for supposing these interim measures were sufficient?—I think I have said all I want to say upon that point.

21179. Then we come to the question of whether the War Office was urged by their military advisers to make earlier preparations?—You will have seen from Lord Wolseley's minutes that we were urged to make earlier preparations. The general observation I would make upon that is, we were obliged to consider that advice with some reference to the circumstances as they presented themselves at the moment we received it. The Commission will recollect that all through the summer of 1899 negotiations were proceeding uninterruptedly with the Transvaal Government. We certainly did not regard peace as unattainable; on the contrary there were moments when we believed that we were very near a settlement which would have avoided all the misfortunes inseparable from a great war and we realised very deeply indeed that owing to the inflammable state of public opinion in South Africa we ought to strain every effort to avoid any action which was likely to precipitate hostilities. I believe the Commission have seen Sir William Butler's correspondence with the War Office. I do not think I misrepresent it when I say that throughout that correspondence there runs a note of genuine and deep alarm lest anything should be done that might make the embers which were smouldering in South Africa break into a blaze. We had also to consider that at that time public opinion in this country was not prepared for a great war or for the large expenditure in preparing for a great war. Besides that, it seemed to us that owing to geographical and military conditions nothing that we could do could have the effect of altogether depriving the Boers of the advantage of the initiative in the struggle. Whenever it came they had the advantage of being on the spot and prepared for it. It was considerations of that kind that

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
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26 Mar. 1903.

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G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

led the Cabinet to authorise us to strengthen the garrison in the Colonies for defensive purposes, while we were not permitted to make extensive preparations or to spend large sums of money upon the preparation of a Field Force designed for the invasion of the Transvaal. If the Commission approves I can perhaps say a word about some of these Minutes of Lord Wolseley's which are before you and on which questions of this kind throughout arise. I will do so very shortly because I am afraid of taking up the time of the Commission. First, there is a Minute of June 8th, 1899, which I have already quoted. Lord Wolseley, in that Minute, pointed out that we should require a large force in the event of war with the Transvaal, and he said that the pressing question for the Government to consider was what we should do at once to prepare for this contingency. He suggested that much could be done at once without attracting any attention provided no one in the War Office or outside the Cabinet were admitted to the secret; that always seemed to me rather a difficult condition to observe because I did not not see how we could make large preparations without taking the War Office into our confidence. Lord Wolseley then goes on to recommend a number of minor military measures designed to strengthen the South African garrison. Those measures I believe were all of them adopted, if not at the time at any rate soon after, but they are comparatively small matters and I imagine the Commission either has or can get evidence as to the extent to which those minor recommendations were acted upon. In paragraph six he recommends that we should mobilise one of our three Army Corps on Salisbury Plain. He thinks that step would probably wake up the Transvaal to the fact that England was at last serious, and then he goes on to recommend, in a passage which I have already quoted, that the operations should begin in South Africa as soon as possible so as to be over by next November. The political situation at that time was as follows: the Bloemfontein Conference had failed, but negotiations had been immediately resumed and were proceeding hopefully, not unsatisfactorily, and I see that on the 7th June—that is the day before Lord Wolseley wrote his Minute—the Prime Minister had made a statement that he was able to form a sanguine forecast of a successful issue. At any rate the moment was not one when the Cabinet was prepared to mobilise an Army Corps or to take any other steps of a distinctly minatory and provocative character still less to take any military measures with the idea that we could subjugate the Transvaal by November of the same year.

21180. Perhaps it would be convenient to refer for moment to the answer Lord Wolseley gave in connection with that Minute; he referred to it at some length, and he dealt with that question which you mentioned about the initiative. He says "Had my advice been acted upon then this Army Corps could have been in South Africa, and very possibly on the Orange River before Mr. Kruger declared war in October, and he declared war on the 11th October. There was no danger that our mobilisation of this Army Corps should have hastened Mr. Kruger's declaration of war, and this is a very important point, because I know people would at first say that if we had done so Mr. Kruger would have declared war immediately; but my answer to that is a very simple one, and it will be understood by anyone who knows the condition of things in South Africa, that Mr. Kruger could not have taken the field before the time he did, and he took the field upon the very earliest date that the Boer forces could take the field in South Africa, because all their men were mounted and were dependent entirely upon grass, and they have no grass to eat until early in October, in fact, the 10th is a very early time for grass; and, I think, that is the answer to the point I am sure would be made by people who heard my statement about this Army Corps being put down at Estcourt at the time I have mentioned. They would immediately say: 'That would have hastened the war,' and my answer to that is, that I do not think it could have done so"—I doubt whether that is quite sustainable; that proceeds on the assumption that the Boer Forces could not carry on hostilities during the months of our summer, but, as a matter of fact, the Boer Forces have remained in the field and have carried on hostilities, and I am afraid carried them on with very considerable success at all times of the year. I remember, although I cannot undertake to reproduce it very exactly, being shown a sort of review of the relative advantages for campaigning purposes of the two seasons, and my recollection is that each season has its advantages and its disadvantages; in the one season you get lots of grass and bad roads, and in the other season

you get no grass and good roads. At any rate our view was that the adoption of minatory measures, at that moment when negotiations were in full swing, would lead to the disappearance of whatever chance of peace remained to us.

21181. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) And in that view you were supported by Sir William Butler?—I believe so.

21182. (*Chairman.*) What I wanted to know in asking that question was whether Lord Wolseley put that point of view to you, as far as you remember, at that time?—I do not remember his having done so.

21183. Because, if there was substance in it, it was a somewhat important point, was it not; it would have given you an opportunity of initiative?—You mean that upon that advice of Lord Wolseley's we might have mobilised our Army Corps on Salisbury Plain and taken the chance of its shipwrecking the negotiations?

21184. It would not have brought on a hasty declaration of war from the Boers if his position was correct?—That is a matter of opinion, but what I think is scarcely a matter of opinion is that the successful prosecution of the negotiations would scarcely have been possible if we had taken steps which obviously showed that we had made up our minds to fight.

21185. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Or to be fully prepared to fight?—I think so. I do not think that distinction was one which you could have expected the Boers to draw.

21186. You do not think that if at that time we had shown a firmer front by providing against the chance of war it would have had beneficial effects in making Mr. Kruger more reasonable?—Everyone has a right to their opinion upon a conjectural point of that kind. I remain of the opinion I have ventured to express.

21187. (*Chairman.*) Do you think that was Lord Milner's opinion also?—I do not know.

21188. (*Sir John Edge.*) Does the fact that Mr. Kruger did declare war as soon as the grass was on the veldt support your view that if we had called out an Army Corps it would not have led to peace, that although we made no great preparations for the war Mr. Kruger when his own opportunity came instead of carrying on the negotiations, declared war. Does that support your view that if we had called out an Army Corps it would not have led to peace?—I imagine that Mr. Kruger declared war when he found we were sending large reinforcements.

21189. I do not think I have made myself quite plain. It has been put to you, at least the suggestion apparently is, that if we had called out an Army Corps and put it on Salisbury Plain that might have induced Mr. Kruger not to make preparations for war, but to carry on the negotiations to an end that would be satisfactory for both parties. I say is that view consistent with the fact that although we did not call out the Army Corps, Mr. Kruger the moment he was able declared war against us?—Do you mean that that combats my view or supports it?

21190. It appears to me that it supports your view. Your view is that you were hoping at that time that you could carry on those negotiations successfully without war?—Quite so.

21191. And you felt that if you called out an Army Corps that would probably put an end to the successful carrying on of the peaceful negotiations; in support of that view it strikes me the result shows that although you did not put the Army Corps on Salisbury Plain, Mr. Kruger declared war himself when he got the chance?—Yes. I agree.

21192. (*Lord Strathcona of Mount Royal.*) May I ask when you came first to recognise that war was inevitable?—If I have to give you a date off hand I should say that war became imminent when the Transvaal withdrew their offer of the five years' franchise, on September 5th.

21193. (*Chairman.*) In what you were saying just now about the danger of precipitating war by taking the advice of Lord Wolseley were you referring chiefly to the mobilisation of the Army Corps?—And to any other measures of a distinctly minatory character. I give you as an illustration the accumulation of large magazines and stores on the line of route which would be followed by the Field Force.

21194. That is what I wanted to get at; did that include all the recommendations which were stated in your Minute of the 12th August?—Yes, all the recommendations which appertained to the preparation of the Field Force.

See Q. 8778.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

21195. You think even the preparations—for instance the purchase and the fitting for sea transport of horses, which was a small sum, £13,000: do you think that would have been a thing?—It might be possible to find here and there some little thing that could have been done unobtrusively, but we had to draw the line somewhere, and we drew it between the preparations for the Field Force and the preparations for the reinforcements that went out in September.

21196. (*Sir John Edge.*) Do you happen to know whether Mr. Kruger or the South African Republic had agents here in England before the war, watching what was going on?—I feel no doubt whatever that they had abundant information of everything that was going on, not only here, but also in every capital in Europe.

21197. I mean that any move towards preparing for an expedition to South Africa would be known to them directly?—Certainly. You will see in one of Sir William Butler's letters that they were watching things so closely that any ordinary move of small bodies of troops or of officers was noticed at once and created apprehension.

21198. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Do you not think that the fact that the Boers were collecting all these warlike stores, which could only be with the object of invading our Colonies, was a fair excuse for our sending out more men earlier?—If that view be accepted we should have had to assume that peace was unattainable. We did not take that view. We knew of the preparations. Of course, we are all wise after the event; but at that time it was impossible to say how far those preparations were intended for defensive and how far they were intended for offensive purposes.

21199. (*Chairman.*) You are going to deal with other Minutes?—The next Minute I have in my series is Sir Redvers Buller's Minute of July 6th. I have already called attention to his apparent reluctance at that stage to send out 10,000 men to South Africa. He gives his view of the sequence in which operations might be commenced, and I do not greatly differ from what he says upon that; but I desire to call attention to Lord Wolseley's Minute which covers Sir Redvers Buller's. In that Minute, dated July 7th, paragraph 6, he renews his recommendation that we should immediately mobilise an Army Corps on Salisbury Plain, that we should at an early date send out an Infantry Division and a Cavalry Brigade to South Africa as an open demonstration of warlike policy, that we should form magazines on the intended line of advance, that we should go to the House of Commons for a vote of credit for half a million and that we should collect 11,000 mules and 700 American waggons. There, again, I venture to give the same answer that I gave a moment ago: the negotiations were proceeding; Lord Wolseley's Minute was dated July 7th; 12 days afterwards, on July 19th, the Volksraad accepted the proposal for seven years' franchise, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the following day announced his hope that the new law would prove the basis of a satisfactory settlement. I do not think that any moment could have been worse chosen for an open demonstration of a warlike policy such as the Commander-in-Chief then recommended to us.

21200. On the assumption that the negotiations were *bona-fide* negotiations?—Certainly, I assumed they were *bona-fide* negotiations. Lord Wolseley's next Minute is dated August 17th, and in that he again pressed us to send 10,000 more men to Natal. As to that I point out that on the 22nd August the Transvaal Government presented to us the five years franchise proposal; to that we sent a reasoned reply—the negotiation was going on, and, rightly or wrongly, it was in our view undesirable that that negotiation should be jeopardised by any sudden exhibition of military activity. That point is dealt with in a letter of mine to Lord Wolseley dated August 20th, 1899.

21201. You put that in now?—Yes.

LETTERS FROM THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE TO
VISCOUNT WOLSELEY.

Derreen, August 20, 1899.

My dear Wolseley,

Your Memorandum of the 17th has reached me.

You have probably become aware since you wrote it that the outlook in South Africa has improved. We are not yet in a position to assume that matters will be satisfactorily settled; but Mr. Chamberlain wrote to me two days ago that, while he wished to avoid relaxing the pressure, he saw no occasion for reinforcements.

I shall in any case let him see what you have written.

If our hopes are disappointed the Cabinet will have to consider the question of further strengthening the force in South Africa, and your views will, of course, come before my colleagues.

I am rather sorry that you did not put those views in writing before we all separated, and when the discussions were in progress which led to the sending of two more battalions to Natal. The position was more critical then than it is now.

I quite understand your wish that the Army Corps and cavalry division which we shall send out in certain eventualities should be exclusively British. We are all agreed as to this. But I see no reason why we should not use the 10,000 troops which India is holding in readiness, for the purpose of strengthening Natal. To send out one division of the Army Corps without reservists would, I cannot help thinking, be awkward. India is ready, and could get there first. Moreover, if your anticipation is realised, and the Orange Free State takes no measures to prevent its frontier from being violated by the Transvaal Boers, we should, I hope, certainly regard ourselves as free to go in through the Orange Free State—the route which I know you prefer. In this event we should be better off if we had not committed a part of our force to the Natal route, which might, however, be used by the Indian force to effect a valuable diversion. There are several other points about which I should have liked to ask questions, *e.g.*, the probability of an attack on the triangle from the Utrecht side by a force of 10,000 or more Boers. But I will not trouble you with these at present.

Yours sincerely,
(Initialled) L.

There is a further Minute of Lord Wolseley's, dated August 24th, in which he once more pressed us to have recourse to a display of force; that is the Minute in which he combated the view that it was desirable to send reinforcements from India. That Minute is dated 24th August, and, as I said just now, on the 22nd, two days before, we had received the proposal for a five years' franchise, so that the same considerations which I have ventured to urge apply to that Minute also. I have dealt with that Minute in my letter to Lord Wolseley of August 27th, which I also put in.

Derreen, Kenmare, August, 27th, 1899.

My Dear Wolseley,

Thanks for your letter of the 24th.

Your Minute was sent at once to Mr. Chamberlain, and a copy has reached Lord Salisbury by this time.

My own view is that we ought not to send further reinforcements to South Africa until it has become clear that the last proposals made by the South African Republic cannot be accepted as a basis for discussion.

It is hard to say whether they are made to us in good faith. The concessions may prove to be illusory, but in appearance they are a very great advance both upon the Bloemfontein proposals and upon the subsequently revised scheme. They seem to me to merit benevolent examination.

But the conditions as to suzerainty and future non-intervention are obviously inadmissible, and, if literally persisted in, will render a peaceful solution, to my mind, impossible.

I am, however, not convinced that they will be pressed as they stand. Krüger is trying to save his face, and we cannot be surprised at it. Everything depends upon his attitude when he is told that the suzerainty cannot be abandoned, nor the right of intervention on behalf of the Queen's subjects if they are ill-treated.

While we are uncertain upon this point, I should certainly avoid "hurrying the pace, and forcing on hostilities." We might, I think, precipitate them by an ill-timed turn of the screw.

On the other hand, it is clear that we must be ready to send reinforcements whenever we are told that the negotiations have broken down, and neither you nor I can judge how soon this may be.

I still lean towards the idea of sending the first instalment from India, and I feel sure that the Government of India would send us good battalions. It has been getting its contingent ready for some time past, and could, I believe, supply it more cheaply and more expeditiously than we could supply ours. I have asked for information on this point.

By using Indian troops you would have your own army corps intact, for use on whichever line might be selected. I say this because it may be possible to compel the Orange Free State to declare itself against us

*The Right
Hon. the
Marquis of
Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.*

and in that case you would, I take it, advance through it and not *via* Natal. You ought to be in *utrumque paratus*, with a plan for each contingency.

I am glad you were pleased with what you saw on Salisbury Plain. Will you bring up the question of retired officers for Militia and Volunteer Battalions after the holidays?

I am all for going as far as we can in this direction.

But do we not already offer extra pay for such officers?

If South African affairs become hotter I shall, of course, come over to the War Office at once.

Yours sincerely,
(Initialled) L.

I call attention to my statement that it was desirable that the Indian troops should be taken upon the ground that they would leave Lord Wolsley's Army Corps intact when he had to send it out afterwards. I think that is an argument deserving of consideration—I mean that we should send the Indian troops instead of sending a portion of the Army Corps without its reserves.

21202. That is what happened—the Army Corps was treated as a separate thing afterwards?—Yes. Every battalion got its reservists, and not a battalion had been broken into as would have been the case if we had previously vamped up composite battalions for the purpose of sending out reinforcements.

There is another short Minute of Lord Wolsley's dated September 1st, 1899, in which he calls attention to the necessity of certain stores, equipment, saddlery, harness and so on. That was, I need not say, respectfully considered; it had, of course, to be examined by the department responsible for these things, which is not the department of the Commander-in-Chief. For example, there is, I notice, a demand for red serge frocks. Now no red serge was used during the whole campaign at all, and I do not believe for a moment that this proposal would have been supported if it had been examined in the department.

Then follow three very important Minutes, two of them by Sir Redvers Buller and one by the Commander-in-Chief. The first in my collection is that addressed to Lord Salisbury on the 5th September 1899. I shall have something to say bye and bye as to the necessity for Sir Redvers Buller taking the somewhat unusual step of applying direct to the Prime Minister instead of to the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State—but I pass that by for the moment. The suggestion that runs through it is that the military and the diplomatic or political forces require bringing into line, and that the diplomats were proceeding to an ultimatum without reference to the military. I do not think that position of Sir Redvers Buller's can be sustained. He was perfectly aware of what was passing; if he was not aware it was his own fault, as he had ample opportunities of making himself aware. Simultaneously with that Minute to the Prime Minister there was Sir Redvers Buller's Minute of the same date addressed to the Commander-in-Chief. There are a number of points in that about which I should like to say something. He begins by saying that he has not troubled the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State with any questions since he was informed that he was to have command of the Field Force, because he thought that the negotiations which were being conducted with a view to avoid war ought not to be hampered by any conditions. I do not quite know what the meaning of that sentence is, but at any rate that suggestion is a different suggestion from another suggestion of Sir Redvers Buller's that he had been kept in the dark and had been given no opportunity of making his views known to the War Office.

21203. What have you to say about that position of Sir Redvers Buller's?—I would like to deal with that rather fully in a moment.

21204. I mean as to his being kept in the dark and having no opportunity?—He says, with perfect truth, that an expedition against the Transvaal is not a simple matter, that it entails the use of a large force and of very considerable transport, and that that transport has practically to be created as the expeditionary force is formed. Nobody ever contested that; in fact, I think when you look at that Minute of mine which I wrote to the Cabinet and which I have put in, you will see we realised very fully indeed that these preparations were formidable and that they would take a considerable length of time. Further on he suggests that we had never invited the local military authorities to tell us what troops they required for the protection of the Colonies. That is not so. We had Sir Penn

Symons' opinion as to Natal; and as to Cape Colony, Sir Redvers Buller himself had very distinctly expressed the opinion that no hostile acts, at any rate on a large scale, were to be anticipated. Then he proceeds with a substantive proposition that in order to make Natal safe its "Garrison should be increased by 5,000 men. These need not be equipped with transport at once, as if they were in Natal they would set free the 10,000 men there who have, I understand, complete transport."

21205. I refer you again to the note which I drew your attention to before of the conversation in your room; I think Sir Redvers Buller deals with the whole question you are now referring to?—What was the date of that?

21206. July 17th; Sir Redvers Buller's opinion was given by Lord Wolsley in the note which I referred you to before?—Quite so; that was, of course, of earlier date than this.

21207. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*): It is not necessary to labour your point because Sir Redvers Buller has already stated there that there were sufficient forces?—Thank you. Then comes Lord Wolsley's Minute of September 5th. That Minute was apparently occasioned by Sir Redvers Buller's appearance on the scene with his two Minutes of September 5th, and it contains several statements which I can hardly leave unchallenged. For example—he asserts that, "we have lost time and given to the enemy the initiative; he is in a position to take the offensive, and by striking the first blow to secure the advantage of winning the first round." Our position, as I ventured to say just now, was that nothing we could do could deprive the Boers of the initiative; they were on the spot, and they could strike the first blow whenever it pleased them to do so. Lord Wolsley goes on to say that he has not been told whether the Indian contingent had been ordered to Natal. He had not been told because the Cabinet did not decide to send it until September 8th, three days after the date of the Minute. He urges the increase of our military forces in South Africa, proposing to send a brigade of Guards there; that is on September 5th, and the Commission will remember that that was the very date on which the Transvaal withdrew the offer of the five years' Franchise; the Cabinet was called together, and on September 8th we agreed to send out reinforcements of the strength advised by Lord Wolsley in the Minute from which I am quoting. But I can scarcely accept Lord Wolsley's statement towards the close of that Minute that, "the Government are acting without complete knowledge of what the military can do, while the military authorities on their side are equally without full knowledge of what the Government expects them to do, nor are they given authority to make such antecedent preparations as will enable them to act with the least possible delay." I venture to say, on the contrary, that we were acting with complete knowledge of what the military could do, and that is shown by the Minute of August 12th, which, as I have said, was prepared with the assistance of the Commander-in-Chief and the officials of his Department. That Minute shows that whether our position was right or wrong, we did know what the military position in South Africa was.

21208. (*Chairman*.) That is the one side; what about the military authorities being without full knowledge of what the Government expected them to do?—I should like to deal with that when I come to the question of the plans of campaign. Nor do I admit that the Government was under a false idea of the rapidity with which we could act. That, I think, is disproved by the Minute of August 12th. However, as I said just now, these three Minutes coincided with the withdrawal of the five years' Franchise proposal, and thereupon we at once proceeded with the reinforcements suggested by the Commander-in-Chief.

There is one more Minute of Lord Wolsley's which I desire to refer to at this point, and that is the Minute of January 13th, 1900. I may say that Minute was written spontaneously by Lord Wolsley, and without any suggestion from me. In that Minute Lord Wolsley shows succinctly the steps taken before the despatch of the Army Corps to strengthen the combined garrisons of Cape Colony and Natal. Those garrisons had, you will remember, been already somewhat strengthened, but between August and October we increased the strength of cavalry from two regiments to five, the strength of the Artillery from three field batteries to nine, and the strength of the Infantry from six and a-half battalions

26 Mar. 1903.

to seventeen. Then in paragraphs 5 and 6 which follow Lord Wolseley, gives an extremely graphic account of the manner in which mobilisation proceeded. He goes on to show how when more troops became necessary we mobilised and sent out a fifth division, then a sixth, then a seventh. At the time he wrote, the mobilisation of the eighth division was proceeding, and he points out that the Irregular Troops dealt with in the previous paragraph represent in round numbers 75,000 combatants of all ranks, besides a large force of Royal Engineers and the 22,000 men previously in South Africa. This army, Lord Wolseley says, was sent from home complete in military staff as well as in medical transport and supply services, and he goes on: "In preparing, equipping and despatching this large body of men the machinery of mobilisation and embarkation has worked without a serious hitch," and at the conclusion of his paper he says: "I have no hesitation in saying that no army has ever left our shores composed of finer soldiers than those of which our army now in South Africa consists. All are seasoned men. There are no recruits or youths under 20 years of age among them. Had we not possessed the Army Reserve, the outcome of our short service system, it would have been impossible to have sent to South Africa the Regular Army now serving there; indeed I would go further and assert that at no previous period of our history that I am acquainted with could England have sent such an army into the field beyond the seas." That was an unsolicited testimonial from a great soldier who is also a very keen critic, and I venture to call the attention of the Commission to it and to submit to them that whatever our failings, which were no doubt very numerous—whatever those failings were at any rate we were able to produce something in the way of a great British force which was not altogether unworthy of respect.

21209. Have you dealt now with all the Minutes?—Yes.

21210. You reserved your observations with regard to Sir Redvers Buller's appeal to the Prime Minister?—I understand Sir Redvers Buller suggests that the 10,000 reinforcements were despatched in consequence of his Minute to the Prime Minister; they were despatched because the Boers withdrew the offer of a five years franchise. The reinforcements, in fact, did arrive in time, as Lord Wolseley says in the Minute from which I have just quoted. They arrived before war broke out. Would their earlier arrival have made a difference? Of course that is very much a matter of conjecture. We are inclined to contend that their earlier arrival might have meant earlier hostilities. I will not labour that point because I have made it two or three times, but considering what the position of the negotiations was it seemed to us undesirable even to send off those 10,000 men so long as the five years franchise offer was open. That has reference to the earlier despatch of the reinforcements, but then there is the question of the earlier despatch of the field force itself, which is another matter. If we could have dropped the field force fully equipped from a balloon without anybody knowing anything about it in South Africa, that might have had very satisfactory results, but as the Commission knows mobilisation means a Proclamation of national emergency, it means Debates in the House of Commons, and it means Votes of Credit. Again mere mobilization would not really have brought you very much nearer to the complete preparation of your Army Corps, because what you had to do was not only to mobilize but to collect your transport, equipment, magazines and so on. Ought we then to have done that sooner? I think your Lordship asked that question earlier in my examination. We had looked the thing in the face, we knew that by holding our hand there was a period of three months which must elapse before the field force was ready to take the field. Were we justified in taking that risk? I submit we were, because we were told by our military advisers that in the interim the Colonies were not exposed to any serious danger. We were led to believe that during that period of three months no serious harm would come to the Colonies. On the other hand, if we had collected say the 14,000 mules which were specified as necessary, can there be any doubt that we should have brought on war sooner than it came, and probably before we could have got the 10,000 reinforcements out to South Africa? The 14,000 mules reminds me that Sir William Butler objected to buying 1,300 mules, on the ground that a step of that kind would create dangerous apprehensions. How much more would such apprehensions have been created if we had collected 14,000?

21211. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) The contract for the 1,300 mules was cancelled?—Yes, that was a contract I think under which they were to be delivered when required; is there not a distinction between that and the actual collection of a great number of these animals? If I might sum up my argument I would say that in my view nothing we could do would have deprived the Boers of their initiative, that it is not clear that the earlier arrival of the field force, or of part of the field force, would have made any difference, and that if the delay did carry with it any disadvantages it was worth running the risk in order to avoid prematurely bringing on a war which up to the last we hoped to avoid.

21212. (*Chairman.*) Practically you base your defence of that position on the political situation at the time?—On the political situation at the time coupled with the fact that our advisers led us to believe that we could secure the safety of the Colonies in the meanwhile by increasing the South African force to, I think, 23,000 men altogether.

21213. Which you say you were able to do before the actual outbreak of war?—Yes.

21214. That deals with the preparations which your military advisers proposed in 1899; you have been speaking of that all through?—Yes.

21215. Referring once more to the Intelligence Department papers of earlier dates, do you not think that it might be argued from them that when the Boers began to make large preparations, which they did immediately after the Jameson raid, certain other preparations ought to have been made in the Colonies when war was not in the same way imminent?—We did increase the garrison, although not to a great extent.

21216. To the extent of a couple of battalions?—More than that; but the increase was not large.

21217. Not anything in comparison to the accumulation of stores which the Boers were making at that time?—No.

21218. Is it not arguable that the real difficulty began then?—I think it is arguable.

21219. But, as I understand your evidence earlier, those papers were not distinctly brought before you by your military advisers at that time?—I am most anxious not to be unfair to my military advisers, and I have no doubt that from one source or another I was aware that advice of that kind had been collected by the Commander-in-Chief's staff, by which I mean the intelligence branch; but I cannot call to mind any proposal on the part of the Commander-in-Chief for a large strengthening of our position in South Africa as an antidote to the Boer preparations. In a Minute of Lord Wolseley's in 1896—about which I may have something to say by-and-bye—he dwelt upon the advantage of keeping rather more troops in South Africa, partly to steady the Boers, and, also, because he thought that a small force held in readiness there would be useful for offensive purposes in parts of the world other than South Africa.

21220. As a central station?—As a central station.

21221. But as a distinct proposal from the Commander-in-Chief, as your principal military adviser, you had nothing before the preparations advised in 1899?—I cannot call any such proposal to mind, but you have had the Commander-in-Chief before you, and I have no doubt he would tell you whether that was so or not. The only earlier demand which I can remember is that embodied in Lord Wolseley's Minute headed "The Strategical Importance of the Cape." My copy is not dated, but it is an enclosure in Lord Wolseley's Minute of the 22nd February, 1896, and in that, Lord Wolseley proposed to add to the troops in South Africa one regiment of cavalry, one battery, and two battalions. That was all.

21222. For all the purposes you have mentioned?—Yes, I think I gave an accurate description of it.

(*After a short adjournment.*)

21223. (*Chairman.*) We have got to the question *See Q. 21300.* of the time of the preparations. I think you have spoken to that, and there is just one further question I would like to ask you on that subject still: you have explained why the Government did not take any military offensive steps while the negotiations were proceeding, as you had hopes of a successful issue, but you mentioned the date of September 8th, as a definite date. Were there the same reasons on September 8th for not giving orders for preparations?—There was a

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

*The Right
Hon. the
Marquis of
Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.*

26 Mar. 1903.

Cabinet on September 8th, and we then decided to send the reinforcements. There was another Cabinet, I think, on September 22nd, and it was at the latter Cabinet that we decided to commence expenditure on the field force.

12124. Yes, we have had the date of 22nd September given to us by many witnesses as the date when the sums required for preparations mentioned in your Minute of August 12th were authorised to be expended?—Yes.

12125. But on September 8th did you not send a definite despatch to the Transvaal withdrawing the previous offers.

(*Sir George Taubman Goldie.*) And saying that you would formulate your own policy?—Yes, there was a despatch of that kind on that date.

12126. (*Chairman.*) Would not that have been a reasonable date at which to have given the orders for the expenditure of the money?—We proceeded of course upon the assumption that all that was urgently and really necessary was the measures for securing the safety of the Colonies, and it should be remembered that no expenditure on account of the Army Corps would have been of any use unless we had set to work the whole of the machinery for the preparation of the Army Corps, that is, collection of the transport, the mules, and so on. We held our hand during a few days before taking that larger step, but upon the assumption that the more moderate measure was sufficient to secure the Colonies in the interim.

12127. War must have appeared very imminent on September 8th?—Much more imminent than before.

12128. So that if the orders for the expenditure of the money had been given then instead of on the 22nd it would have saved a fortnight?—But supposing we had saved a fortnight what difference would that have made? We actually authorised the expenditure for the Army Corps on the 22nd September; according to our calculations with which you are familiar, and which are set out in my Minute of August 12th, the Army Corps would not have been fit to take the field until December 23rd. But you will remember that three out of Lord Methuen's four battles were fought in November, the fourth battle was fought in the early days of December, and General Buller's action at Colenso was fought on the 14th or 15th December. All of these collisions had taken place before we could under any circumstances have had the Army Corps ready.

12129. That only means that you were better than your prophecy?—No.

12130. You got the Army Corps into South Africa earlier?—But it was not fit to take the field.

12131. Then if the preparations had been ordered a fortnight earlier it would have been more fit to take the field?—A fortnight would not have cleared you.

12132. But it would have meant the advantage of a fortnight?—Well, it would have meant the advantage of a fortnight.

12133. That is the measure of advantage which would have been gained?—Yes.

12134. We have been told there was no plan of campaign prepared in the War Office, and each General, I think, has told us that he received no instructions?—I think it is correct to say that no formal plan of campaign was drawn up in the War Office; on the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the Generals knew perfectly well what they were going to South Africa for. I do not know whether the Commission has taken evidence upon that point, but I am under the impression that it is by no means the rule that a General dispatched upon an errand of the kind is furnished with full and precise instructions. The objects which we had in view were perfectly well known to Sir Redvers Buller, and as to the means by which those objects might best be accomplished the only point that was in any doubt was the question of the line of advance, whether it should be through Natal or by the Orange Free State. As to that I have already given some evidence; but the Commission has probably noticed, that in the view of the Commander-in-Chief, who, after all, was mainly concerned in a matter of that kind, it was desirable that as wide a discretion as possible should be given to the General in command of the force. You will see in Lord Wolseley's Minute of June 8th that he says: "The general plan of campaign to be adopted is one that must thoroughly meet with the views of the General Officer selected for the

supreme command. There are, practically, only two lines of advance for an army into the Transvaal"; and in his later Minute of July 7th, again, after considering the two lines of advance, he says, that "should the Free State help the Transvaal against us he presumes Sir Redvers Buller would not shrink from using the Free State as the line of advance upon Pretoria." I think that shows that what was present to Lord Wolseley's mind was that Sir Redvers Buller would have the widest discretion as to the plan of campaign to be adopted.

12135. I think that is so, and Sir Redvers Buller, *See* in an answer he gave to us, said: "It was well understood between Lord Lansdowne, Lord Wolseley and myself, that the intentions with which I left England were to land the three Divisions at East London, one Division at Port Elizabeth, and one Division at Cape Town, and to concentrate them upon the two bridges at Norval's Pont and Bethulie, with a view to advance through the Orange Free State. That was the original plan of campaign?"—Quite so.

12136. Then he was asked whether it was not the *See* case that Lord Wolseley said that "there were no Q. 1 instructions given," and that he "went out with a free hand," and he said "there were no instructions, and I went out with a free hand on the understanding that I was going to do a definite thing?"—That I think very correctly expresses the facts of the case.

12137. That is not quite the same as a plan of campaign, which might be formulated, say in the Intelligence Department or by the highest military authorities in the country before an expedition starts?—That I think was really a matter for discussion by the soldiers with the soldiers, but I am prepared to say that at no moment did Sir Redvers Buller suggest to me that he was at a disadvantage because he had not been supplied with instructions or a plan of campaign. He was constantly in communication with the Commander-in-Chief, with the Director of Military Intelligence, and with other members of the head-quarters staff, and I think I am justified in saying that when he left England he did not do so under a sense of any disadvantage, because at his very last interview with me on the 10th October when he took leave of me he told me that he expected to start, that is to commence his forward movement, about two days before Christmas, that it would take him probably one month to pass through the Orange Free State, and after that 14 days to get to Pretoria. Now I do not for a moment suggest that this was anything like a formal assurance on Sir Redvers Buller's part that he saw his way to doing exactly what he then anticipated, but I think it is fair that I should quote it as showing that he had thought the thing out and that he regarded the accomplishment of his object within those dates as at any rate within the bounds of possibility. This interested me very much. I thought I should like to see whether he was able to make good his own expectations, and I jotted those dates down in my pocket book immediately he left the room.

12138. Then you do not consider that it is necessary that the Staff at the War Office should, when an expedition starts, supply a general plan of campaign, which of course is quite different from entering into the details of the operations which the General Officer in command must undertake on the spot?—That is rather a question for the soldiers; upon this particular occasion I cannot see that anybody was prejudiced by the absence of a definite plan of campaign.

12139. May I give you a quotation which Lord Wolseley gave us from Von Moltke. Von Moltke says in the official account of the Franco-German war, page 50, volume 1: "No plan of operations can with any safety include more than the first collision with the enemy's main body. It is only the laity who believe that they can trace throughout the course of a campaign the prosecution of the original plan arranged beforehand in all its details, and observed to the very close. The Commander-in-Chief most undoubtedly will, in spite of the changing fortunes of war, always have the main object of the campaign before his eyes; but the means by which he hopes to attain it cannot be sketched out with certainty beforehand." That draws the distinction which I was endeavouring to draw between the main object which might be sketched out and the details which of course must be left to the Commander-in-Chief in the field?—The main object in this case, I suppose, was to compel the submission of the two Republics.

12140. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) To reach Pretoria?—

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Landsowne.
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1908.

To reach Pretoria, which at that time was regarded as likely to determine the issue of the campaign.

21241. (*Chairman.*) What I conceive was meant was that an expedition would be sent out with a general plan of the campaign but of course with discretion to the general officer to apply it as circumstances dictated, but as I understand it there were no written instructions whatever?—No, not that I am aware of.

21242. We were told by one witness—I have some compunction in mentioning this—that in India it would be different?—My impression is to the contrary. I would suggest that the commission should ascertain whether in the case of Lord Roberts' numerous operations on the Indian frontier he received any definite instructions. I am under the impression that he did not.

21243. No plan of campaign laid down for the attainment of the main object?—That is my impression.

21244. What we were told was that the Commander-in-Chief in India would have submitted a plan showing the course of the operations worked out by the Intelligence Division under him and the Quarter-master-General—he would have submitted that to the Government before an expedition was sent out; is not that your experience?—I am afraid I cannot answer that.

21245. At any rate you think that the campaign was not prejudiced by the course which was taken on this occasion?—I do not think so for a moment.

21246. Is that all you wish to say about the plan of campaign?—That is all.

21247. As to Sir Redvers Buller not being taken into confidence by the War Office, which is the statement he has made?—My attention has been called to a statement contained in the summary of Sir Redvers Buller's evidence to that effect. I think Sir Redvers Buller is under a complete misapprehension. I should like in the first place to dwell upon the extreme unlikelihood of the Government having deliberately withheld from Sir Redvers Buller anything that it was desirable that he should know; after all he was selected by the Government; he carried our fortunes and it was not very likely that we should keep him in the dark systematically, which is what I understand he alleges. We warned him in good time that he was to be asked to take command of the force, with the object that he might have ample opportunity of considering on what lines he should conduct these operations. I also wish to say that upon the occasion when I intimated to Sir Redvers Buller that he had been designated for the chief command I went out of my way to tell him that from that date anything that the War Office could supply him with in the way of information was his to ask for. If he wanted information and did not come for it, I submit that he had only himself to blame.

21248. Of what date do you speak—in June?—I think it was in June. It seems to be assumed that there was a great deal of secret political intelligence which was within our knowledge and which was not within his, and which ought to have been imparted to him. That was not at all the case; everything that happened during the course of these negotiations appeared from day to day in the columns of the newspapers; there was really nothing that we could have imparted to him which he could not derive from the ordinary sources of information. He certainly had access to me, and as a matter of fact, he did on several occasions come to me at the War Office, although not often. He certainly had access to the Commander-in-Chief, and to the Intelligence Branch, and it is also to be remembered that Colonel Stopford, who was designated as his Military Secretary, was at the time in charge of the Mobilisation Department in the War Office. Sir Redvers Buller could certainly have found out through him what was happening in the War Office; but I am bound also to say this, that Sir Redvers Buller's position in the War Office, although he had ceased to be a member of the Headquarters Staff, was such that he really could have obtained from anybody anything he wanted in the way of assistance or information. He had been, as the Commission knows, for years in a quite exceptional position of authority in the War Office; he was Adjutant-General when the Duke of Cambridge was Commander-in-Chief, and at that time a great part of the work of the War Office was really conducted by Sir Redvers Buller, and by him alone. I say, having served in the War

Office with Sir Redvers Buller, and knowing his relations with the War Office staff, that there was not a room in the War Office that Sir Redvers Buller could not have walked into whenever he pleased with the certainty that whatever assistance he could get in that room would be given to him without demur. I have known Sir Redvers Buller for some time, and it never occurred to me that he was a particularly diffident person, or very easily intimidated, particularly by civilians. Therefore, if I may say so, coming back to a point which you mentioned just now, the suggestion that Sir Redvers Buller was, so to speak, boycotted at the War Office, and that it was because of that that he had to find out the Prime Minister's Private Secretary and appeal through him to the Prime Minister, seems to me to be a rather preposterous representation of the facts—I cannot put it more gently than that.

21249. As a matter of fact there was—and you have already referred to it—a Minute of his that went to the Prime Minister?—Yes, a Minute which might perfectly have been written earlier, and which might perfectly have been addressed to the Commander-in-Chief, or, if he preferred it, to me.

21250. Have you anything else to say with regard to that procedure?—No, I have not.

21251. At any rate there was no intention of yours to deny him any amount of your confidence?—I cannot put it too strongly that it was, not only far from my intentions, but I think it would have been a monstrous thing if, having invited Sir Redvers Buller to undertake this extremely important command, I, or anybody under me, had stopped short of giving him all the assistance that could possibly be afforded him. At any rate, if he believed that assistance of that kind was being withheld from him, I venture to suggest that he ought to have spoken or written to me, which he might have done at any moment during the summer.

21252. Was there any difficulty about officers appointed to Sir Redvers Buller's staff?—I noticed in the same summary of evidence, I think, a suggestion that officers were imposed upon Sir Redvers Buller. As to the selection of his staff, of course, the selection of the individual officers rests mainly with the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Secretary, and not with the Secretary of State for War; but I have excellent reasons for knowing that Sir Redvers Buller was freely consulted with regard to the composition of his staff. I say I have excellent reasons, because two years ago I became aware that this complaint was made that Sir Redvers Buller had not been sufficiently consulted about his staff. Now I had a very distinct recollection of an interview between Sir Redvers Buller and myself, in which the question of his staff was referred to, and his words, which I am sure I can quote with substantial accuracy, were that if he could not win with that staff he did not deserve to win. I did not, however, like to trust to my own recollection alone and I consulted Sir Coleridge Grove, who was Lord Wolseley's military secretary, on the point, and Sir Coleridge Grove supplied me with a memorandum which I propose to put in. It is not very long. Would you like to have it read?

21253. Perhaps, if you would not mind?—"Sir Redvers Buller was frequently consulted by the Commander-in-Chief as to the composition of the staff for South Africa and his wishes were always acceded to. I have heard Lord Wolseley say to him on several occasions that as he (Sir R. Buller) was to command the expedition, he should have on his staff any man he wanted. When the staff list was in a fairly advanced condition I gave Colonel Stopford a manuscript copy of it to take down with him to Aldershot, where he was going to stop with Sir R. Buller. Colonel Stopford was at that time designated as Sir R. Buller's military secretary, and I asked him to ascertain the latter's views on the composition of the staff. He brought me the list back with a few small changes and no more proposed. All these were carried out. Later on, when the list was practically complete and in print, I asked Sir R. Buller to come to my rooms here. He did so, and I gave him the full list asking him to look through it, and say whether he would like any changes, additions, or names removed. He took the paper to a standing desk in one of the windows and read it carefully through from end to end, taking some time in doing so. He then returned it to me, saying: 'Well, if I can't win with that staff I ought to be kicked.' After this he spent some time in my room going over the names and discussing the various qualifications and points of their owners. He also suggested one or two changes which were carried

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

See page 178,
col. 1, par. 4.

out. They were quite minor ones. It is true that Sir R. Buller interfered very little in the selection of the staff for South Africa. In the main he accepted the names proposed from here. But all that was being done was known to him, and he was told on several occasions that any wish of his with regard to the staff would be carried out. C. Grove, M.S., War Office, March 7th, 1900." So much as to the staff generally; but I notice that at page 13 of the summary which you were good enough to let me see he dwells particularly upon the manner in which Sir Charles Warren was imposed upon him. He says: "On that evening I debated with myself whether or not I should relieve Warren of his command; but the question was less simple than it appears at first sight. Had he been sent out to me on the same footing as any other officer I should not have hesitated, or rather I should never have entrusted him with this command at all; but he had been sent out to me as my appointed Second in Command and with orders from the Government that he should supersede Methuen; and though I had successfully combated this order as to Methuen another equally precise had been substituted for it—namely, that wherever employed General Warren should hold the position to which his rank entitled him. It is true that I disapproved of his first two days' work in the first command that he had ever held under me, but I did not think that this was sufficient justification for his removal in the face of the direct instructions which I had received from the Secretary of State for War." That is clearly a suggestion that the Secretary of State for War had imposed Sir Charles Warren upon Sir Redvers Buller, and that for that reason he (Sir Redvers Buller) was not at liberty to deal with Sir Charles in the same way as he might have dealt with other senior officers in his command. Now, I want to lay the facts before the Commission. Sir Charles Warren was sent out by Lord Wolseley as a Divisional Commander in charge of the 5th Division; subsequently to that it became clear that it was necessary to appoint a Second in Command to Sir Redvers Buller in case any misfortune should happen to him. We sent Sir Redvers Buller a telegram on the 30th November that the time had come for a decision as to the appointment of a Second in Command to himself, and that we inclined decidedly towards General Warren and we inquired what his present view was. We received a telegram dated 1st December, in which Sir Redvers Buller, after passing in review the qualifications of the different Generals ended by expressing his agreement in the appointment of Warren in the following words: "I therefore agree in the appointment of Warren." All I wanted to bring out was that there was no question of sending orders from home under which Warren was to be stereotyped in a particular position whether he did well or badly in that position.

21254. Is that all about that point of the officers?—That is all.

21255. Sir Redvers Buller has also stated that there was some interference from the War Office as to the disposition of the troops after he held the command?—That is a complete misapprehension; I would ask the Commission to consider some more of the telegrams which are in the collection which they possess. In the first place, at the outset and before Sir Redvers Buller had reached South Africa, we sent this telegram to the General Officer commanding in Natal, dated 27th October, 1899. "Please understand we expect you to act strictly in accordance with the military requirements of the situation. The Governor is within his right in directing your attention to political consequences of your arrangements, but the responsibility for the decision rests entirely with you. You may find steps necessary which may run counter to public opinion here and in the Colony, but we shall unhesitatingly support you in adhering to arrangements which seem to you militarily sound." I quote that because that telegram, which was sent with the approval of the Cabinet, shows that in our view military considerations were always to come first.

21256. That was to Sir George White?—Yes. At that time Sir Redvers Buller must have been on his way out.

21257. He arrived on the 31st October?—I think it is not unfair to suggest that that telegram, which contained a very important declaration of policy, would have been shown by Sir George White to Sir Redvers Buller on his arrival; I say that for what it is worth.

21258. Of course, Sir George White was in Natal when Sir Redvers Buller arrived at the Cape?—Yes, but it would have gone through the General Officer of Communications.

21259. He would have seen it?—I presume so. Then on the 31st October, Lord Wolseley, the Commander-in-Chief, telegraphed to Sir Redvers Buller as follows: "Issue to General White, who is now one of your Generals, whatever orders you may think best. White's telegrams lead me to fancy that he means to hold on and allow himself to be besieged in Ladysmith. Is he wise to do this, which will place all Natal at the enemy's mercy? I warned him before you left of what seemed to me the importance of Colenso, where I wish he was now with the river rising from the rains, but you are the best judge, and we all trust to your judgment." That was a personal telegram sent by Lord Wolseley, although with my knowledge, and I ask the Commission to observe that it was sent not by the civilians but by the Commander-in-Chief, and that even the Commander-in-Chief was ready to defer to Sir Redvers Buller's judgment upon all these questions of plans and military dispositions. On the 1st November another telegram was sent: "Secret. We are not in a position here to form adequate judgment of recent military operations. Please remember that you are absolutely responsible for the distribution of all subordinate commands, and that no consideration must be allowed to stand in the way of putting the most efficient men in places of the greatest difficulty." That telegram I should say was the outcome of a discussion in the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, and it was intended to strengthen Sir Redvers Buller's hand and make it absolutely clear to him that we should support him in appointing or removing his Generals according as he thought right. There are later telegrams from Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State, dated the 8th November, and from the Secretary of State to Sir Redvers Buller of the same date, showing the desire of the military authorities at home to be guided by Sir Redvers Buller as to all arrangements connected with appointments to high commands in South Africa. There is also the telegram of the 5th December, 38 E which points in the same direction. I now come to a telegram upon which I must dwell for a moment, namely, telegram No. 51, of the 14th December, from the Secretary of State to Sir Redvers Buller, running as follows: "Warren has been ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to proceed immediately upon landing to take command of Methuen's Force. The Commander-in-Chief considers it desirable to employ Methuen in future on lines of communication, but leaves his disposal to you." That is an extract. The Commission will observe that in this case the Commander-in-Chief did in a sense intervene, but of course at that moment Sir Redvers Buller's hands were fully occupied in Natal, and Lord Wolseley had probably as good an opportunity as Sir Redvers of judging of the fitness of the different commanders; but the importance of this telegram is this, that it is apparently upon that telegram and upon that telegram alone that Sir Redvers Buller has founded a complaint that he was interfered with from home in reference to his military dispositions in South Africa. The alleged act of interference is described in page 9 of the summary. It is there stated that the Government had already ordered the Fifth Division to Modder River and the same theory is developed in the answer to 15,328, in which the witness expresses his opinion that "the Government, in the shape of the Secretary of State for War, was committed to having recommended and enforced upon me—in fact ordered upon me—a policy which entailed sending that division to Kimberley and I had to overcome that. I was in the position of a man who had never been consulted at all, whose advice had never been taken and whose advice usually had been rather curdly, not very politely refused." Now, as to the general statement of want of courtesy and curt refusals, I decline to go into that unless I am supplied with specific instances of such treatment. Here, however, a specific instance is alleged, and it is, so far as I am aware, the only attempt made to support the charge. Now, the facts as to the Fifth Division are these: The Fifth Division was on its way to South Africa, and I say positively that it was not earmarked for service in Cape Colony or elsewhere. It was at the disposal of the General Officer in Command, and General Buller himself without any pressure from anybody, evidently contemplated employing that Division in Cape Colony, because in his telegram of 11th December, 1899, he makes this remark: "Further I have always looked forward to employing

the Fifth Division in the midland districts." Then came the Battle of Magersfontein, and the decision that General Warren should replace Lord Methuen, and apparently Sir Redvers Buller seems to have assumed that because Sir Charles Warren had been directed to take over the command from Lord Methuen, the Fifth Division was therefore necessarily to be tied to Sir Charles Warren, and to be employed whether or not upon the Kimberley line, and Sir Redvers Buller's suggestion is that after the reverse at Spion Kop, when he stood urgently in need of troops, it was necessary for him to force the hand of His Majesty's Government by the somewhat clumsy threat that he would be obliged to let Ladysmith go unless he was allowed to get the Fifth Division. We never intended to prevent him from using the Fifth Division as he might think best. So far as I am aware that is the solitary case which he is able to put forward in support of the extraordinary statement which he made to the Commission.

21260. (*Viscount Esher.*) With regard to those last words you read of his in which he says that his advice has usually been rather curtly and not very politely refused, does that collection of telegrams you have been reading from contain, as far as you know, all the telegrams which passed between you and Sir Redvers Buller?—I believe it to be a complete collection.

21261. (*Chairman.*) I find in that collection telegram No. 60 from the General Officer in Command at the Cape, Sir Forestier Walker. He advised you on the 16th December that it was intended that "the 10th Brigade and divisional troops of the 5th Division shall be assembled at Orange River, and 11th Brigade at De Aar Junction. Then the former march and the latter rail to Modder River to join Methuen, whence relief of Kimberley will be proceeded with under Warren's orders"; but it does not appear, as far as we have been able to ascertain, who intended that. It is intended; but we have not been able to discover any evidence, at any rate, that it was intended from home?—No evidence at all. I suggest it was the intention of the local military authorities, and from a telegram I read a moment ago it is pretty clear that was Sir Redvers Buller's own intention.

21262. There is a telegram, No. 67, which rather bears out that view, from Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State, dated December 18th:—"As to your telegram No. 56, the directions which it contained had already been given, but after receiving your No. 53 I ordered the 5th Division (less two battalions urgently required at De Aar Junction) to Natal"; so that he seems to have had the whole division in his hands at that time?—Yes. My case is that from first to last he was master of the Fifth Division, and could employ it where he considered it most advantageous to employ it, and if, as seems to be the case, that is the only instance in which interference from home is alleged, the charge breaks down altogether.

21263. Is that all that is necessary to be said on that subject?—Yes.

21264. Do you wish to say anything about the circumstances under which Sir William Butler resigned?—I do not know that I think it particularly material that I should. I presume you have had evidence, but if the Commission desire to hear my explanation I can give it in the fewest possible words. I shall once more, if I may, quote a document. In that document I referred to the unfortunate relations which have lately existed between Sir Alfred Milner, High Commissioner of South Africa, and Sir William Butler, General Officer in Command there. I stated that I had now received from Sir William Butler an official letter explaining his conduct, and ending as follows:—"As the result of an interview which I had with Sir Alfred Milner to-day, has left little doubt on my mind that my presence in command here has been an increasing source of embarrassment to him, or of hindrance to the prosecution of his views, I have, in consequence, lost no time in adopting the only course which appears possible under the circumstances. I am prepared to place in your hands the resignation of my present appointment to be dealt with as you may think fit." I expressed the opinion that it would be desirable to accept this resignation. I said that I did not doubt Sir William Butler's sincerity, nor dispute his right to hold his own opinions with regard to questions of South African policy, but it appeared to me that at such a crisis it was absolutely necessary that the High Commissioner and the General Officer in Command should be on terms of mutual confidence and that their relations should be known to be of a cordial

character. This, unfortunately, could not be said of Sir Alfred Milner and Sir William Butler. It was notorious that they disagreed, and, in my opinion, the ill-assorted union should be terminated as soon as possible. In these circumstances, the Commander-in-Chief had proposed, with my approval, that Sir William Butler should be appointed to the command at Plymouth, then held by General Sir F. Forestier-Walker, and that Sir F. Forestier-Walker should be appointed General in Command in South Africa. That really contains the whole story.

21265. Some questions have been asked as to the occupation of Ladysmith?—The history of the occupation of Ladysmith is briefly this:—On the 22nd April, 1897, we decided to add a battalion of foot and three batteries of field artillery to the garrison of Natal. Upon this the General Officer commanding in South Africa—General Goodenough then—telegraphed as follows:—"Recommend locating 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, three Batteries of Artillery and 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers at Ladysmith under canvas. Preferable to Maritzburg which is crowded already. Will you sanction occupying the new station? High Commissioner concurs." That telegram was referred to the then Adjutant-General, Sir Redvers Buller, and the then Quartermaster-General Sir Evelyn Wood, who concurred in the proposal, and on the next day a telegram was sent to the General Officer commanding in South Africa in these words "Ladysmith approved as new station." I feel no doubt that Ladysmith was chosen as a new station simply because it was supposed to be a fairly healthy place and because the other places were crowded and there was no accommodation, but it is my belief that at that time the question of regarding Ladysmith as a *place d'armes* was not at all taken into consideration; at any rate it was not so represented to me.

21266. Were you not aware of the local schemes of defence which were drawn up by the officers in South Africa?—To some extent, but they were very technical military matters, which interested me, but I could express no opinion as to their merits.

21267. I think all of them provided for Ladysmith being a station for a certain part of the garrison of Natal?—A station; but I think in most of those schemes it was contemplated that the troops should be placed in advanced positions ahead of Ladysmith. Lord Wolseley, for example, contemplated, as you know, holding the northern triangle of Natal. Ladysmith might then have remained simply as a station behind those advanced positions.

21268. I think my impression from the evidence is that Ladysmith was the main position; there were posts in advance, Dundee and so on, but Ladysmith, in the schemes, was designated for practically the garrison that was there before the outbreak of the war?—It was designated as the station at which that garrison should be quartered; but my point was that I doubted whether it had been regarded from the point of view of its suitability as a defensive position.

21269. Was it not also designated as a place where stores were to be accumulated?—Certainly; the stores were, in fact, as you know, accumulated there.

21270. On the ground that it was a great railway junction. Was that one of the grounds on which it was occupied?—I think so.

21271. The account you have given us is your understanding of the way in which the matter came about?—Quite so.

21272. It came from an officer in Natal, and was approved in the War Office by your military advisers?—Yes.

21273. You did not mention the Commander-in-Chief; did he concur?—It went to the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General; I do not know whether it went to the Commander-in-Chief at the time or not.

21274. But it was occupied then with your approval?—Whether the matter ever came before me I do not know, but if it had come before me with the imprimatur of the Quartermaster-General and the Adjutant-General I should have accepted it as a matter of course, and I should not have considered it my business to find out whether the place was or was not suited for defensive purposes.

21275. You did not hear whether it was the intention of those who advised you that in the event of the invasion of Natal there should be a withdrawal from

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.F.

26 Mar. 1903

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K. G., P. C.,
G. C. S. I.,
G. C. M. G.,
G. C. I. E.

26 Mar. 1903.

Ladysmith behind the Tugela?—I never heard that idea mentioned until late in the day, by which time I conceive that we were so deeply committed to Ladysmith that a withdrawal would have been almost impossible. I know the Commander-in-Chief did consider that matter, and would have been much happier if we could have withdrawn behind the Tugela, but the immense accumulation of stores at Ladysmith I imagine rendered that out of the question.

21276. I have before me an answer given by Sir John Ardagh. He was asked: "But there was a large collection of stores, and as it turned out it was necessary to defend it in order to preserve the stores," and the answer was: "Our idea at home was that the stores would be withdrawn to a defensible position, which from our point of view would naturally have been the line of the Tugela. (Q) That was your distinct idea at home? (A) Yes."?—Did you ask Sir John Ardagh when that idea was formed?

21277. He was speaking of the time at which Ladysmith assumed the position it afterwards occupied in the schemes, to which he answered: "After the Jameson Raid it began to be more looked into, and it gradually developed into a fairly large cantonment"?—I cannot help thinking that if there had been anywhere on record a military proposal to the effect that whenever hostilities became imminent the stores should be withdrawn from Ladysmith, there would have been some trace of it, and we should have heard of it.

See Q 5066.

21278. He was asked, "Was that formulated in any way?" and the answer was, "I have no doubt it will be found in the various minor reports about defensive positions, and the places to be occupied in the event of operations coming down towards Ladysmith"?—I am afraid I cannot answer for what may be found in the minor reports.

21279. Is that all you wish to say about Ladysmith?—Yes.

21280. We had some evidence from Sir Henry Brackenbury with regard to a Report on Deficiencies in Reserves in 1899?—The war undoubtedly brought to light a very serious deficiency in our reserves of stores, and I put in a Memorandum which I prepared on the subject at the time.

MEMORANDUM OF MAY 21ST, 1900, BY THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE WITH REGARD TO RESERVES OF ARMAMENT AND MILITARY STORES.

Being dissatisfied with the condition of the Ordnance Department, I appointed as Director-General, in the beginning of 1899, Sir Henry Brackenbury, of whose administrative capacity I had had opportunities of judging while he was my colleague in India. Sir Henry addressed himself at once to the task of inquiring into the condition of our armaments and reserves of guns, ammunition, stores and clothing. Before he had completed his investigation the war broke out, and brought to light the melancholy extent of our deficiencies.

In December 1899 he made his Report, and laid before me proposals for remedying a condition of things which he correctly described as full of peril to the Empire.

* The Report placed upon record the following facts:—

We had a quite insufficient reserve of Horse and Field Artillery *matériel*; only one battery of Horse Artillery, and that converted to an experimental quick-firing system; and only eleven batteries of Field Artillery, of which two had been converted to an experimental system. Five of these were soon after sent to South Africa, and three were required for newly-raised batteries, leaving at one time only one reserve battery in the country.

The whole of our stock of field gun ammunition (500 rounds per gun) was absorbed by demands from South Africa at a very early stage in the war, and we had to borrow from India and from the navy to keep up the supply demanded.

We had only 500 sets of harness and 500 sets of cavalry saddlery in reserve, and had to send more than that number of each to South Africa to make good losses in the first two months of the war. We had only 500 sets of Mounted Infantry saddlery in reserve, and had at once to order 11,500 sets to equip the force for South Africa, being forced to have recourse to the American market to obtain them.

We sent to South Africa in the first two months of the war a third of our store of small-arm ammunition, and dispatched weekly 500,000 more rounds than the

whole manufacturing power of the country could produce.

We at once exhausted our reserve of infantry accoutrements, we had to borrow large guns from the navy, machine guns from fortresses, boots and helmets from India, to buy 25,000 sets of mule harness, 17,000 tents, and 900 marquees.

We had no reserve of hospital equipment; we had but one-fiftieth of the picketing gear required in South Africa, and a reserve of only eighty swords.

The greater part of the armament of our fortresses being obsolete, its replacement by more modern guns had been approved. At the beginning of the war there was a small and quite inadequate reserve of spare B.L. guns; there were no spare Q.F. guns. The ammunition stored only amounted to 200 rounds a-gun abroad and 100 rounds a-gun at home. The reserve was insignificant.

There was an urgent need of further storage accommodation; the Ordnance Store buildings could barely hold the inadequate stocks in existence at the time, and there was no sufficient reserve of power of output of military stores in the country.

The whole of the firms manufacturing war *matériel* in the country have, indeed, been, during the war, employed to the fullest capacity, and the Ordnance Factories have worked night and day and on Sundays. All naval orders in the Laboratory and Carriage Department had, for a time, to be put aside.

It is, I think, abundantly clear, from Sir H. Brackenbury's Report, that we were not sufficiently prepared even for the equipment of the comparatively small force which we had always contemplated might be employed beyond the limits of this country in the initial stages of a campaign. For the much larger force which we have actually found it necessary to employ our resources were absolutely and miserably inadequate. The result has been that the Department, even by working under conditions which have nearly led to a breakdown, has been barely able to keep pace with the requirements of the army. We had at the outset of the campaign to send troops abroad, insufficiently supplied with clothes and equipment, and if we have been able to overtake arrears, it has only been by relaxing our specifications, and by paying extravagant rates. If other complications had supervened, a catastrophe would have been inevitable.

The condition of things disclosed by Sir H. Brackenbury's Report was so grave that I at once referred it to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, by which it was considered at meetings held during the month of January. The Chancellor of the Exchequer urged, and I thought most reasonably, that we ought not to accept proposals involving an expenditure of many millions upon the representation of a single official of the War Office. We accordingly decided to appoint a Departmental Committee, consisting of Sir Francis Mowatt, Mr. George Wyndham, and Mr. E. Grant Burls, of the India Office, to examine Sir Henry Brackenbury's proposals, while a second Committee, consisting of Sir Robert Grant, lately Inspector-General of Fortifications; Admiral Custance, Director of Naval Intelligence; and Colonel Walford, of the Royal Artillery, was appointed to examine specially two of the questions which had been raised, viz:—

1. The percentage of guns and mountings which should be held as reserves for the approved fortress armaments; and

2. The armament of the defences of the land fronts of fortresses at home and abroad, for which no provision has been made in the re-armament scheme accepted in 1899.

Sir Francis Mowatt's Committee reported on the 31st March, and Sir Robert Grant's Committee on the 26th February.

The following is a summary of the expenditure recommended by the first-named Committee:—

	£	£
(A.)—Reserves of guns and mountings for coast batteries (on a basis of 1 gun in reserve for every 10 mounted)	499,980	
Ammunition for ditto	1,289,876	
		1,789,856
(C.)—Reserves of guns, &c., for Horse and Field Artillery (on a basis of 25 per cent. reserve) and completion of siege train	1,475,351	

* Note.—It was arranged when Lord Lansdowne gave evidence that his memorandum should be printed, and that the Commission should subsequently decide to what extent it should be finally left for publication.—B. H. H.

(D.)—Reserve of machine guns and carriages (on a basis of 25 per cent. reserve) ...	£	£
(E.)—Reserves of general stores, including a sufficient stock to maintain a force of three army corps, one cavalry division, and lines of communication (about 135,000 men) in the field for six months, besides special reserves of particular stores ...	76,260	
(F.)—Reserves of clothing calculated upon the assumption that we should have—		
1. A sufficient quantity to supply to the whole of the force above specified the equipment (fighting dress) which it would require on mobilization.		
2. A moderate reserve to be sent out with the field force.		
3. A working margin equal to six months' requirements	932,000	
(G.)—Increase to plant and buildings of ordnance factories ...	366,100	
(H.)—Additional storage accommodation ...	500,000	
		4,692,711
Total ...		6,482,567

The recommendation (A) above is calculated on the basis of a 10 per cent. reserve; this percentage was given to the Committee as a provisional basis of calculation, while its sufficiency was referred to Sir R. Grant's Committee for consideration.

Sir R. Grant's Committee recommended—

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 1. The adoption of a basis of one gun in reserve for every four mounted abroad, and of one gun in reserve for every six mounted at home. The substitution of this percentage for that which forms the basis of (A) in the recommendations of Sir F. Mowatt's Committee involves an additional expenditure of ... | £ | 1,124,134 |
| 2. The provision of movable armaments for land fronts of fortresses, at a cost of ... | | 1,586,338 |

In addition to the above, a sum of £3,552,965 will have to be spent during the next three and a-half years on the completion of the coast defences, in accordance with the scheme approved by the Cabinet in 1899. It was at first intended that guns and works were to be provided (the former out of Estimates) during the seven years following the approval of the programme. It was decided by the Defence Committee of the Cabinet in January that both are to be provided as rapidly as possible. This expenditure has been agreed to by the Treasury.

There has been a considerable amount of official and unofficial discussion between the Treasury and the War Office with regard to the above proposals. At present the situation is as follows:—

The Treasury insists upon the following terms—

(E.)—The demand for £1,343,000 for reserves of general stores is not to be pressed, but £500,000 is to be placed at the disposal of the War Office.

(F.)—In regard to clothing, the Treasury refuses altogether to sanction the demand for a six months' working margin of stock, and will agree to the remainder of the proposal only when the War Office is able to show that an improved system of clothing has been actually adopted for the army.

In regard to the recommendations of the Grant Committee—

1. The proposal to provide reserves of guns and mountings for coast batteries on the higher scale recommended, involving an expenditure of £1,124,134, is altogether refused.

2. The Treasury refuse to agree to the proposal that £1,586,338 should be spent upon the movable armaments of the land fronts, but have expressed their readiness to consider favourably the provision of new armament for a few of the more important fortresses abroad.

If the War Office will accept the above terms the Treasury will, it is understood, accept the remainder of the proposals with a few reservations on minor points. If the War Office declines, the Treasury withdraws its concessions.

While I am anxious to meet the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I must urge that his proposals, if adopted, would seriously hamper us in giving effect to what I understand to be the policy of the Cabinet—

As to stores, we have decided that our military preparations are to be based upon the assumption that we have three army corps and a cavalry division, with troops for lines of communication, at our disposal. Our equipment and reserves of guns and ammunition are to be provided upon this assumption, and it would, to my mind, be out of the question that our reserves of stores, which are as indispensable to an army in the field as any other part of its equipment, should not be provided upon the same basis.

In regard to the reserves of clothing, our demands are, in my belief, only reasonable. A Committee, to which the question of the clothing of the army has been referred, has lately reported, and has recommended a simpler and more practical system, based on the principle that there should be only two styles of dress in the British army, viz.:—

(a) Full dress.

(b) The fighting and working dress.

This principle has been accepted by the military heads of the War Office, and I have no objection to announce it in general terms. This ought, in my opinion, to be a sufficient guarantee to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. All that we propose is, that we should always have in stock the whole of the clothing indispensable as a first outfit for the approved field force; that we should also have a moderate reserve which would be sent out to the base of operations on the outbreak of hostilities, and that we should have, in addition to the above, a six months' working margin of stock in store at home. Without such a working margin we should, on the commencement of hostilities, be subjected to a repetition of the same pressure which has so nearly led to a breakdown during the present war.

As to the recommendation in favour of a more liberal scale of reserves of guns, I have only to say that it was decided by the Defence Committee to have recourse to expert advice, and that, in the judgment of Sir R. Grant and his colleague, a reserve of less than one gun to four abroad and one to six at home would not be consistent with safety.

With regard to the defences of the land fronts, the Grant Committee has recommended the provision of 610 guns of modern type, to replace 1,196 guns of various obsolete types.

The Committee was instructed to consider particularly the nature of the attack which was to be anticipated in the case of each fortress, and, in all cases where schemes of defence already approved had been based upon the assumption that the fortress was exposed to attack of a particular nature, was to base its recommendations upon the same assumptions. The armament proposed by the Committee is considerably below that proposed by the Director-General of Ordnance.

It has been suggested that as we have retained some guns of old types for sea defences, so we should retain for the defence of the land fronts a certain number of old-fashioned guns. The answer to this is that, when we are concerned with the land fronts, it is not a question of defending narrow channels, but of placing in the field movable guns whose effective range should be at least equal to that of any guns which are likely to be opposed to them. The proposal of the Treasury would oblige us to leave the whole of the land fronts of our home fortresses undefended except by guns of an obsolete pattern, while abroad such places as the Cape, Hong Kong, and Mauritius would have nothing but their present inadequate armament. We shall, I think, incur a very serious responsibility if we neglect what seems to me to be an ordinary measure of precaution in regard to fortresses and coaling stations of such importance.

With regard to the question of reserves generally, I urge strongly that we decide once and for all to place the Ordnance Department upon a business footing. No large purveyor of commodities could carry on without a stock sufficient to meet promptly the urgent demands of his customers. We have attempted to conduct a huge business literally from hand to mouth. We ought to decide now to create reserves sufficiently large to enable us to meet the initial pressure of a campaign, and the War Office should be authorized to replenish those reserves without special instructions whenever they have been encroached

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

26 Mar. 1903.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.
6 Mar. 1903.

upon.* This is the Indian system, and it works well. A similar system, I believe, prevails in the navy. Unless we do the same here, we shall one of these days have a disastrous breakdown. It is no exaggeration to say that if we had this year been involved in hostilities by sea as well as by land such a breakdown would have occurred. As it is, the Admiralty has complained bitterly that we had to neglect its requirements because we could not afford to neglect those of the South African Army.

I am not asking to be given the whole of these large sums at once, but I do ask for the acceptance of the policy, for authority to issue the necessary orders, and for an assurance that the necessary sums will be forthcoming when the material is ready, which we hope will be within the next three years.

A mere payment on account without the acceptance of the policy will leave us still on the old hand-to-mouth basis.

(Initialled) L

May 21, 1900.

It will, of course, be remembered that in our former military schemes we never contemplated anything beyond sending two Army Corps out of the country, and obviously the military operations, on the scale to which they developed almost at the outset of the campaign, were bound to eviscerate our reserves, such as they were; but, irrespective of that, I do not think the question of reserves had been sufficiently considered as distinct from equipment. You want to have with each of your units a certain equipment, and you ought also to have behind that a certain reserve with which to make good the wear and tear of that equipment. The point was taken up by Sir Henry Brackenbury, whose evidence you have received. Sir Henry Brackenbury entered the War Office in February, 1899. I formed a very high opinion indeed of his ability during his service as a Military Member of the Council in India, and I was particularly anxious that he should come into the War Office, and take charge of the Ordnance Department. He did so, and addressed himself to this question of reserves, but during the first months of his tenure of office both his time and mine were very fully taken up; we had at the moment a large scheme in progress for the rearmament of our fortresses. It had been impressed upon me during the previous year and before that that a great part of the armament of those fortresses was of a most obsolete character, and that a very large outlay was necessary in order to replace these old-fashioned guns by modern guns of the best type, that was, of course, a scheme which could not be carried out without passing in review the armament of all these different fortresses, and considering whether it was or was not excessive, whether it was suited to the present requirements. I mention that to show that, irrespective of the immense pressure on the Ordnance Department, which was due to the war during the earlier part of 1899, Sir Henry Brackenbury's hands were very full with this armament scheme, and he was therefore not able to advise me with regard to the question of reserves until the end of the year 1899, when he laid certain conclusions before me which showed that we had a very serious void to fill up. That matter was at once taken up by Government, it was considered by the Defence Committee, and it was considered by the Cabinet. The Commissioners are aware of the manner in which General Brackenbury's proposals were dealt with by the Mowatt Committee and Sir Robert Grant's Committee, the result of those two inquiries being that an expenditure of about 10½ millions out of 11½ millions recommended by Sir Henry Brackenbury was authorised.

21281. I think that it is not the case that this deficiency in stores was only brought to light by the war: you were dissatisfied with the matter before the appointment of Sir Henry Brackenbury?—I was convinced that the whole question of the Ordnance Department wanted a thorough overhauling and I brought in General Brackenbury, with the Commander-in-Chief's entire concurrence, as the man above all others who was best fitted to set matters in order.

21282. And do you think that deficiency of stores had been of long standing?—I think so. I think we were probably—as I believe Lord Wolseley said in a memorandum I quoted—better found at the beginning of the late war than we had ever been found before, but that does not prove we had enough.

21283. Is not that a fact that ought to have been brought before the Secretary of State of the day?—All these things mean an enormous expenditure of money, and if the Commission will consider the large expenditure that was incurred during the five years I was at the War Office I think they will understand that we could not do everything at once.

21284. I mean, without any reflection on individuals, the system ought to have provided, and ought to provide in future, that a deficiency in stores to the serious extent that was brought out by Sir Henry Brackenbury's inquiry should not occur?—I do not disagree.

21285. The system had not provided against that contingency as it stood in 1899?—I am not sure that I should admit that it was the system that was at fault.

21286. What was, then?—The personal element enters into all those things; you may have a head of a department who is easy-going and does not like putting forward proposals for the expenditure of millions when he knows there are other demands for the expenditure of other millions in front of him.

21287. But, in order that we may have the Army well found, we ought to have a system which, as far as possible, will eliminate the personal element.

(Sir John Jackson.) Who preceded Sir Henry Brackenbury?—General Markham. In regard to the question of our shortcomings in the matter of fortress armament, there was no fault, either personally or in the system; that was brought before us, and we were aware of it before General Brackenbury came to the Office. What happened when he arrived at the Office is that we accelerated the arrangements for making good the deficiency.

21288. (Chairman.) And the Commander-in-Chief agreed in the proposal that came from Sir Henry Brackenbury's enquiry?—He was certainly aware of it and concurred in it. The matter was one which concerned the Director-General of Ordnance more immediately than it concerned the Commander-in-Chief, but I see that after the Report of the Mowatt Committee I authorized a draft letter to the Treasury recommending certain proposals for adoption, and that I minuted that paper "to be seen by the Commander-in-Chief," and it was marked by one of the Commander-in-Chief's staff on the 28th of April as "seen by the Commander-in-Chief." I also find in the Records of the Army Board that on the 18th June the Director-General of Ordnance made a statement on this subject to the Army Board, the Commander-in-Chief being present, and the Board noted with satisfaction the large expenditure which had been authorised by His Majesty's Government, so that I think you may say that the Commander-in-Chief was sufficiently consulted.

* To use the words of Sir F. Mowatt's Report, the necessary reserves should be "permanently maintained and any stores withdrawn for service immediately and automatically replaced."

FIFTY-THIRD DAY.

Friday, 27th March 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
 The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
 ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
 The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
 GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
 Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
 Sir JOHN EDGE.
 Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq., *Secretary*.

The Right Hon. the MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., recalled, and further
 examined.

(In Appendices B. and D. to the Report Volume will be found all the Documents referred to in Lord Lansdowne's
 Evidence)

The Right
 Hon. the
 Marquis of
 Lansdowne
 K.G., P.C.
 G.C.S.I.,
 G.C.M.G.,
 G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

21289. (*Chairman*.) I believe you would like before we proceed to supplement a little what you said about the Intelligence Division Papers, and in that connection may I draw your attention to a correspondence with which we have been furnished between the Colonial Office and War Office in 1897, in which Mr. Chamberlain acknowledges having seen those papers which had been communicated to him by the Intelligence Division, and the War Office on the 29th April went into detail in the matter?—I am very glad you give me the opportunity of adding something to what I said yesterday upon the subject of those papers. I believe that the first statement I made was that the little buff book entitled "Notes on the Two Republics" had come into my hands, I thought, in 1899, and in consequence of a request I had made to be supplied with it, but I am anxious to avoid leaving the Commission under the impression that the documents upon which that collection of notes was founded were unknown to me until 1899. When they first became known to me—because, as you remember, they are documents of different dates—I cannot tax my memory to say, but I think it quite possible, considering my intimate relations with Sir John Ardagh, of which I spoke yesterday, that soon after they were written they were informally made known to me; some, at any rate, of them may have been. What I wished to convey to the Commission was this, that those documents were never put before me by the Commander-in-Chief as a justification of a demand for important measures designed to strengthen our position in South Africa. That was the object of my statement, and, indeed, as far as my memory serves me I cannot recollect any formal demand for precautionary measures of such a kind between Lord Wolseley's proposals, which were embodied in his minute of 1896, and his big demand which was put in the minute of June, 1899. I do not think there was anything between the two. With regard to the earlier of those demands, the Commission will notice that what Lord Wolseley then asked for was that the force in South Africa should be increased by one regiment of cavalry, one battery of artillery, and two battalions of infantry. Now, as a matter of fact, between 1896 and 1899 the garrison of South Africa was increased by one regiment of cavalry, as proposed by Lord Wolseley, by three batteries of artillery, instead of one battery of artillery, as proposed by Lord Wolseley, and by four battalions of Infantry, instead of two battalions of infantry, as proposed by Lord Wolseley. I cannot give the Commission the precise date of those additions, but I think I may say that they must have taken place in 1897 and 1898, and they, therefore, show that, as you suggested just now in your question, the condition of affairs in South Africa was present to the mind of Her Majesty's Government.

(*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) It might be as well to have on the notes the exact figures which I have got here. On the 1st December, 1896, there were 5,409 men in South Africa; on the 1st June, 1897, there were 8,154; on the 1st December, 1897, there were 9,593; on the 1st June, 1898, there were 9,036; on the 1st December, 1898, there were 8,456; on the 1st June, 1899, there were 10,289; and on the 1st October there were 22,104.

21290. (*Chairman*.) About this correspondence with

the Colonial Office, have you that at all in your recollection?—Not the details of it; but I do remember there was a correspondence, and that there were discussions in the Cabinet.

21291. The correspondence to which I allude proceeded on the fact that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had seen the papers in the Intelligence Division, which therefore must have been those first on the series, those of 1896, because this is in 1897, and on April 14, 1897, Mr. Graham, the Under Secretary, wrote that he was directed by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain to request that he would draw the particular attention of the Marquess of Lansdowne to reports furnished to this department from time to time by the Director of Military Intelligence, and especially to the letters from Major Altham and Major Northcote, of the 8th and 16th March; and your reply on the 29th April is in detail here, but it goes on this preface that "Lord Lansdowne takes note of Mr. Chamberlain's statement that in view of the enormous and continued military preparations of the Transvaal Government he cannot conceal from himself the possibility that the latter, feeling themselves in a position of strength, and knowing that the British possessions in South Africa are comparatively defenceless against an attack from that side, may allow themselves to be carried away by the more reckless of their advisers, and take some step which Her Majesty's Government could not overlook, or even go so far as to initiate aggressive action." Did not that point at larger preparations being made than those which you have mentioned just now?—I should have thought that passage pointed rather to raids perhaps on a considerable scale, than to an invasion in force; but, at any rate, the outcome of those discussions was the gradual increase of the garrison to which reference has just been made.

21292. I see that at the end of Sir Ralph Knox's letter the opinion of the War Department was summed up in this way, "that it is accordingly intended to send at once to South Africa three batteries of field artillery, and an additional battalion of infantry will also be sent," and the cost was stated at £200,000?—That is one of the increases of which I spoke just now.

21293. Do you think that that increase met the representation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies at that time?—We thought so at the time.

21294-5. The Secretary of State for the Colonies accepted that, and did not ask for any more?—I do not think so. In the same letter you discussed the force which was at first applied for by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which would have consisted of three regiments of cavalry and two batteries of artillery, and the estimated cost would have been £500,000; your letter argued for a reduction to the amounts I have previously stated.

21296. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) After consultation with your colleagues?—Yes, the thing came before the Cabinet, and was discussed with that result.

21297. (*Chairman*.) With the outcome that it was reduced from what had been proposed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the amounts which were actually sent?—Yes

The Right
Hon. the
Marquis of
Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903

21298. (*Viscount Esher.*) On what do you suppose the Secretary of State for the Colonies based that demand which the Chairman has just read out for a specific number of troops?—It is very hard for me to say, but the question, as I said just now, came before the Cabinet, and the decision of the Cabinet for which the whole Cabinet is responsible, was that the smaller force should be sent.

21299. (*Chairman.*) Looking back on the correspondence, I think, from the previous letter, on the 5th April, it quite clear that Mr. Chamberlain's observations were based on the Intelligence Division's papers, and on the perusal of General Goodenough's despatch of the 13th December, 1896?—No doubt.

21300. You do not want to say anything more on that subject?—Not on that subject, but may I add one word on another matter which was mentioned yesterday? I was asked, I think, by yourself, Lord Elgin, why it was that as the five years franchise proposal was withdrawn by the Transvaal Government on the 5th September, when the Cabinet met on the 8th September, we only sent out a reinforcement of 10,000 men, and why we did not at once put in hand the preparations for the despatch of a larger force. I have looked at my papers since I was in this room, and although I have not got the Blue Books of the time by me, I think it is clear that the reason the larger measure was deferred was because the withdrawal of the five years franchise proposal did not terminate the negotiations. A despatch was written in reply to that withdrawal; there was a question even then whether there should not be a conference, and, as a matter of fact, the negotiations did continue for some days afterwards, and it was only when the negotiations had clearly fallen through that we decided to spend a very large sum of money—I think something in the neighbourhood of £600,000—in preparations for the larger force. You will see that on the 16th September the reply of the South African Republic Government was handed in to the British Agent at Pretoria, stating willingness to enter upon a conference provided acceptance is not made dependent upon impossible conditions. I think the date of the actual breaking-off was September the 22nd, when Mr. Chamberlain sent a telegram to Sir Alfred Milner noting the negative reply of the South African Republic Government, and stating that a further communication would be made.

21301. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I think there was a despatch sent on the 8th September, the last paragraph of which is very clearly in my mind, by which the Government withdrew all their previous offers and said they were prepared to formulate their own policy?—That is quite right; on the 8th September a reply was sent intimating that Her Majesty's Government adhered to their previous decision, and that if the South African Republic Government's reply is negative or inconclusive they must preserve the right to reconsider the position *de novo* and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement. I think that must be the paper you have in your mind.

21302. That is why I asked the question yesterday, because reserving the right to reconsider the position *de novo* and to formulate your own policy does imply the breaking off of the former negotiations?—It was a plain intimation that they had arrived at the end of their tether, but there was a *locus penitentiae* left.

21303. I quite understand that; still, it was an intimation that they had arrived at the end of their tether?—As I think I said yesterday, the reason—at any rate, one of the reasons—for which we limited ourselves to sending out a reinforcement of 10,000 men was because we believed that that reinforcement was sufficient to secure the safety of the Colonies.

21304. (*Chairman.*) And, further than that, that the political considerations still were in favour of your not doing anything to make an absolute break with the two Republics?—And absolutely shipwreck the last hope of a settlement being arrived at.

21305. We had got yesterday to the point at which you wished to mention the minutes which the Commander-in-Chief has put in, showing that he on several occasions proposed increases in the Army, and that those increases were not complied with?—I do not know to what extent the Commission would like me to go into these matters; if they are to be gone into minutely I am afraid it will be rather a long story, and I am disposed to put it to the Commission rather upon broad and general lines. The first of that series of minutes of Lord Wolseley is one dated 22nd February, 1896, con-

taining, as the Commission knows, very large demands indeed involving an immense expense. Now Lord Wolseley and I had taken office a few months before, and we had not very much time for taking stock of what we found at the War Office. At the date when Lord Wolseley's minute was put in the Estimates for the year had already been framed, and I think it must be quite evident that proposals so extensive as those of the Commander-in-Chief could not possibly be accepted without careful scrutiny and examination, not only by the Departments, particularly the Financial Department of the War Office, but by the Government as a whole. I am anxious, however, that the Commission should understand that, far from brushing Lord Wolseley's proposals summarily on one side, they were treated with the utmost attention, and I have here two or three minutes of my own dealing very fully with Lord Wolseley's proposals, and I should like to put those in. I have not put them in yet.

21306. Are they not those we have already?—No; I can give you, in a very few words, the essence of them, and then I think it will be for the Commission to consider whether they might not be printed in connection with Lord Wolseley's minutes. I see, for example, that in my first minute dated 10th July, 1896, I pointed out that the initial expenditure involved by the Commander-in-Chief's proposal amounted to two millions sterling; that in addition there would be a normal increase of the Estimates of £900,000 a year, an increase which in course of time would rise to £1,175,000 a year; and I said I could not lay before the Cabinet so vast a scheme until the necessity for the whole of the proposed expenditure had been demonstrated. Then I went on to pass the different proposals—which, of course, in the meanwhile had been examined in the Finance Department of the War Office and in the different Departments concerned—in review, and at the end of the minute, paragraph 20, I summarised the points upon which I asked for further explanation. If I may go back for one moment to Lord Wolseley's own minute, I should like to point out that he had apparently admitted that he had not taken into consideration the financial aspects of these questions, because he says that "while he trusts it will not be supposed he is blind to the desirability of the most rigid economy, the main lines upon which our Army should be constituted must be framed on other considerations than those of finance." Of course, we, who have to watch over the expenditure, have perhaps to give more consideration to the financial aspects of these matters than our military advisers. However, Lord Wolseley went on in paragraph 31 to say, "I am aware that it may not be in the power of the Government to give, at all events, at once the whole of what I press for," but he asks that his proposals should be accepted as the basis and essence of our military administration. I think that shows Lord Wolseley himself realised that his scheme was a basis for discussion, and that he himself did not expect that the whole of what he asked for was likely to be granted in the immediate future. After that Lord Wolseley's proposals were examined by the Colonial Defence Committee with regard to that part of them which had reference to the garrisons abroad and also by the Army Board, and it is rather a remarkable fact that the Army Board, of which the Commander-in-Chief is a member, put forward recommendations which advocated the addition of only one battery of field artillery as compared with the 11 batteries.

21307. What was the date of that decision of the Army Board?—I cannot give the exact date, but it must have been in the last months of 1896, for I have here a minute, dated the 4th December, referring to the point, and with your permission I will put that minute in.

21308. That is quite near enough; I asked because I am not quite clear what was called the Army Board at that time?—The Army Board at that time consisted of the heads of the great military Departments, presided over by the Commander-in-Chief; it was then purely military.

21309. Much the same as the Army Board we knew of during the war?—No, I am coming to that later. Then the Army Board at the same time made various other comparatively modest proposals—the addition of 3,500 men to the Garrison Artillery, the addition of two battalions of Guards and seven battalions of infantry of the line, an additional battalion of the West India Regiment, and an additional battalion of Malta Militia.

21310. Are you quoting from a paper which you are putting in?—Yes. On the strength of those proposals I asked the Cabinet to give me two battalions

See Q. 21223,
et seq.

of Guards, an additional battalion of Cameron Highlanders, a battalion of the West India Regiment, a battalion of Malta Militia, and an addition of 3,500 men to the Garrison Artillery, and I believe that the greater part of that was given—I cannot say exactly how much. Lord Wolseley renewed his demands in 1897, and that minute I think the Commission has got; it is dated the 3rd November, 1897.

21311. (*Viscount Esher.*) That is a year afterwards?—Yes, and I find that on the 2nd December, 1897—we had, of course, in the meanwhile gone a great deal more carefully into all these points—I wrote a minute for the Cabinet supporting not the whole proposals made by Lord Wolseley in that minute, but the greater part of them, and in particular—

21312. (*Chairman.*) May I interrupt you for one moment? We have a minute here said to be signed by you of date 12th November, 1897. Is that the same minute? It deals with the Commander-in-Chief's minute of 3rd November?—I have not got that minute here, but it is quite obvious that I desired to raise a number of points and to elicit the Commander-in-Chief's opinion upon them, and that it was the result of that discussion between myself and the Commander-in-Chief that led to the minute to which I am now referring.

21313. I thought it might be the same, but only with a different date?—It is not the same; it was an interlocutory proceeding. I was going to say that I was at that time in entire agreement with the Commander-in-Chief upon the main principle which underlay all his proposals for increases to the infantry of the Army, because the Commander-in-Chief and I were both strong advocates of the system of linked battalions, which, as you know, proceeds upon the assumption that for every battalion abroad, or for every battalion abroad approximately, there should be a battalion at home, and I felt, as did Lord Wolseley, that the reason our system was being overstrained was because we had been continually increasing the strength of our garrisons abroad without a corresponding increase of the strength of the forces at home upon which that garrison depended. Although Lord Wolseley and I may not have been absolutely in line as to the number of battalions required for that purpose, upon the main principle we were absolutely in line, and I supported him to the best of my ability. In that minute of the 2nd December I asked for 10 battalions of the line, for an addition of 50 men per battalion in order to make the home battalions better able to find the drafts requisite for the battalions abroad, for an addition of 12 batteries of artillery, and also for a sum of three-quarters of a million for the abolition of what was known as the grocery stoppage, a stoppage which had the effect of diminishing the soldier's pay, which was extremely unpopular, and supposed to be very detrimental to recruiting.

21314. That was a minute to the Cabinet?—That was the minute of the 2nd December, 1897, to the Cabinet.

21315. Which you put in?—Which I put in.* There is another minute of the 15th December which I put in also; they are all historically of some interest, and they all show—and that is the point I want to bring out—how very thoroughly and in what a favourable spirit these proposals of Lord Wolseley's were dealt with by myself and by the Cabinet. The proposals underwent a certain amount of change, but I think I am right in saying that the eventual outcome of it was that the Cabinet granted 10 battalions, an addition of 80 men per battalion (we found that the 50 was scarcely enough for our purpose), and 15 batteries of artillery, to which were afterwards added, I think, three howitzer batteries.

21316. When was that?—My minute was written in December, 1897, and the addition was sanctioned for the next year's Estimates.

21317. (*Viscount Esher.*) You got 15 batteries instead of 12?—Yes; in fact, 18 batteries, counting three howitzer batteries, which were added.

21318. Did you get the £750,000?—£635,000 was the final figure; I do not know how it came to be reduced; that was a very large increase, and I do not think I misrepresent Lord Wolseley when I say that he received it with very great satisfaction. I make one slight correction; I mentioned 10 battalions of infantry; the Cabinet did not refuse the addition of 10 battalions in principle, but, as we all knew that new units can only be raised slowly and gradually, the Cabinet only sanctioned six battalions at the time on account of the larger proposal.

I see that the Army Estimates, which in 1896-97, which was my first year, stood at 18½ millions, rose the following year to £19,630,000, and in the year after that to over 20 millions.

21319. (*Chairman.*) You mention that as showing that you did what you could to meet the requirements put forward by Lord Wolseley?—Certainly.

21320. With regard to Lord Wolseley's minute of the 7th January, 1899, you will observe he says: "I must here repeat what I said in the minute of 3rd November, 1897, on the state of the Army, that it is not strong enough in infantry or field artillery to fulfil the objects for which it is intended"; that is after the additions to which you have spoken?—Yes, I am afraid you will always find that the soldiers will ask for more whatever they get, but at the time when that large increase was obtained I remember very distinctly that Lord Wolseley expressed himself extremely pleased and satisfied.

21321. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) May I ask you whether you think that if you had gone to Parliament with very much larger proposals they would have been entertained?—I think not; I think we had considerable difficulty as it was with what we did ask for, because there is always this obvious criticism to demands for large increases to the Army. You ask for large numbers of battalions, but how can you show that you are going to get them? We had considerable difficulty then in keeping the Army, such as it was, full, and to begin building up ten or fifteen battalions at once was obviously an unwise proceeding.

21322. (*Viscount Esher.*) Does not Lord Wolseley practically admit that in the few words which follow those which the chairman read to you?—Yes. He refers to the inadequacy of the pay, but we had increased the pay very considerably, and it was not unreasonable to ask that we should see what the effect of that increase was.

21323. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is there not another difficulty, too, with a sudden augmentation, namely, how to house the men?—Certainly; the barrack question underlies all these matters, and I may say with reference to that that we had already on hand the serious question of the condition of the existing barracks, which was very unsatisfactory. We were already confronted with the prospect of a very large expenditure in order to adapt the old-fashioned barracks—some of which were obsolete and insanitary, and others of which were situate in the wrong parts of the country—to the modern requirements of the Army; so that the addition of a large number of further units would have greatly intensified that difficulty.

21324. (*Chairman.*) Is that all you wish to say about the minutes?—Yes.

21325. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I just wish to refer to the proposals put forward by General Brackenbury in December, 1899, with regard to these stores and reserves of guns, and so forth; may we not take it for granted that the deficiencies were not the result of one or two, or three or four years of insufficient expenditure, but were practically the accumulations of a great number of years of want of expenditure on the matter?—I think you may fairly take that for granted; in fact, I would almost say that we might go rather further, and say that, great as our deficiencies were, the Army at that moment was probably better equipped than it had ever been before. Lord Wolseley himself made an admission of that kind in a minute which I read yesterday, in which he described how the Field Force for South Africa had been equipped and despatched from this country.

21326. It would not be putting it perhaps too high to say that it has been the system in this country at all times to keep our stores as low as possible, and to economise as far as possible in such matters?—Yes. I think the idea was that at a pinch you could always go to the trade and buy what you wanted, and that there would be time to do it. I daresay those who held that view had something to say for it, because we never contemplated sending a huge force out of this country at a moment's notice, and it has always seemed to me that the occasions on which it would be likely that we should have to do so would be very rare. On this occasion we were fighting a Power that had no fleet, but if we had been engaged with a Power having a fleet, or having allies that had a fleet, we could not have sent two or three Army

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.
G.C.S.I.
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E

27 Mar. 1903.

* The Minute of the 15th December contains the whole of the Minute of the 2nd December and something in addition. It is not, therefore, considered necessary to print in the Appendix the Minute of the 2nd December as well as that of the 15th December.—B. H. HOLLAND, *Secretary.*

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

corps out of the country in the first few weeks of hostilities, and there would have been time, consequently, to look about and collect the stores and equipment you required.

21327. I notice that Sir Henry Brackenbury's Memorandum was written during what is generally known as the "black week"; it was after Stormberg and Magersfontein; and, in fact, it was on the very day of Colenso; is it not possible that he may have been fortified and encouraged to make what he considered to be the necessary demands to an extent that he would not have been if it had been in peace time and supposing we had come to an amicable arrangement with the Boers in the previous summer?—No, I think not; I think General Brackenbury had been working at this question for some months, and I think you must take it that his conclusions had been deliberately arrived at.

21328. Then I will go a step further; do you think, supposing we had come to an amicable arrangement with the Boers in the previous summer, it would be likely that any proposal to spend suddenly ten or eleven millions of money—and when I say suddenly I mean within two or three years—would have been favourably accepted by this country?—I think it extremely doubtful.

21329. It is even quite possible that not only the Government, of which you are a member, but no Government would have had the courage to bring forward such a proposal; is not that so as a general principle?—I think so.

21330. As a matter of fact, of course, in what one must call the panic of the war, the money was voted at once?—It is a well known thing that once a war has broken out the floodgates of expenditure are opened.

21331. And when the war is over the cry sometimes arises to reduce expenditure and to cut down the Army to the smallest possible limits?—There is always that danger, but pray do not understand me to suggest that, even if it was the existence of the war which enabled us to put forward these large demands, I do not think the principle which underlay General Brackenbury's proposals a perfectly sound one. I think I said yesterday that we had not—so it seems to me—sufficiently realised the difference between the equipment which a field force has to take with it and the reserve from which you would make good the wear and tear, which we all know is enormous, of that equipment when once the force has taken the field.

21332. I quite understand that, and I hope you understand that my question was directed rather to your opinion as to the way in which such proposals would have been received by the nation in the time of profound peace?—I quite understand.

21333. Coming to another point I believe that during the early stages of the war one of your great anxieties must have been how to replace the wastage of war in men?—Yes.

21334. Under the system which prevailed before the war, that is, under the Stanhope Minute or Memorandum we only provided for two Army Corps going abroad and a cavalry division, and it was a great difficulty to provide a sufficient number of trained men in order to fill up the gaps created by the wastage of war?—It was under those circumstances that the system of short service and reserves, which, as you will remember, had been a good deal derided, stood us in such good stead. I think the whole of the reservists who were called up, with the exception of one and a fraction per cent., joined the colours, and I have heard nothing but praise of the men. We should have come totally and hopelessly to grief if we had not had that reserve to fall back upon, and, as the Commission of course understands, while the reservists fill up the battalions which shed their younger soldiers, those younger soldiers go to the dépôt and train on, and are ready after a few months to go out as drafts to make good that wear and tear of which you spoke a moment ago.

21335. Quite so, but the number of troops required in South Africa for the war was so much greater than could ever have been contemplated by anyone in the country that the result was that during the war large classes of men had to be drawn upon who had little training?—Clearly; the requirements of the war were altogether far in excess of anything which we or anyone else had ever contemplated.

21336. And a similar state of things might arise at

some future time?—I should be sorry to say that it might not.

21337. And it is impossible for this country to keep up during perhaps 50 years of peace a standing army sufficient to meet such a state of things; it would be beyond the national purse?—That raises very serious questions. I think the answer to that is that we should always endeavour to have as large a reserve as possible. After our satisfactory experience of the Reserve in this war I should personally be inclined to rely more and more upon it, and I have always thought that there was a good deal to be said for a view which is held by Lord Roberts, amongst others—a view upon which, by the way, we acted—that it was possible and desirable to shorten the period of colour service, and to increase proportionately the period of Reserve service. The output of Reservists under a three years' system of engagement, of course, is enormously larger than under a six years' period of service with the colours.

21338. But even an increased Reserve system could not give us a sufficient number of men to meet such an enormous strain as was put upon the country in the South African War, and as might be put on the country again in a war with one or two great Powers?—For the rest you must depend upon the manhood of the country, prepared in such manner as may be found most expedient.

21339. That is the point I was coming to, and I would ask you now to throw your mind back to the year 1870, or so, when people were discussing the question of an Education Bill of this country, and when it was asserted constantly in the newspapers that the nation would never submit to civil education being imposed compulsorily upon the population. That has been done. I do not ask you as a Minister of the Crown to say whether the nation would ever submit to military education being made equally compulsory, but I do ask you as a former Secretary of State for War whether it would not have been an enormous advantage to you as Secretary of State for War if on appealing to the manhood of the country you had been appealing to a manhood who in their boyhood had been trained to arms?—That seems to me an obvious proposition.

21340. Then the young men who would have come forward to volunteer in tens of thousands would have gone out with a knowledge of how to shoot, with some knowledge of drill, and some knowledge of discipline?—Quite so.

21341. (Sir John Hopkins.) I should like to ask you a question about the calling out of the Army Corps. We had it in evidence, I think from Lord Wolseley, that if you want 10,000 men, say for a foreign expedition, you have the power of calling out a portion of an Army Corps; is that so?—Not strictly speaking a portion of an Army Corps, but a certain number of men. That is a very important point, and it is one to which I gave a certain amount of attention when I was Secretary of State. I was strongly of opinion that the blot in our system was that we could only touch our Reservists when we were able to proclaim—I think the words are—a great national emergency, or something of that kind. Obviously, you do not want to proclaim a great national emergency merely because it is necessary to send an expedition of 12,000 or 15,000 men out of the country. On the other hand, if you cannot get your Reservists, you have either to send young soldiers who are not fit to send out of the country, possibly to a dangerous climate, or you have to turn those young soldiers out of your home battalions, and fill them up by means of drafts taken from other battalions, a most objectionable arrangement, not only because it is detrimental to *esprit de corps*, but also because when you have eviscerated a certain number of battalions in that manner, if the thing goes on and you have to call upon those battalions, you find that you have practically destroyed their value as fighting units. It was for that reason that in 1898 I introduced a short Act to amend the law relating to the Reserve Forces and Militia, giving us power to call out a number of men not exceeding 5,000 without proclaiming a national emergency. Our idea was that that would enable us to send a force of about 12,000 men out of the country.

21342. And that was passed?—That was passed, but it was passed, I think the Commission ought to know, not without a good deal of suspicion and difficulty. It was criticised from two points of view. Parliament is extremely jealous of giving the Government of the

day too great facilities for sending expeditions and making war, and one trend of thought is adverse to any proposals of that kind; the other is a different one; it is partly the feeling of the men themselves, and partly the feeling of the employers, that a man who has left the Army and gone back into civil life as a Reservist is at a disadvantage if he is liable to be called up at any moment and sent away to take part in a "little war."

21343. In connection with calling out an Army Corps or a portion of it, does the money for the necessary equipment, in the shape of horses, and so on, automatically become available, because we had some evidence to show that was one of the blots of the system—that those concerned could not put their hands immediately on the money required to produce the necessary outfit when an Army Corps was called up?—I am not aware of any provision under which money is ever provided automatically.

21344. Would not that appear to be a blot rather, and if it was desirable for you to call out 5,000 men, would it not be equally desirable that they should be equipped at once or that the money should be forthcoming for the equipment?—The money for the equipment of 5,000 men?

21345. Or for the Army Corps itself?—I think you must distinguish; there would probably be no great difficulty about the equipment of the small force.

21346. I think we have had it in evidence in connection with the Army Corps that was called out first of all, that there was some delay in providing the necessary outfit on account of the want of money—the money was not forthcoming immediately?—I do not think there can have been any delay in providing money for the First Army Corps, because the preparation of the First Army Corps was not authorised until the 22nd September, 1899, and by that time we could have spent money on anything we pleased.

21347. (*Sir John Jackson.*) It has been stated in evidence that the military authorities had not realised the fighting qualities of the Boers, and in point of fact that they calculated that the war would be over by November; did not that show something wanting on the part of the Intelligence Department—the fact that the authorities did not sufficiently realise that?—I think the purport of my evidence in chief was that while the Intelligence Department was fairly well informed as to the strength of the Boers, they did not fully realise their fighting value and their power of endurance in the field.

21348. On that point, of course, we had had experience of the Boers in the previous wars, had we not?—I think you would probably be told—I think there was an impression—that the Boer of to-day had become from various reasons less formidable than the Boer whom we had known in the field in former wars, but I doubt whether the experience of this campaign bore out that theory.

21349. The experience shows they have not deteriorated?—I should say so.

21350. We have also had it in evidence that very little money indeed was ever given to Intelligence officers for expenses in South Africa; do you not think that a bad plan?—Yes; I think probably one of the good results of the South African War will be that the importance of the Intelligence branch will receive greater recognition, and that it will be more liberally supplied with funds. I suppose you are aware that my successor has improved the position of the Director-General?

21351. Of course, we have heard a great deal about the risk there was of precipitating a war in June, 1899; I understand that you are of opinion that if we had spent more money and sent out considerably more men in June, showing our firmness and our intention to fight if necessary, that would rather have tended to have made difficulties than otherwise?—I think it would have been likely to shipwreck the negotiations which were proceeding, and which we to the last hoped to be able to bring to a satisfactory conclusion.

21352. (*Sir John Edge.*) And I suppose if we had called out an Army Corps in June and made large preparations, and war had been the result, it would have been said at home, in South Africa, and abroad, that we had precipitated the war?—I think that is evident. You must remember that there was a strong feeling both in this country and abroad and in South Africa of suspicion, engendered by the Jameson Raid, and I doubt extremely whether if we had gone, as I conceive,

prematurely, to Parliament in the month of June, 1899, and asked for a large war expenditure, we should have got it.

21353. And even if you had got it, I rather assume we would have given the opportunity, at any rate, to our enemies, of saying we had provoked the war ourselves?—I think so; I think it would have made this difference—that whereas when war actually broke out we had the whole of the country at our backs, which made a very great difference in our position, both here and abroad, if we had forced the pace and brought on hostilities sooner, we should not have had the same support.

21354. Am I right in assuming that the Jameson Raid really made difficulties in the way of taking precautions that might otherwise have been taken?—I think it certainly had the effect of creating deep-seated mistrust of us in the mind of the South African Republic.

21355. If we had sent out large reinforcements to South Africa early in 1899, or even before that, or during the Bloemfontein Conference, do you not think the preconceived mistrust of us would have been increased?—I think so.

21356. And the Boers by that time were practically ready for war; they had practically got all the guns except a few that were ultimately never delivered, and they had got their munitions?—At any rate they had sufficient quantities of arms and ammunition to render them well able to commence hostilities.

21357. And if we had moved before the Bloemfontein Conference, or even during the Bloemfontein Conference in 1899 we might have precipitated war?—I think so.

21358. I do not know whether I am justified in asking the question, but is there any fund out of which moneys could be provided for the obtaining of information by the Intelligence Department?—Do you mean any special fund outside the ordinary War Office Estimates?

21359. Yes?—No, I think not; the expenses of the Director-General's Department would form an item in the War Office Vote.

21360. Supposing a considerable amount had been spent in trying to obtain proper maps in South Africa—mapping the country—would that have appeared on the Estimates?—I do not know that it would have appeared on the Estimates that the expenditure was incurred in particular for maps, but it would be shown as being incurred on behalf of the Intelligence Department.

21361. The place would not have been ear-marked where the expenditure was incurred?—Not necessarily.

21362. We have heard that the officers who were sent out to obtain what information they could were very slenderly provided with money?—Those mapping operations were no doubt conducted on a very modest scale, but I do not know that anything else was proposed to me; it was proposed to me that we should send out officers, and I at once agreed to it.

21363. I suppose if we had proceeded after the Jameson Raid to any extensive mapping that might have been likely to be misunderstood by the Boers?—I cannot imagine anything that would have had a more alarming effect upon them than if a whole gang of Engineer officers had appeared in the country map making; it had to be done with very great secrecy, and it could not have been done for that reason on a large scale.

21364. (*Sir John Jackson.*) The Boers' preparations on the other hand, we may say clearly showed that they intended fighting?—I think they clearly showed they were prepared for a fight, but I have never been convinced—I certainly was not convinced at the time—that they were preparing for offensive operations.

21365. If they were preparing for offensive operations it could only be against us?—You recollect, for example, that the Boers acquired a certain number of very heavy guns—guns which afterwards became so notorious when they were moved about the country; all our information was to the effect that those guns were for the defence of Pretoria, and we know—in fact, at the time I was shown the plans and the sketches of them—there were works actually constructed outside Pretoria for that purpose.

21366. (*Sir John Edge.*)—The Portuguese were not likely to attack them, I suppose?—I think not.

21367. It could only have been intended for a struggle with England?—Yes.

21368. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) If the Government in the month of June, or earlier in 1899, had asked Parlia-

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

*The Right
Hon. the
Marquis of
Lansdowne,*
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

ment for a considerable sum of money, of course they would have had to disclose their hand, and say what they wanted that money for; do you not think that would have been treated by the Boers as in effect a declaration of war against them?—That was certainly my opinion, and is now.

21369. And they would have at once sent in an ultimatum, and invaded the Colonies?—At any rate it would have put a stop to any prospect of a successful issue for the negotiations which were then proceeding.

21370. Do you not think they would have gone further, and that there would have been a war actually precipitated then and there?—I put it in this way, that I feel sure it would have shipwrecked the negotiations, and that in my belief it would probably have induced earlier hostilities by inducing the Boers to anticipate any precautions we might take for securing ourselves in the two Colonies.

21371. And that would have taken place before even the troops in India could have reached there?—Certainly.

21372. So that, in point of fact, the difficulty the Government was in at the time was not merely a question of preparing the people in this country for the possibility or probability of a war breaking out?—That is quite true.

21373. It has been stated here by a witness, that in view of that very point, the necessity of the Government having to go to the House to ask for a sum of money in order to enable them to prepare for a war which, in their opinion, might become necessary, there should be a sum always standing to the credit of the War Office or the Admiralty, but to be drawn upon only by the Cabinet, independently of Parliament, just as foreign nations do. How do you think that would work under our Constitution? The sum mentioned by witness was the sum of ten millions of money?—I am afraid you would not persuade the House of Commons to vote ten millions of money upon such conditions.

21374. Still, if it could be done, it would have put the Government in 1899 in a very much better position if they had the power of preparing stores and equipment, and so forth, independently of having to go to Parliament for the money?—I cannot imagine anything more delightful for the Secretary of State than to be emancipated from the restrictions which our Parliamentary system imposes upon him.

21375. It would have been better for the country, too, at that time?—It might have been better for the country.

21376. (*Viscount Esher.*) Would it not throw much greater and heavier responsibility upon the Secretary of State and on the Government generally? For what you mean is, that practically you would embark upon hostile operations before consulting Parliament?—I think that is true; in case of operations of any magnitude, the Government must have the country at its back, and if it has the country at its back the country will give it the money at once.

21377. I think there is very little doubt that if you had had the sum of ten millions at your disposal during the months of June and July, 1899, you would have felt very much tempted to make the preparations which you, yourself, think, if made, would have precipitated the war?—Quite so.

21378. I suppose that, on the other hand, there might be some advantage in altering the statute under which you have to apply to Parliament before you mobilise troops. I understand you would have been unable to carry out Lord Wolseley's suggestion to mobilise an Army Corps on Salisbury Plain without complying with the statute?—You have to make a Proclamation of national emergency, and call Parliament together within a very few days; I forget the exact number.

21379. Might it not perfectly reasonably occur that the Government might desire, even for purposes of training, to mobilise an Army Corps, calling out the Reserves? Is it not a reasonable assumption to make that it might be desirable in the interests of the training of troops, quite apart from the question of peace or war, to call out an Army Corps, and mobilise it as suggested by Lord Wolseley, including the Reserves? Under the present circumstances you cannot do that without calling Parliament together, and issuing the Proclamation, to which you have just referred?—That would really be

for the purpose of something corresponding to what we call manœuvres?

21380. Yes?—Quite so; but as you know even for manœuvres we used to have a special Bill; I think now there is a general Bill, which was brought in in my time.

21381. But it does not enable you to call out any proportion of the Reserve; is not that so?—No, it does not.

21382. Would you see any objection to empowering the executive Government to do that without having to issue a Proclamation, and, if necessary, call Parliament together?—From the point of view of the Army it would be a very salutary thing, but what makes me hesitate is, that I think you would then be met with the difficulty which I mentioned a moment ago—the difficulty of the employers of labour; they would resent very much having a man who might be spirited away from them, perhaps in harvest time or at some other moment when he was wanted, for these military exercises.

21383. What do you imagine was the reason of the Statute which prevents you from calling out the Reserves without calling Parliament together, and without issuing that Proclamation; was it not to tie the hands of the Executive Government?—Yes; to prevent the Executive Government from making war without consulting Parliament and the nation.

21384. Do you not think that, on the other hand, the natural restriction of want of money is sufficient? Do you think, in fact, that particular Statute is necessary?—I think you would find it difficult to carry the repealing Bill through Parliament.

21385. If it could be carried, you would not see any harm in it?—No.

21386. It is only carrying Sir Frederick Darley's suggestion a little further?—Yes.

21387. You told us yesterday that, in view of the possibility of hostilities, you had frequent consultations with your military advisers. During those years after the Raid, and up to the time of the outbreak of the war, did you ever get from your military advisers any joint remonstrance for not strengthening the garrisons in South Africa?—No; I do not think so.

21388. You were never approached by the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General and the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and so on, with any joint representation that it might be desirable, in view of the facts laid before them by the Intelligence branch, to increase the garrisons in South Africa?—I can call to mind nothing of the kind; in fact, as I told the Commission when I came into the room this morning, I can recollect nothing between the Commander-in-Chief's proposal of the 22nd February, 1896, when he asked for a very small increase of the South African garrisons, and his large demand in June, 1899.

21389. But the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General unquestionably had access to all the information of the Intelligence Branch?—Undoubtedly; the Director of Intelligence was one of the Commander-in-Chief's subordinate officials; that is made clear by the Rules of Procedure.

21390. You told us you were not quite certain that you yourself, personally, had seen all the correspondence that passed between the Intelligence officers in Africa and the Intelligence branch in London, although you told us you thought you might have seen it?—At any rate, I was aware of the condition of things described in those papers.

21391. Of course, you have no kind of doubt that what information had been seen by the Commander-in-Chief?—Surely; it was the Director-General's business to report to the Commander-in-Chief.

21392. Have you any reason to suppose that, upon obtaining that intelligence, he had ever consulted the other high military officers in the War Office with regard to the state of affairs disclosed in that information?—I have no trace of any such proceeding.

21393. If he had been impressed with the great seriousness of the situation, and had consulted the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General and the Ordnance Department, which one would naturally have supposed he would have consulted under such circumstances, and then if they had made a joint

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

representation to you, would it not have considerably influenced you?—It would have considerably influenced me, even if it had been a single-handed representation from the Commander-in-Chief alone. Supposing, I mean, that the Commander-in-Chief had put forward a representation of that kind in the same way, and with the same emphasis and earnestness in which he put forward his proposals for an increase of the Army in the Minute of February, 1896, that, of course, would have been a very weighty proceeding, which would have impressed me and, no doubt, the Cabinet.

21394. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I think you stated there was no demand made by Lord Wolseley between 1896 and 1899. Would you be good enough to look at the end of Questions 8744 and 8745; I have no doubt the troops mentioned there were afterwards sent, but I think you will find Lord Wolseley does ask for troops there?—Those were the small increases to which I referred in my evidence; they were first mentioned in Lord Wolseley's minute in the appendix to the minute of 1896, dealing specially with the Cape, and I say that not only those increases, but more than those increases were granted during the two years which followed.

21395. He sets out his minute in that answer there; in point of fact, I think the troops he mentions there were sent, and he mentions a large quantity of transport there, too?—The troops were certainly sent.

21396. (*Viscount Esher.*) With regard to Sir Henry Brackenbury's representations at the end of 1899, and the facts disclosed there to you, I think they should have been previously known, or might have been known, or, for all we know, were known, to the Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, and the Quartermaster-General?—Yes; there again I give the same sort of answer as I gave just now. I have not a doubt that Sir Henry Brackenbury's predecessor often asked for things on the estimates that he did not obtain. Naturally, the heads of departments are always asking for this, that, and the other thing, and they do not always get what they ask for; but no reasoned, comprehensive demand such as that embodied in Sir Henry Brackenbury's minute disclosing the condition of our stores and equipment was, to the best of my belief, put forward until Sir Henry Brackenbury came.

21397. Of course, that is a very serious document?—A very serious document.

21398. It is incredible that any such document could have been laid before you between the year 1895 and the year 1899 without your recollecting it, and therefore it is obvious no such document was ever laid before you?—No such document was ever laid before me.

21399. Would you not conceive it, after all, to be the duty of the principal military officers concerned to make themselves acquainted with a state of facts such as that disclosed in Sir Henry Brackenbury's memorandum?—It is their duty; certainly; but one man will take a matter up more strenuously than another.

21400. Should the responsibility be left to one man, do you think?—You mean, should the responsibility in a case of that kind be left to the Director-General of Ordnance?

21401. Yes; does it not strike you that the state of facts there disclosed should have been known to the officers who were really responsible for the Army?—In my view, the officer who is really responsible in those matters is the Director-General of Ordnance.

21402. Certainly, he is primarily responsible, but would it not occur to you that the Commander-in-Chief, for instance, if you take him as being the officer responsible for the whole of the Army, should make himself acquainted with the condition of our armaments, with the equipment, and with the clothing, etc., etc., etc., deficiencies as to all of which were disclosed in that memorandum?—You must remember that the Commander-in-Chief under our system is an officer who has an immense amount of work—I think more work than he can possibly get through—thrown upon him, and therefore there would always be a great temptation to an officer who was put in that position to take up a limited number of subjects, probably the subjects about which he knows most or in which he is most interested, and he will, not unnaturally, depend upon the heads of departments for advice as to the rest.

21403. You must not suppose for a moment that I

am imputing blame to any individual; I am only trying to get at the defects of the system, and it seems to me that there must be some serious defects in a system under which a state of facts such as that disclosed in Sir Henry Brackenbury's memorandum were not brought to the attention of the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State between 1895 and 1899. That is my point, and I think you would agree with that, would you not?—That if you had a perfect system administered by faultless people those things could not happen, but I doubt whether you will ever contrive a system of that kind.

21404. You have had very great experience in India; do you think such a state of facts could arise in India without its being brought to the attention of the Viceroy and the Government?—That is a conjectural question.

21405. You can only give an opinion?—Well, the position in India is so different. In India you have not got to reckon with Parliament; that makes a great difference, because here we know, and every head of a department knows, how difficult it is to get money, and therefore unless a man is very energetic and very convinced, the temptation to him is to take things easily, and to be content with what he can get.

21406. There was only one other question I wanted to ask you, because it was not made quite clear yesterday. I do not know whether you remember that Sir Redvers Buller, among several complaints he made, said this: "I think there should have been a consideration of the intended expedition at which the Commander-in-Chief designate should have expressed his views before the Army Board or the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, or before some board who would have heard what he had to say, and he would have had an opportunity of raising a large number of questions that I should have liked many times during the three months to raise, but I never had any opportunity." I take it that it was not within the province even of the officers composing the Army Board to invite him to attend, was it, or could they have done so if they had wished?—Strictly speaking, perhaps not; but I think if that was Sir Redvers Buller's view the proper course for him to take would have been to mention it to the Commander-in-Chief or to me. There would have been no difficulty in arranging that he should meet the members of the Army Board.

21407. It was open to him to suggest that he should be called before the Army Board if he wished to be?—Of course, or before the Defence Committee of the Cabinet or before the Cabinet itself; if he had suggested that it would have cleared his mind and made his task easier that he should have a full opportunity of discussing these matters, that opportunity would surely have been given to him.

21408. (*Sir John Edge.*) I am not familiar with the way work is done in the War Office. Would the Commander-in-Chief have any means of knowing what the state of the ordnance was except through the Director-General of Ordnance?—So far as the War Office is concerned he would derive his information from the Director-General.

21409. Would the Adjutant-General, for instance, know anything about the condition of the ordnance *quâd* Adjutant-General?—The Adjutant-General under the system which was in force at the time of which you are speaking had his own distinct sphere.

21410. *Quâd* Adjutant-General, he would know nothing about it?—*Quâd* Adjutant-General, he need not know anything about it, but *quâd* member of the Army Board, he probably would.

21411. The same would be the fact about the Quartermaster-General; *quâd* Quartermaster-General, his own department would not deal with the question of ordnance?—No, and he would not be the responsible adviser of the Secretary of State with regard to ordnance.

21412. Who is the responsible adviser with regard to ordnance—the Director-General of Ordnance?—Yes.

21413. And he is the only official really who is responsible?—The Director-General of Ordnance shall be charged with supplying the Army with warlike stores and equipment, and he shall submit proposals for the annual estimates for the above services, and shall advise the Secretary of State on all questions connected with the duties of his department. (*Vide Order in Council of 4th November, 1891.*)

21414. Do you happen to know whether at that time the Commander-in-Chief could have called for a report

See Q. 15019.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

from the Director-General of Ordnance?—That is a very important point; the Commander-in-Chief under this Order in Council which I have just quoted, exercises general command over His Majesty's military forces at home and abroad; he is the principal adviser of the Secretary of State on all military questions, and, subject to his authority, is charged with the general supervision of the military departments of the War Office. Now, in the view of those who were responsible for that Order in Council, that general supervision gave the Commander-in-Chief the distinct right of interesting himself in the affairs of any department in the War Office.

21415. Calling for a report from the head of any department in the War Office?—Certainly; and I may say that Lord Wolseley himself certainly understood that, because I have here a minute signed by him, dated October 4th, 1900, which runs thus: "Director-General of Ordnance. Is it true that all further progress in the manufacture of the 9·2-inch guns has been suspended for more than the last three months on account of changes in the construction lately determined upon? I do not want to worry you, but I deeply feel our present condition as regards the armament of our ports and fortresses both at home and abroad." I think that minute shows that the Commander-in-Chief had the right of calling for reports such as you referred to, that he was aware of that right, and that he did, in fact, exercise it.

21416. And if he was not satisfied with the papers that came before him from the Director-General of Ordnance, he could call for a further report?—Yes, or if he wished to start a hare of his own, so to speak, he could do so.

21417. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Is it your opinion that, taking all matters into consideration, including the natural disinclination of the Government to do anything which would precipitate war, at the time the war broke out you were, under all the circumstances of the case, sufficiently prepared for that war?—I do not think we were; I think the operations assumed proportions far in excess of anything we had ever professed to be prepared for.

21418. Who, would you say, was responsible for that—what department? Is it the country itself or Parliament?—The then Government and the Governments which preceded it, and Parliament, in so far as it determines the strength of the Army to be maintained and the amount of our military expenditure.

21419. In point of fact, it is the people themselves who were responsible for the non-preparation?—I think you have had mentioned to you the often quoted memorandum of Mr. Edward Stanhope, laying down that our organisation was to proceed upon the basis of three Army Corps, of which two were to be composed of Regular troops; that has been the accepted basis ever since Mr. Edward Stanhope's time; that basis has, I believe, been referred to in Parliament.

21420. So that for the want of preparation, such as it was, it is really the people who are responsible through Parliament?—You might put it in that way.

21421. (*Sir John Jackson.*) In fact, the great disinclination of the House of Commons to vote money for war purposes until we are absolutely at war?—I am not sure that I should put it entirely on that; I think I should put it much more upon the fact that no one ever anticipated that we should have to send a field force of those dimensions out of this country at a few days' notice.

21422. But it is the case that for many past years there always has been a great disinclination to vote money for war purposes until we were absolutely at war, and then the country comes forward?—I think that is true.

21423. (*Chairman.*) You alluded just now to the minute of Mr. Stanhope, and said that it had been explained more than once. We have this statement from one witness; he was asked: "But the minute of Mr. Stanhope, or the effect of that minute, was known," and he answered: "Very little, I think; I think I am right in saying that it was never authoritatively published. It was known inside the War Office, but for a long time it was highly confidential"?—The

minute itself; but I am sure the two Army Corps basis must have been again and again referred to.

21424. And it was based on the recommendations of that minute?—That minute was accepted by successive Secretaries of State.

21425. (*Chairman.*) We now get the questions with regard to War Office reorganisation, and in the first place, I suppose, you would wish to refer to the Order in Council of 1895, for which I believe you were responsible?—I was responsible for that Order in Council. In reference to that I call the attention of the Commission to my minute written for the Cabinet on the 31st October, 1895, which I now put in:—

MINUTE BY THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE ON THE 31ST OCTOBER, 1895, AS TO WAR OFFICE REORGANISATION.

The scheme sketched by me in the House of Lords on the 26th August may be fairly described as a compromise between two extreme views, both of which have been strongly urged by their supporters.

1. It is contended that we should make a strong Commander-in-Chief directly responsible to the Secretary of State, with Heads of Departments responsible and entirely subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief. This is practically the existing system.

2. The opposite view is that the Heads of the four great Departments should be independent of the Commander-in-Chief, and that we should not give him, even indirectly, authority or influence which would impair their responsibility to the Secretary of State.

The scheme has been exposed to a cross-fire of criticism from the advocates of both these views. I do not think it has suffered more severely than was to be expected, or that it will be necessary to alter it materially. The strongest condemnation has proceeded from a misunderstanding or misrepresentation of our intentions. We have been told that we are attempting to place the Commander-in-Chief and the Heads of the four Departments in a position of absolute equality, and that this is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle of individual responsibility. A writer, to whose letter prominence was recently given in the "Times" newspaper, described them as being officials, "none of whom are to be greater or less than the other, none afore or after the other." The argument has been pushed home most successfully with regard to the relation of the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General. "How," it has been asked, "can your Commander-in-Chief really command, how can he have any responsibility for the efficiency of the forces under him if he is precluded from interference with their discipline?" It was, I need not say, always our intention that the pre-eminence of the Commander-in-Chief should be distinctly recognised, and for this reason we had made him the principal adviser of the Secretary of State*, and given him, as such, an unlimited right of advising the Secretary of State upon questions arising in any of the departments. In questions of discipline, as in all others, the Commander-in-Chief would, under the scheme as it stands, certainly have had his say.

The persistence with which these criticisms have been repeated makes it, however, clear that in framing the actual wording of the Order in Council we must be careful to preclude the possibility of any misunderstanding upon this point.

Under the draft, which was before the Committee of the Cabinet in August, the Commander-in-Chief was, in effect, charged with the whole of the duties which the Hartington Commission had assigned to the Chief of the Staff. I attach a memorandum enumerating, in the words of the Commission, the duties of the Chief of the Staff, and specifying those of them which will belong to the Commander-in-Chief.

In addition to these he will be entrusted with—

(a) Appointments to commissions, promotions, and military honours and rewards.

(b) The general command of the forces at home and abroad.

It would, no doubt, be possible to deprive the Commander-in-Chief altogether of (b), and thereby to advance another step in the direction of the second of

* The Hartington Commission had, it will be remembered, recommended that the Chief of the Staff should be the adviser of the Secretary of State in all matters of general military policy.

the views indicated at the commencement of this memorandum.*

This solution of the difficulty does not commend itself to me. I am averse to any arrangement under which the Commander-in-Chief would be shorn of the attribute which, in the eyes of the public, most contributes to the dignity of his position. What would be said of a Commander-in-Chief who inspects, advises, appoints, and rewards, but does not command? We should be told that, after announcing that we had decided not to create a Chief of the Staff, we had called him into existence under another name and in the thinnest of disguises.

Another suggestion has been to limit the interpretation of (b) to command of the *personnel* of the Army only, and on that ground to remove the Adjutant-General from his place in line with the other Heads of Departments, and convert him into a subordinate of the Commander-in-Chief. This would undoubtedly meet the argument against divorcing discipline from command, to which I have referred above; but I should deprecate the change on the ground that it would make a marked and logically indefensible distinction between the relations of the *personnel* and supply services to the Commander-in-Chief.

It will, I believe, be safer to proceed upon a different line, and to frame the Order in Council in terms which will unmistakably show that the Commander-in-Chief, as the principal military adviser of the Secretary of State, is in a position different from that of the other Heads of Departments, a position giving him a general power of supervising and directing the whole of the military work of the office.

The necessity of some such supervising authority in regard to the purely military business of the office is, I think, obvious. The scheme of the late Government gave the Commander-in-Chief, as President of the Army Board, powers of "co-ordinating," or in other words "regulating," the work of the Military Departments. The Army Board has now, for reasons which I need not here explain, been relegated to the background, and will have no place in the written constitution of the office. But the necessity for a supervising or co-ordinating authority is as imperative as ever. In the daily business of the Military Departments, cases constantly arise, not of sufficient importance to justify a special reference to the Secretary of State, but requiring, because they concern more departments than one, the decision of an official whose authority will not be questioned.

Military opinion is, moreover, unanimous in holding that the attempt to dissociate the Commander-in-Chief, even in appearance, from the control of the discipline of the Army would be fraught with danger, and that no scheme will work, or be understood by the Army, which does not give the Commander-in-Chief an undoubted right of interference in questions of discipline.

I therefore propose that in describing the duties of the Commander-in-Chief, we should lay down that he is to be "the principal adviser of the Secretary of State on all military questions, and shall be charged with the general direction of the Military Departments of the War Office." These words seem to me amply sufficient for the purpose of giving the necessary strength to the position of the Commander-in-Chief, not only in regard to discipline, but in regard to all other military questions.

The Heads of Departments are, I think, under the scheme as now revised, left with as large a measure of responsibility as can practically be given to them. Their existence will, for the first time, be recognised in the Order in Council, under which they will be charged with specific duties and required to advise the Secretary of State on all questions connected with the duties of their departments. This is a very considerable advance. The Order in Council of 1888, now in force, concentrates upon the Commander-in-Chief the whole of the duties of the Military Department of the War Office, and ignores the Heads of Departments, who are not even mentioned in the Order. There is a very general desire for a more explicit recognition of their separate responsibility. In practice, no doubt, the actual distribution of the work has not corresponded with the Order in Council. A great part of his duties have, for example, been dele-

gated by the Commander-in-Chief to the Adjutant-General. This officer, and the other Heads of Departments, have, moreover, had direct access to the Secretary of State, a privilege of which they have availed themselves very frequently during recent years. In the written constitution of the Department, however, the Commander-in-Chief is the sole recognised adviser of the Secretary of State upon military affairs. It is this theoretical concentration that has evoked so much criticism, and supplied the Hartington Commission with the materials upon which to found their main indictment. The Press has taken up the question, and members, both of the late and present Government, have admitted that a revision of the constitution of the Department was necessary.

We are therefore, I conceive, obliged to go as far as we can in the direction of giving separate responsibility to the Heads of Departments. How far can we go? Absolute independence and complete responsibility are out of the question—

(a) Because, in five cases out of six, more than one department is concerned, and responsibility cannot therefore be fastened upon a single officer. The proposal to alter the armament of a fort, for example, concerns the Inspector-General of Fortifications, the Inspector-General of Ordnance, the Adjutant-General, and the Quartermaster-General. No one of these officers can be made individually responsible for the advice tendered to the Secretary of State;

(b.) Because complete responsibility implies complete power, and complete power implies complete control over expenditure. Heads of departments are, however, subject to the financial control of the Secretary of State; of the Cabinet; and, in the last resort, of Parliament.

These are obvious limitations to their responsibility. It might, perhaps, be added that so strongly imbued are most soldiers with ideas of military discipline, that, except in very extreme cases, the head of a department would be reluctant to press his view of a case against that of the Commander-in-Chief. That this feeling exists is a matter of notoriety. The risk, I am satisfied, is not, as some critics have anticipated, that the Commander-in-Chief would be out-voted at the Army Board, but that the Army Board, or the departments represented at it, would merely register the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief. Much would, of course, depend upon the character of the individuals concerned; but it would always be difficult for, say, an Inspector-General of Ordnance to take upon himself to thwart a proposal strongly advocated by the Commander-in-Chief, who is the source from whence flow promotion and appointment.

It does not, however, by any means follow that no responsibility can be assigned to the heads of the Military Departments. Each of them is, in the first place, charged with carrying out the special duties assigned to him; executive responsibility is not impaired or destroyed by general control, whether financial or otherwise. If a barrack tumbles down the Inspector-General of Fortifications will know that he is responsible for the failure. If the troops find themselves short of food during manœuvres, the Quartermaster-General will be to blame. If a batch of bad bayonets are issued, or shells fail to explode in action, the Inspector-General of Ordnance will be taken to task.

The Order in Council, and the Rules of Procedure, have been so framed as to make it understood by each head of a department that, as one of the Secretary of State's advisers, he is responsible for warning the Secretary of State whenever anything affecting the efficiency of the department is, in his opinion, wrongly done, or left undone.

With this object in view each head will have free access to the Secretary of State, as well as an opportunity of recording his opinion upon the papers concerning his department, and of raising his voice at meetings of the Army Board or the War Office Council.

Under such a state of things they would, I believe, feel a very real though limited responsibility. Such a degree of responsibility appears to me consistent with the power of general direction, which I have shown to be inseparable from any real command-in-chief, and,

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne
K.G., P.C.,
G.C.S.I.,
G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

See Q. 21431.

* It is remarkable that the present Commander-in-Chief, although entrusted under the Order in Council of 1888, and under his Letters Patent, with the command of the forces in the United Kingdom, has no command beyond the limits of the United Kingdom conferred upon him. In spite of this he exercises as a fact administrative command over the troops abroad and at home

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by common consent, essential to the efficient working of the military side of the Office.

(Initialled)

L.

31st October, 1895.

The Commission will find in that Minute a very full explanation of the principles upon which the Order in Council of 1895 was framed. I think it would be better that I should leave that Minute in your hands, rather than that I should travel over the same ground in a statement. There is a second Minute, written some time afterwards, on May 8th, 1899; it is instructive, because it contains my impressions of the manner in which the system introduced in 1895 had operated during those four years, and I put that in.

MINUTE BY THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE OF 8TH
MAY, 1899.

A few days before the present Government took office in 1895, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had announced to the House of Commons that the retirement of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge was to take place on the 1st October next, and he proceeded to give a general indication of the arrangements which were to follow His Royal Highness' relinquishment of office. Those arrangements were to be in accordance with the "main principles" of the Hartington Commission, which it will be remembered had advocated the abolition of the office of Commander-in-Chief, the distribution of his duties among the heads of the Military departments, and the appointment of a Chief of the Staff. The recommendations of the Hartington Commission had received considerable public support.

Under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's scheme there was to be substituted for the appointment of "Commander-in-Chief," as it then existed, the appointment of a "General Officer Commanding-in-Chief" with "greatly modified functions," and holding office for five years under the ordinary rules.

The manner in which these arrangements were to be carried out formed the subject of considerable discussion. It was particularly desired that the Commander-in-Chief should be given a distinct pre-eminence with regard to the other members of the Army Board, and that he should be described as "the principal adviser" of the Secretary of State. The old title of Commander-in-Chief was accordingly retained, and it was laid down in the Order in Council of 21st November, 1895, that he should be "the principal adviser of the Secretary of State on all military questions, and shall be charged with the general supervision of the Military Departments of the War Office."

In order still further to secure to the Commander-in-Chief this power of "general supervision," it was laid down in the details of office procedure, shortly afterwards published, that "all important questions will be referred to the Commander-in-Chief before submission to the Secretary of State."

These regulations reserved to the Commander-in-Chief a far larger measure of control and authority than was contemplated by the Hartington Commission by the late Government, or by the advocates of decentralisation in the press.

Of the absolute soundness of these arrangements, Lord Lansdowne feels no doubt. He holds strongly that it was essential to put an end to the old system under which the whole of the responsibility for all the Departments of the War Office was concentrated in the Commander-in-Chief. That officer, it must be remembered, is charged, not only with the general command of the forces at home and abroad, and with such duties as those of inspection, etc., but with "the preparation and maintenance of detailed plans for the mobilisation of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces, with the preparation and maintenance of schemes of offensive and defensive operations, and with the collecting and compiling of military information." The importance of these latter duties, which are those discharged in the armies of other countries by the Chief of the Staff, cannot be over-estimated, and, if the Commander-in-Chief is not relieved by such a measure of decentralisation as that which is now in force, it is humanly impossible that they should be properly performed.

It was for these reasons that the Cabinet decided that he should be referred to by heads of departments only in regard to important questions.

There is obviously some difficulty in determining what cases shall be regarded as falling within this category. A different construction might very likely be put upon

the words by different Commanders-in-Chief, or different Secretaries of State. Lord Lansdowne, in administering the War Office, has endeavoured to conform strictly to the spirit as well as to the letter of the rules, and to see that others observe it; and, so far as he is aware, it has been observed. If there have been omissions, he has always been ready to support the Commander-in-Chief in a demand that he should be more fully consulted.

Such consultation seems to Lord Lansdowne specially necessary in regard to cases involving questions of discipline. He has recently referred to a series of papers dealing with the most important discipline cases that have arisen within the last four years, and he finds that in no single one of them was there any failure to refer to the Commander-in-Chief. The suggestion that the Commander-in-Chief should be given, by Order in Council or otherwise, a special right of intervention in regard to questions of discipline does not, however, commend itself to him. To single out one Department and say that in respect to it the supervision of the Commander-in-Chief should be of a special character, seems to Lord Lansdowne calculated to weaken that general right of supervision and title to be consulted in all important cases, which the regulations, as they stand, already provide for the Commander-in-Chief.

Lord Lansdowne has had under consideration the expediency of issuing a minute calling the attention of the Headquarter Staff and other officials of the War Office to the regulations of which he has explained the substance in this paper. It seems to him, however, that before taking a course which would be tantamount to a censure of those concerned for their implied failure to conform to the regulations, it should be shown that there has been a habitual departure from them. It is not, he understands, alleged that this has been the case, and after consultation with the Commander-in-Chief he has decided not to issue such a minute for the present. The point will, however, be kept in view, and if the Commander-in-Chief will bring to Lord Lansdowne's notice important cases in which there has been a failure to refer to him, measures will be taken to insure that the proper procedure shall be followed.

Lord Lansdowne intends that this paper should remain on record in the War Office for the guidance and information of all concerned.

8th May, 1899.

There is also my minute of 1900, which has been laid before Parliament, and which the Commission has seen.

21426. The last memorandum you spoke of was one which was presented to Parliament?—Yes.

21427. Do you wish to make any further observations with regard to the organisation of 1895?—No. I really do not think I need add to those observations; I may say I remain very much of the opinion which is expressed in those minutes. Perhaps I should say just one word with regard to the change in the system which has been introduced by my successor—the change, I mean, which had the effect of altering the position of the Adjutant-General. Under my scheme the Adjutant-General was head of his own Department, and only under the supervision of the Commander-in-Chief. My successor, in deference to very strong expressions of military opinion, put the Adjutant-General back into a position distinctly subordinate, under the control and not under the supervision of the Commander-in-Chief. My feeling about that is that while I adhere to the reasons which induced me to put the Adjutant-General in a quasi-independent position, I feel that in a case of that kind you cannot ignore the great weight of solid military opinion in favour of putting the Adjutant-General in a different position from the other heads of Departments—in a position, namely, of more direct subordination to the Commander-in-Chief.

21428. But it was not a part of your scheme that the Adjutant-General should be forbidden access to the Secretary of State, as was stated?—No. I believe that statement was made to you in the passage to which Sir George Goldie called attention just now. I feel convinced that Sir Evelyn Wood misunderstood what was said to him by the Commander-in-Chief. Of course, if the Commander-in-Chief had told Sir Evelyn Wood that he was not to have access to me, the Commander-in-Chief would have been flagrantly violating the Order in Council, and I do not for a moment believe Lord Wolseley would have done anything of the kind.

21429. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) This is the passage in Lord Wolseley's evidence which deals with this matter, and the answers were given partly in reply to Sir Henry Norman and partly in reply to myself:—
 0-6 "(Q. *Sir Henry Norman.*) You mentioned what I must call the extraordinary arrangements that prevailed at the War Office, that the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General, who, in all previous times, had been supposed to be officers under the Commander-in-Chief, had direct access to the Secretary of State? (A.) Were directly under him. (Q.) Which has now been altered again? (A.) Yes. (Q.) But Sir Evelyn Wood spoke about that; he said that he received instructions not to go to the Secretary of State without your orders. Was he correct in saying that? Would you like me to read exactly what he said? (A.) Yes, if you please. (Q.) I put to him: 'Did I understand you to say that in the period between 1895 and 1900, though you were supposed to be more or less free, as a staff officer holding a very high appointment, to go to the Secretary of State, you did not feel yourself able to go, except with the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief?' and his answer was: 'I was told not to go by the Commander-in-Chief.' Then I asked: 'Does not that seem one way of getting round an order?' (A.) I think it is very possible that I did. I do not remember the circumstances of having ever said those words to him, but it is quite possible that I did. I should think, if I did say it, I told him in very different words. I should have said it was very desirable that he should always come and tell me what had taken place between him and the Secretary of State upon any subject under discussion; that it was necessary that I should know of any discussion that took place between the Secretary of State and any officers supposed to be serving under me. I am sure that was the way I should have put it to him. (Q.) He put it a little more direct? (A.) Yes. (Q. *Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But, as a matter of fact, by the Order in Council, he was under your supervision? (A.) 'Supervision' is a curious term; I do not quite understand what it means. (Q.) But that would quite justify you in suggesting it to him? (A.) Yes; I was acting within my rights entirely?"—I read Lord Wolseley's answer as meaning that he did not admit having used the words which were attributed to him, but that he did admit having spoken to the Adjutant-General to this effect: "That it was very desirable that he should always come and tell me what had taken place between him and the Secretary of State upon any subject under discussion" (I think one may fairly assume this refers to subjects of importance, and not to mere trivialities); "that it was necessary that I should know of any discussion that took place between the Secretary of State and any officers supposed to be serving under me. I am sure that was the way I should have put it to him." I think Lord Wolseley probably told Sir Evelyn Wood that it was essential that he (Lord Wolseley) should be made aware of any important discussions between the Adjutant-General and myself. I do not at all object to that, and I think that comes well within the Commander-in-Chief's powers of supervision.

21430. When you submitted the Order in Council of 1895 did you contemplate that you would be able to have confidential communications with the separate heads of Departments or not?—Not, if I may say so, behind the back of the Commander-in-Chief; but what I did distinctly contemplate was that upon a question, let us say, concerning the introduction of a new quick-firing gun, I should have the freest possible consultation with the Director-General of Ordnance, and that it would not be necessary, whenever a consultation of that kind took place, that I should ask the Commander-in-Chief to come into my room and hear it.

21431. But I see in your minute of 31st October, 1895, to which you are referring at present, you say: "It might perhaps be added that, so strongly imbued are most soldiers with ideas of military discipline, that except in very extreme cases the head of a Department would be reluctant to press his view of a case against that of the Commander-in-Chief. That this feeling exists is a matter of notoriety." And a little lower: "Much would, of course, depend upon the character of the individuals concerned, but it would always be difficult for, say, an Inspector-General of Ordnance to take upon himself to thwart a proposal strongly advocated by the Commander-in-Chief, who is the source from which flow promotion and appointment." It was on that account I asked you whether it was not contemplated by the Order in Council of 1895 that you

might feel it necessary to call upon one or the heads of the great Departments in the War Office for his private opinion without exposing him to being in conflict with the Commander-in-Chief by a disclosure of his views?—What was in my mind was that by confidential communication of that kind I should get the actual mind of a man who was an expert in a manner in which I should not get it if I was only to see him in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief and perhaps some other senior officers. It is conceivable that you might have a Commander-in-Chief who had views of his own about artillery, and in such a case your ordnance expert might feel a certain reluctance to put forward his own views in the presence of his superior.

21432. And not only perhaps in his presence, but if he had afterwards to report to that superior what he said to you and what you said to him?—Yes.

21433. The reporting afterwards would have very much the same effect, would it not?—It would not be quite the same thing, but I never contemplated that the Commander-in-Chief should be kept in the dark.

21434. No, that is a different matter?—It is certainly the case that when you have a number of these high officers sitting round a table they will not give you the same absolutely frank, unreserved opinion that they will when you get them quietly into your room and talk to them *tête-à-tête*.

21435. No; we had evidence upon that point from the Director-General of Ordnance, which appears on the notes, that at the War Office Council he might not be prepared to express an opinion which might not be shared by the President; that is natural, is it not?—A great deal depends on the idiosyncrasies of the different heads of Departments.

21436. (*Chairman.*) I think there was also an expression of opinion that military opinion would come out more distinctly in a military board without the presence of the Secretary of State?—I think that is likely, and it was for that reason, in order to give the opportunity for military opinion to form itself, that the Army Board was constituted.

21437. The Army Board as under the regulations of 1895?—Yes.

21438. (*Viscount Esher.*) Then it is the Secretary of State, and not the Commander-in-Chief, who inspires all this alarm. Is not that so?—I have a strong suspicion that the Secretary of State is not so alarming to the military officers as one military officer is to another. The Secretary of State, you see, cannot profess to be an expert; he is, more or less, an ignorant civilian, and has to gather the best information he can from the experts, but as between soldier and soldier you have one expert against another expert, or one expert against another man who considers himself an expert, and that leads to reticencies and suppressions of opinion.

21439. (*Chairman.*) Just to finish up the point you were speaking of before about the access of the Adjutant-General to the Secretary of State, I suppose you did see Sir Evelyn Wood?—Constantly.

21440. You are aware that there have been criticisms by several witnesses on the operation of the Order in Council of 1895?—Yes.

21441. Have you anything to say with regard to them?—Would you indicate the particular criticism?

21442. One is Lord Wolseley's own?—Lord Wolseley frankly objected to the whole system; his idea was a big Commander-in-Chief, with all the heads of departments under him, and I think I have said all that is necessary to combat that view in the minutes you have before you.

21443. There were two principal points I gathered from his evidence which he laid stress upon, and one was the position of the Commander-in-Chief, in which he put it that he ought either to be a member of the Cabinet or to have entry to the Cabinet. That was the position he wished the Commander-in-Chief to have, I think?—I know the idea of adding the Commander-in-Chief to the Cabinet has been advocated on high authority of late, but I have never believed that it would be a good arrangement, nor do I believe that except upon special occasions it is desirable that the Commander-in-Chief should attend Cabinet meetings. He may be a very distinguished soldier, and a very able and competent Commander-in-Chief, but it does not at all follow that upon administrative

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
 K.G., P.C.,
 G.C.S.I.,
 G.C.M.G.,
 G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

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questions he is the best person qualified to put his own case before the Cabinet; in other words, if he carries his Secretary of State with him, and gives his Secretary of State a good brief, the Secretary of State, I believe, is more likely to carry the proposals through the Cabinet than the Commander-in-Chief himself.

21444. And under the Order in Council of 1895 was it intended that whenever necessary the Commander-in-Chief should be summoned and state his own case?—That point was not touched by the Order in Council of 1895.

21445. It was not specifically touched, but was that underlying the essence of it?—I do not think that point arises in connection with the Order in Council. As a matter of fact, there were occasions, although they were rare, on which the Commander-in-Chief did attend the Cabinet, and there were other occasions, less rare, upon which he attended the meetings of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet.

See Q. 8948.

21446. The other main suggestion in Lord Wolseley's evidence was this. I quote it in his own words: "Make the Commander-in-Chief, as long as he is, as at the present moment, a non-political man, submit to Parliament every year over his own signature a certificate to say that he, on his own responsibility, certifies to the country that those three Army Corps are absolutely complete in every store that is requisite in order to mobilise them at the shortest possible notice, and the same thing as regards the two Army Corps being ready for active service abroad." What have you to say with regard to a certificate of that kind?—It strikes me as being rather a counsel of perfection; the certificate is to establish that the Army Corps are complete in every store and equipment—I think those were the words you used?

21447. Yes, and next day he submitted to us a rough draft of what he would propose as the certificate; I do not know whether you have seen that?—I think I did see it, but my answer to your question is that such a certificate to be of any real value would have to establish that the Army Corps were complete in every store and equipment that might be necessary for them, no matter in what part of the world they might be called upon to serve. That is one of our great difficulties; we do not know where our troops are likely to fight, and the tendency is for equipment of all kinds to be very highly specialised.

See Q. 9196.

21448. That is brought out in the draft certificate which Lord Wolseley submitted to us in these words: "This is to be signed once a year by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army; it is only a rough draft, but it gives the general indication of the lines upon which I think it ought to be done:—'I have the honour to report that the position as regards the forces which it has been decided we are to be prepared at all times to put into the field for service abroad or for home defence is as follows:—(1) The two Army Corps for service abroad are complete in personnel, equipment, and stores except as follows: First, any special equipment or stores required by the special conditions of the country in which they may have to operate. This cannot be provided until that country is known; secondly, there are the following deficiencies in the men and stores required, independent of the special equipment referred to above' (and then, of course, follows statement of them). 'These two Army Corps would be ready to embark as soon as the necessary sea transport could be provided for them, or so many days after the order to mobilise had been given.' Or, if that was not the case it should be stated. 'The three Army Corps for home defence are complete in personnel, equipment, and stores, except as follows' (then would follow the particulars as before). 'These three Army Corps would be ready to move to their appointed stations in (so many) days after the order to mobilise had been given.' To be signed by the Commander-in-Chief"—The passage in that draft certificate that strikes me most is that in which the Commander-in-Chief would make a reservation to the effect that the Army Corps was complete in all except the special equipment which might be required by the peculiar circumstances of the country in which the troops were to serve. Look what an enormous loophole that would leave. As I was on the point of saying, the tendency is to specialise equipment very highly indeed; you have different clothes, different wagons, different equipment of all sorts according to the country in which hostilities take place. Now, if the Commander-in-Chief's certificate left that loophole

it seems to me to follow that the certificate would not be of any very great value. You might find that you wanted your Army Corps for service in some country in which equipment of a highly specialised kind was required, and that equipment would not be forthcoming.

21449. But it would not be forthcoming under any system, would it?—Well, but does the Commander-in-Chief's certificate advance you beyond the point where you are now?

21450. I understand it would advance you in this respect, that the chance of deficiencies in stores, such as were brought out by Sir Henry Brackenbury in 1899, would be guarded against in that case?—I doubt whether it would really protect you. On the other hand, it seems to me to be too great a power to put into the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. You put him in the position of being at any moment able to refuse to sign this certificate, and thereby forcing the Secretary of State for War to go to Parliament with an admission that things are not as they should be. I think that would be likely to create very inconvenient relations between the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief, and I should prefer to leave matters as they are.

21451. Then what is the position as they are? The Secretary of State makes his statement once a year, in which he takes upon himself practically to give the certificate which is proposed here, because he states to Parliament that the Army equipment is adequate?—I do not think you can divest the Secretary of State of his responsibility.

21452. That responsibility is on the Secretary of State now?—Yes, and all the certificates in the world will not relieve the Secretary of State of his final responsibility.

21453. That is distinctly the responsibility of the Secretary of State that he does give what amounts to a certificate each year in his statement on the Army Estimates?—I should say that there is an unwritten certificate to the effect that all has been done that can be done within the bounds of financial possibility.

21454. And at any rate, if anything turns up afterwards, it is the Secretary of State who is responsible for that omission?—If anyone has to be hung, it must be the Secretary of State.

21455. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And this would be a certificate by the Commander-in-Chief that the Secretary of State was correct in making his statement; he would be an auditor really, in a sense?—There is just one other point about that certificate which I think is worth considering. Does not the idea of the certificate proceed upon the assumption that you can conceive finality in these questions of arms, equipment, and so on? Now my experience taught me that there was no such thing as finality, and that the equipment which was thought good one year was voted to be out of date the next year, and so on. Let me give you just one illustration of the kind of thing I mean; although we had not any large reserves of clothing, we had a very considerable quantity of it in store, and we were immensely proud of ourselves because we decentralised our so-called reserves of clothing. You had all these suits of khaki drill, or whatever the material was, bound up in nice little bundles at the depôts; the reservists were to come in, take down their bundles, and go away on board ship, and nothing could have been more admirable than this arrangement. At the very last moment my military advisers came to me and told me that the material was wrong, that they must have khaki serge, and all these elaborate precautions proved to have been more or less useless. We had to go to the trade under tremendous pressure to get this material made, with the result that there was delay and confusion.

21456. (*Chairman.*) Do you think that was one of the preparations which were in abeyance pending the money being voted?—No, it was really an after-thought that serge and not drill was the proper material.

21457. I know it came pretty late, but I think it was included in preparations?—I do not know the exact date, but my point is that it was a sudden change.

21458. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I should like to ask a question upon that; a suggestion of that sort would come from the principal medical officer of the Army, no doubt, and we have it in evidence that it came from him?—It would come from him.

21459. Under the system of a permanent Army Board on which he sat, would not questions of that sort naturally come up for discussion during peace time?—There was an Army Board, and I do not see why this question should not have been brought before it; it did, in fact, come before it on the 31st August.

21460. Your Army Board, under the name Mobilisation Committee, only began to sit in June?—I have something to say about that presently.

21461. What I want to get at is this, that so far as we know there was no such Board permanently in existence beforehand?—There was the original Army Board, consisting of the four heads of Departments and the Commander-in-Chief, and there was nothing to prevent the Director-General of the Army Medical Department from going to anyone he pleased—for instance, he might have gone to the Director-General of Ordnance or to the Commander-in-Chief, and said to him: "Now for this climate in which we are going to fight we want serge instead of drill," and the question might then have been brought before the Army Board.

21462. There is rather a difference between a man doing that on his own initiative and a Board meeting round a table, and men bringing up suggestions to the Board from week to week?—Would your point not rather be that the Director-General of the Army Medical Department ought to have been a member of the Board?

21463. And that the Board should have met regularly during peace time; there are two suggestions?—The Board of which I speak did meet perhaps not regularly, in peace time. The Director-General of the Army Medical Department was not a member of it, however.

21464. We have it in evidence that the Army Board at present meets very seldom, practically only for the discussion of the Estimates, and I think that was perhaps so in the last year of your tenure of office?—I do not know how often they met. I do not know whether I ought not perhaps to qualify what I said a moment ago—the Army Board under the Order in Council had not the right of initiative, and therefore, strictly speaking, the Director-General of Ordnance might have conceived that he had no right to bring up any subject at the Army Board. On the other hand, of course, if a representation had been made to him by the Director-General of the Medical Department he could have come either to the Secretary of State or to the Commander-in-Chief with a proposal to refer the question to the Army Board, or he might have started a paper on the matter, which would have come to me.

21465. My only suggestion is that when men have the habit of meeting together regularly, they much more naturally take up topics, and topics much more naturally occur to them than might occur to an individual who is not in the habit of meeting his colleagues to discuss questions?—I entirely agree with you as to the advantage of frequent meetings.

21466. (Chairman.) There is just one other point you mention in your précis before we come to the Boards, about a statement by Sir Ralph Knox, that the authorised procedure was departed from; what do you say to that?—I do not know whether he gave you any particular instance. I know Sir Ralph Knox did rather resent the manner in which business was sometimes transacted directly between the high military officers and the Secretary of State. His reason no doubt was this, that according to the strict procedure, if an official proposal is put forward by one of the heads of Departments, the paper ought to go through the Permanent Under-Secretary, in order that it may be registered and not lost sight of, and there is an inconvenience when the head of a military Department takes a short cut and does business with the Secretary of State direct. I quite understand Sir Ralph Knox, as an old and experienced official chafing a little at the idea that direct communications went on.

21467. (Viscount Esher.) Verbally?—Verbally, yes. On the other hand, I think it would be most unfortunate if anything was done to prevent or discourage high military officials from going freely to the Secretary of State, and certainly in my time whenever those discussions—those personal communications—led to a result or to the formulation of a proposal, we always treated the proposal officially, and made an official paper of it, and got it back, so to speak, into the official groove. There may have been cases, and I believe there were sometimes, where the regular procedure was not followed as strictly as it might have been, and

the result, of course, was a certain amount of inconvenience.

21468. (Chairman.) Of course, as long as the minutes were recorded eventually, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary's position was perfectly secured?—Perfectly.

21469. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) In answer to Question 1323, Sir Ralph Knox said he always understood there could be no objection to verbal interviews, but he goes on to say, and I had better read the words: 27 Mar. 1903. "I do not know whether you know the location of the War Office, but the Commander-in-Chief has a room adjoining that of the Secretary of State practically, with a door into it, and they are in constant communication with one another, and of what verbally passes there is no record whatever; and so with regard to the other officers; say the Director-General of Ordnance would go into the Secretary of State's room, as a matter of course, and discuss many questions with him. That I always understood there could be no objection to; I mean if the Secretary of State wants to see any officer of his Department he sees him, but when the question takes the form of the *litera scripta*, whatever discussion may have taken place, there ought to be a written decision upon it, and that ought to be submitted through the Under-Secretary of State, I think, without question. It was constantly occurring that decisions were obtained direct by the heads of different Departments on their *ex parte* statement by the Secretary of State"—Without knowing what particular occasions he referred to, it is very difficult to answer that question; at any rate, I think he was right in principle as to the procedure. At the same time, it was a procedure that need not always be followed to the letter.

21470. May we not take it that it would be a serious disadvantage to the Secretary of State if he could not have conversation with the leading experts in the War Office without the necessity of having to record all that is said?—A serious misfortune, and I would even go further, and say that even communication by the *litera scripta*, so long as it was informal and confidential, was in many cases very desirable.

(After a short adjournment.)

21471. (Chairman.) (To the witness.) The remaining head of your evidence is with regard to the consultative bodies within the War Office. There were some changes introduced in respect to those in 1895?—That is so; when I took office I found that there were in existence—first, a War Office Meeting which used to be convened by the Secretary of State, and at which the heads of departments, military and civilian, were present; it met rarely, and, in fact, I do not think it is too much to say that at that time those meetings had almost fallen into desuetude. Besides that there were what were known as Adjutant-General's Meetings; they were meetings attended by the Adjutant-General and the three other great military heads. These meetings were not recognised by the constitution of the War Office, and I think they may be regarded as having, to some extent, grown up in consequence of the somewhat special condition of the War Office at that time, when the Duke of Cambridge was Commander-in-Chief. The Duke of Cambridge gave a great deal of attention to certain parts of the business, and not so much to others, and the Adjutant-General consequently acquired a position of special authority in the office. It was his habit to convene his military colleagues, and to confer with them as to various questions as they arose. I thought the arrangement a bad one, partly because it had no place in the constitution of the office. It was an irregular arrangement, because, when Lord Wolseley succeeded the Duke of Cambridge as Commander-in-Chief, it was quite clear that he would expect to have a voice in deliberations of that kind. I therefore regularised the matter by creating the Army Board, which consisted of the Commander-in-Chief and the four other military heads.

21472. That was what you called the Army Board under the 1895 organisation?—Yes; the original Army Board, we might call it, to distinguish it.

21473. Because that was not the Army Board of which we had the Minutes during the war?—No; that is a different body.

21474. It has been rather difficult to carry the nomenclature out, but the Army Board under the 1895 Order is the one you are now talking of?—I would call it, for the sake of convenience, the original Army Board; we constituted that Army Board and abolished the Adju-

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne,
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G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1903.

tant-General's Meetings, and we gave, under the Rules of Procedure which you have had before you, a recognised position to the War Office Council. With regard to the original Army Board, we restricted its functions to the consideration of the Estimates, to the consideration of promotions, and, thirdly, to the consideration of such matters as might be referred to it by the Secretary of State. Those were the changes made in 1895.

21475. You had besides that a War Office Council, had you not?—Yes; I think I mentioned that: the old War Office Meeting which had existed since Lord Cardwell's time was for the first time given a position in the constitution of the War Office.

21476. Under the presidency of the Secretary of State?—Under the presidency of the Secretary of State.

21477. But at that council all the subjects of discussion were arranged by the Secretary of State?—Yes; the Secretary of State's practice was to reserve for consideration by the War Office Council any questions with regard to which it seemed to him desirable that there should be deliberation and discussion. It met, not at regular intervals, but when it was convened by the Secretary of State, and there was usually an agenda with précis of the matters coming up for discussion. A note was taken by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State; the decision was reserved for the Secretary of State, who afterwards announced it.

21478. No individual member had any initiative?—No; but if any individual member desired to bring a matter before the War Office Council, he certainly would not have been denied the opportunity of doing so.

21479. He had to communicate privately with the Secretary of State, I suppose?—He would have come to me, and said, "It might be desirable that this matter, which concerns two or three different departments, should be debated at the War Office Council."

21480. And do you defend that position?—I think so; I think practically it left any one free to originate a discussion, if they desired to do so.

21481. You are aware that a Committee sat under Sir Clinton Dawkins, which examined into that matter, and they reported that there should be a board practically on the same lines, but the members of the board should be empowered to bring before it any important question affecting their department, and the board as a whole should consider and decide any proposal submitted to it, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State?—I see no objection to that.

21482. You see no objection; but I understood you to say, from your previous answer, that you thought the other arrangement a satisfactory one?—My suggestion was that, under the other arrangement, virtually there was no reason why any member should not bring forward a subject if he chose.

21483. You think the Secretary of State would never have exercised a veto at the preliminary stage, and prevented a member from bringing up a subject?—I do not think I should have exercised such a veto unless it had seemed to me that the subject had not yet arrived at the point where a general discussion was called for.

21484. Still, the other system preserves the independence of members rather more?—Yes; it has that advantage.

21485. There may be an argument for it on that ground?—I think so.

21486. And it has been adopted?—It has been adopted, I believe, both in the case of the War Office Council and the Army Board.

21487. At any rate, I am looking just now at the War Office Council; we had it from Sir Edward Ward that that had been adopted by the present Secretary of State?—I believe so.

21488. Then, with regard to the Army Board, the Army Board in the war was a different organisation, was it not, from what you have been describing?—The new Army Board, which is a convenient way of describing it, came into existence in this manner: There was already, as part of the machinery of the War Office, a Committee for Mobilisation, which was supposed to be assembled whenever there was war. The Committee consisted of 19 members, and it became apparent at the very outset that that body was not a well-composed body for the purpose of dealing expeditiously with the kind of points which

arose from day to day. I therefore substituted for it a Board comprising the old Army Board—that is the Board consisting of the Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and the Director-General of Ordnance, with the addition of the Accountant-General and the Assistant Under-Secretary of State. I made those additions because I thought it extremely desirable that the soldiers should have, so to speak, in their pocket two members of the permanent civilian staff of the War Office, who would be able to tell them, the one about the back history of any question that might come up, and the other about its financial aspects. That body met constantly, and I believe you have seen its minutes. I have always thought that it did its work extremely well, and that it was a valuable addition to the machinery of the War Office at such a time.

21489. We had it, too, from, I think, both sides, that the civilian members whom you added to the Council took the part which you intended them to play—that they did not interfere with the military discussion of the matter, but gave their advice on the other branches of the subject?—Quite so; I think that really was a good illustration of what I have always regarded as the right mode of conducting business in the War Office, viz., that the soldiers and civilians should, as far as possible, sit side by side, and not occupy different branches of the office, and occupy their time in controversies with one another.

21490. At the same time, what I meant rather by my observation was that it did not interfere with the principle that the Army Board, as so constituted, could express the distinctively military opinion, while the War Office Council, with the Secretary of State at its head, was more representative of the whole War Office?—Quite so; the two civilians were present more as assessors, if I may say so.

21491. And, therefore, the Army Board, as so constituted, did represent the collective military opinion of the War Office?—Yes.

21492. And that you consider an advantage?—I do.

21493. Do you think that that still continues under the present system?—I can speak with much more knowledge of what the system was in my time than of what it is now.

21494. I am speaking now of the present system after the Order in Council of 1901, and, of course, I do not ask you to speak to that with any detailed knowledge, but I only ask you whether you think that still continues or whether you are of opinion that it should continue?—Is it not the case that the Army Board still exists, but with the addition of one or two more civilian members?

21495. We have had evidence to this effect, that the Army Board does still exist, but the principle being that the War Office Council now has regular weekly meetings, the Army Board has dropped into the background and only meets very occasionally, and principally for the consideration of the Estimates. And all that I wanted to get from you was that there being that difference between the War Office Council and the Army Board, the latter gives essentially the collective military opinion of the War Office; it is of great importance that that board should not drop into the background, but should meet on the same class of subjects as they dealt with during the war, and present to the War Office Council and the Secretary of State the collective opinion of the military members of the War Office?—Yes, it seems to me that that would be desirable. The question is, I suppose, whether the additional importance which has been given to the War Office Council, on which all the military heads of departments have a place, might not be considered as compensating for any diminution of authority in the Army Board.

21496. It seems to me, with all deference, that it is a matter of definition of duties, and that the history of the different boards in the War Office rather bears that out, but if the War Office Council took up matters which were not distinctively matters of military opinion, and the Army Board those which were distinctively of military opinion, there might be a line of division drawn?—Yes.

21497. Do you not think that would be a very desirable process in the organisation of the office?—Do I understand your suggestion to be that the military heads should be given an opportunity of formulating

their policy in consultation before that policy comes up for consideration in the War Office Council?

21498. On matters of purely distinctive military policy?—Yes, I do not disagree with that.

21499. You see we have had previously mentioned a representation from the late Commander-in-Chief that he ought as Commander-in-Chief to have the position of putting forward a military policy even before the Cabinet, and I am suggesting to you that in the War Office the collective opinion of the Army Board was proved in the war to be of very great utility when brought out by meetings of the Army Board?—Yes, and I see from a note that I have here that under the present constitution of the Army Board the board is free to consider any important subject which the Commander-in-Chief or the head of the military department may desire to bring forward for discussion. Therefore I take it that they have that opportunity now.

21500. They had the opportunity, but according to the evidence we had, I think, from the Commander-in-Chief himself, the Army Board very seldom meets?—That, I think, would be unfortunate.

21501. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Who would convene the Army Board?—The Commander-in-Chief.

21502. (Chairman.) What is your opinion generally with regard to the advantages of these boards?—I think the Commission will have gathered from what I have said that I attach great importance to the practice of consultations round a table between the soldiers and the civilians in the War Office. The soldiers are at a disadvantage in two respects; in the first place a good many of them, the men who come into the office and take up a five years' appointment, cannot know the back history of the questions that come up—it is impossible that they should—and it is of very great advantage to them to have by their side men who have passed years in the office, and who know what has taken place with regard to the different cases, who know what the difficulties are and whether there are pitfalls which have previously been discovered, and which it is desirable to avoid. Then very often, but certainly not always, the soldiers have not quite a sufficient appreciation of financial difficulties; I have known some soldiers who were excellent financiers; others are a little inclined to take the line of saying "It is our business to tell you what the Army wants, and it is your business to find the money." Then with regard to the value of these boards as a means of bringing the heads of departments together: I think there is a great deal to be said from that point of view in their favour. You have constantly in the War Office cases which concern not one department of the office, but more departments than one, and if each head goes his own gait and deals with the subject off his own bat, there obviously must be a great deal of confusion, a confusion that can be avoided if the heads of departments are brought together in consultation; therefore, upon the whole, I am strongly in favour of meetings of this kind. On the other hand, I sometimes think that people are inclined to run away with the idea that a board is a panacea for all Army troubles; there is a sort of idea that if you have a board of seven people the opinion of that board is seven times as valuable as the opinion of a single man; but, of course, I need not remind the Commission that the heads of the great military departments owe their position to the fact that they are experts in their own line. Their opinion as experts with regard to their own particular department is, of course, of first rate value, but it does not at all follow that you would get a better opinion, let us say, about a question of fortress armament from a board of five or six members than you will get from the one man who has made the question of fortress armament his special study.

21503. No, but on the other hand, if you want the general military opinion of the War Office, the mere fact that the heads of departments are experts in their own line would make the opinion of the board a more complete opinion than the opinion of each individually?—That would be true with regard to matters which, like many War Office matters, concern not one department but two or three.

21504. That is what I mean?—Yes.

21505. The last heading you gave us was about any measures taken between 1895 and 1899 for increasing the strength of the Army?—I thought it perhaps worth while to remind the Commission that during

those years something was done to increase the efficiency of the Army. I do not profess to give a complete catalogue, but I would say in the first place, that during our first two years the greater part of our time was taken up in fighting for the existence of a short service system. I daresay you will remember what a campaign was directed in Parliament and in the Press against that system. Lord Wolseley and I spent a good deal of our time in preparing the case for the defence, which I am glad to say we were able to maintain successfully. During the time when I was at the War Office, amongst other things, we increased the strength of the home battalions by 80 men per battalion; we very largely increased the field artillery (that is a point which has already been mentioned), and supplied it with a quick-firing gun; we rearmed the Army with a new rifle.

21506. (Chairman.) With the quick-firing gun?—Yes, there is great difference of opinion as to what is a quick-firing gun, but with a gun that in point of rapidity of fire was, I believe, as good as any gun at the time in use upon the Continent, and far better than any gun with which the artillery had yet been supplied.

21507. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) The 15-pounder?—Yes; we carried through a large scheme for re-arming our fortresses, superseding the obsolete muzzle-loaders, with which many of them were equipped; we added considerably to the barrack accommodation throughout the country; we purchased the great Salisbury Plain manœuvring ground; we passed a Bill for facilitating the holding of manœuvres; we also passed a Bill to which I have made reference already for the creation of a special service reserve for minor expeditions; we improved the pay of the soldier by putting an end to the grocery stoppage; we did a good deal towards supplying rifle ranges and increased reserves of ammunition; and, altogether, I am inclined to believe that Lord Wolseley was not far off the mark when he said in that minute of January, 1900, that the Army which we sent to South Africa was a better found and a better equipped Army than had ever been sent from these shores before.

21508. (Sir John Jackson.) Does a soldier now get his pay without any stoppages?—We did away with what was called the grocery stoppage; I think the effect of that was to add 3d. to the soldiers' pay, but that left certain other stoppages, and I think I am right in saying that under Mr. Brodrick's present scheme those have all disappeared, and the soldier's pay has been very considerably raised.

21509. (Chairman.) Is there any other point you wish to record?—I think not.

21510. There is one matter which I should like just to mention, and that is the question of the relations between the War Office and the Treasury; we have had a certain amount of evidence on the subject. Sir Evelyn Wood and Mr. Marzials both spoke to it, and, as I understood it, if a proposal involving expenditure is brought up by any Military Department of the War Office it goes to the finance side first to be discussed?—Yes.

21511. And then it is submitted to the Secretary of State?—It goes to the Finance Department, and then, if the Finance Department objects to it, or cuts it about, the Military Department concerned is given an opportunity of saying what it has to say in defence. I think that was a change introduced while I was at the War Office; the soldiers used to complain that their schemes were torn up by the financial critics, and that they had no more to say.

21512. So that they got a second hearing?—Yes.

21513. And then it goes to the Secretary of State?—Yes.

21514. And if he approves it then goes to the Treasury?—If he approves, and the proposal is one for a service for which Parliament has provided money, then the expenditure may go on at once.

21515. Without reference to the Treasury?—Without reference to the Treasury; but if no funds are available out of the particular subhead, then it has to go to the Treasury.

21516. That is any expenditure which has got to be met out of the provision for the year?—Yes. Then any larger proposals, involving a large outlay, would have to be dealt with either by a Supplementary Estimate or on the Estimate of the next financial year, and in

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both those cases, of course, the Treasury has to be consulted.

21517. What we were told was that in that case the representative of the War Office in any discussion with the Treasury was the financial side of the War Office?—The inference being that the soldier had no opportunity of defending his own proposal?

21518. Exactly?—I do not think that is the case, but, of course, these points which are discussed between the Treasury and the War Office between Estimates, during the course of the year, as a rule are comparatively minor points, and I have never heard that the Treasury was unfair to the War Office; on the contrary, although their business is to criticise, I have never heard that their criticism was unfairly exercised.

21519. Or sums refused unfairly?—If they were so refused it would always be open to the Military Department to go to the Secretary of State and move him to take up the cudgels for that particular proposal.

21520. That is what I wanted to come to; that would be the next step?—Yes.

21521. And I suppose in the case of new expenditure affecting the Estimates of the next year, especially if it was of importance, that would always be the case; it would be for the Secretary of State to deal directly with these matters?—Yes; proposals of that kind would be considered by the Secretary of State with other proposals when the Estimates came up for his consideration, probably in the month of October or November, and then the final discussion would be between the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the two would probably try to arrive at an agreement as to the sum to be taken in the year's Estimates, and if the two could not agree there would be a reference to the Cabinet.

21522. And the final discussion would rest with the Cabinet?—That is so.

21523. I think it was suggested in one answer that the Treasury might, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer might, define a certain sum within which the War Office must keep their proposals, in which case there would have to be a discussion, I suppose, in the War Office itself as to the particular heads, and the way in which the particular heads might have to be cut down?—The first question that would have to be decided would be whether the Secretary of State would accept that particular sum; he might accept a decision from the Cabinet that the Estimate he had put in was to be reduced, and it might be left to him to decide how that reduction should be effected.

21524. He would generally put in an Estimate based upon separate provisions for the separate heads, would he?—Yes; in discussion with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Cabinet he would certainly be expected to explain how his total was divided among the different heads of expenditure.

21525. And if the decision was against him, and the sum total was cut down, would it rest with him to distribute it among the heads?—It might do so, because from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's point of view if he got the reduction it would not signify very much to him whether he got it at one point or another, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Cabinet might indicate to the Secretary of State that in their opinion the War Office proposals with regard to certain Departments were justified, but that they were not equally justified in the case of another. In that case the reduction would have to be made, not over the whole surface of the Estimates, but upon the particular items which had not been accepted by the Secretary of State's colleagues.

21526. If they decided upon one particular point no doubt that would be so; if they decided on it generally it would rest with the War Office to distribute?—I am bound to say that in my experience the process of insisting upon a reduction *en bloc* has not been resorted to. I have always found the Chancellor of the Exchequer ready to discuss with me on their merits the particular details of the War Office proposals.

21527. If he took exception to one particular head, would the military member concerned in that particular head have any opportunity of representing the great importance, in his opinion, of the expenditure which had been proposed?—Certainly, because in all these discussions the Secretary of State is briefed by his military advisers; all these points are very technical

points, and it is absolutely necessary that he should be convinced by his military advisers and supplied by them with the most cogent arguments producible.

21528. And you would have consulted the particular military member on a matter of that kind?—Certainly, from the first; and if I found I could not get what I wanted from the Cabinet, I should go back to my military adviser and say, "I am very sorry you have asked for so much; all I can do for you is a smaller sum."

21529. Would not the opinion of the Army Board be very useful on a matter of that kind?—On some matters I think it would be.

21530. As giving a correlative importance to the various subheads?—Yes, but we really did get that, because the War Office Estimates were always discussed at my table in the presence of the military heads, and therefore I had a very fair opportunity of judging of the relative importance of the proposals.

21531. That is in the Council?—In the Council.

21532. But, of course, it is possible that the military opinion might be expressed more freely in the Army Board, where the Secretary of State was not present?—I never found that the soldiers were very diffident in expressing their opinion.

21533. Does that give a full description of the relations between the War Office and the Treasury?—I think that is all I can suggest on the subject.

21534. (*Viscount Esher.*) That lump sum proposal the Chairman has alluded to just now, in point of fact, was made by Lord Randolph Churchill at the time of his retirement?—Yes; he said, take off half a million.

21535. And do what you like with it?—Yes.

21536. And it was on the objection taken by the Secretary of State for War that Lord Randolph Churchill retired from office?—That is right.

21537. (*Chairman.*) Have you anything to say about the contract system?—I am afraid I can tell you very little about that; of course, as you know, a large number of the contracts are made locally by the Generals in the Districts. The larger contracts are made in the War Office. The military head of the Department is consulted, the Finance Department is consulted, and then, as you are aware, there is an official called the Director-General of Contracts, who deals with those questions, and they come for examination in the Financial Secretary's Department, who refers to the Secretary of State when necessary.

21538. In your experience, do you think it works for economy and also for efficiency as it has been worked in the War Office?—I think so.

21539. I am speaking now of the home system?—Yes; I have no reason to say the contrary.

21540. Of course, in the case of the war, the contracts out in South Africa were on a different footing?—They were all made locally, and about a great many of them we heard nothing until afterwards.

21541. You could not from the War Office exercise any control?—I think not; we had hardly any means of judging what the fair price for mules or wagons or things of that kind on the spot would be.

21542. And, at any rate, you are not in a position to speak of them in any way?—I am afraid not.

21543. There is only one other matter I should like to ask you a question about, and that is with regard to the Imperial Yeomanry; that, of course, was a new departure at the beginning of the war?—Quite new.

21544. The particular point I wanted to ask was that there seemed to be some impression that they did not receive quite the encouragement when they first offered their services that they were entitled to expect?—I do not think they can complain of any want of encouragement from me or from Mr. Wyndham, who was Under-Secretary of State. It was an audacious innovation, and we should not have made it if we had not been prepared to give it every encouragement in our power.

21545. Prior to the application of Lord Chesham and Lord Valentia, Colonel Lucas, in the early days of October, approached the War Office, but he had an answer, I understand, from General Borrett that there was no intention whatever of employing Yeomanry, and three weeks afterwards it was decided that the Yeomanry forces should be employed?—General Borrett was in a comparatively subordinate position in the War Office, and I do not think that upon a point of that kind

they ought to have regarded General Borrett's answer as final.

21546. And of course, at any rate, they were left very much, in the first instance, on their own resources?—That was rather the point of the experiment. These gentlemen who came forward gave us to understand that they had special opportunities of collecting men and horses, and even that they had the command of shipping to transport these newly-raised corps to South Africa. I rather jumped at the proposal, because, in the first place, our hands were very full at the time, and also because I was being constantly told that the War Office methods were so involved in red tape that nothing could ever be got through. I therefore thought it was an excellent opportunity of seeing what some of these gentlemen could do for themselves, and we, therefore, gave them a very free hand, but I think as time went on they became aware that they had a good deal to gain by the help of men who were older stagers than themselves, and it was given to them.

21547. They complained, I think, perhaps still more of not being put into an advantageous position by the military branches of the War Office; for instance, on the question of staff, and so on, and the War Office—I cannot put it more distinctly than I said at the beginning—did not show them as much encouragement as it might have done. This is the statement. I quoted it to Lord Wolseley in Question 9173: "I think the worst part of the organisation was that the regiments, or battalions, as they were called, of Imperial Yeomanry were not provided with an adequate staff. The staff that was proposed by the Imperial Yeomanry Committee was exactly the same as that told off to Regular regiments, and in almost every detail that staff was cut down by the then Adjutant-General of the Forces at home, so that no Yeomanry regiment went out to South Africa of the first lot with an adequate staff?"—Whose evidence was that?

21548. I put the question to Lord Wolseley; this was a statement made on behalf of the Imperial Yeomanry by Lord Valentia, and I was quoting it to Lord Wolseley. Lord Wolseley said, "I can give you no information about that, because I never was consulted." Then I said to him, "The next question I might also read: 'In what particulars was it cut down?'" and the answer was "There was no paymaster to the regiment; there was no paymaster-sergeant to the regiment; there was a quartermaster to the regiment, and no quartermaster-sergeant-major, and no quartermaster-sergeants to the respective squadrons, and the regiments were sent out in most cases entirely without transport." That was the evidence given to us by Lord Valentia, who is an officer, and Lord Wolseley said, "I think it is very likely. I have no doubt it is perfectly true?"—I have no recollection of that question being raised, except to this extent, that I think there was a question of providing a numerous staff for the Imperial Yeomanry on the assumption that it was going to be a large corps with an organisation of its own. I believe the idea of my military advisers was, on the contrary, that it would be better to break it up into small units, and to attach those units to other bodies of Regular troops, so that they would not want a large central staff. That is my general impression.

21549. What they are speaking of in the statements I have quoted is with regard to regimental staff?—With regard to the regimental staff, I see in the proceedings of the Army Board, No. 749, "The Military Secretary read to the Army Board a letter from Lord Valentia asking that special officers should be appointed to the special corps which are being raised in connection with the Imperial Yeomanry, for the purpose of selecting, approving, and training recruits, and the Board recorded its opinion that no Regular officers can be spared for this purpose, and recommend that the officers raising these special corps should endeavour to obtain suitable officers from the Reserve. Military Secretary to take action." I do not know whether that has anything to do with it.

21550. I did not wish to trouble you with the military details, but I take it from what you have just said, that you considered it as an experiment which it was worth while to make?—Yes, and there certainly was no intention on my part of in any way discouraging them.

21551. We know there have been criticisms which we need not go into just now, but taking it as a whole, do you think it was a successful experiment?—I think it was. I think we got some extremely valuable men in

that way. I am under the impression that towards the end we tapped an inferior stratum.

21552. But if it was a successful experiment you would not desire on the next emergency to treat it as an experiment again?—No, I would not.

21553. Then would it not be desirable in some way or another to formulate the experience gained, and have some procedure ready by which these additional forces could be raised rapidly and on some system?—I think so.

21554. Are you aware of anything of that sort being done?—No, but as to that you will probably be able to get evidence elsewhere.

21555. You think it is a matter which is deserving of attention?—Certainly, and I am under the impression that the present Secretary of State for War is making this question of the Auxiliary Forces his special study.

21556. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) In the first instance the arrangements for raising the Yeomanry proper were under the control of a committee formed of gentlemen from the counties including Lord Chesham. I think that was the case in the first instance, and the first body of Yeomanry sent out were raised in that way; but afterwards it was changed, and practically, I believe, it was Colonel Lucas and one or two others who arranged for the enlistment of the second contingent who were not at all equal to the first contingent. I think that has been represented to us?—I think that is what happened; the local sources of supply in different parts of the country had been pretty well exhausted, and an endeavour was then made to raise more in London and central places.

21557. And the control of raising the men of the second contingent did not rest with the same committee?—No, it was diminished in number.

21558. (Chairman.) Was not the difference between the first and the second contingents rather this—that the second contingent was sent out to South Africa very much more speedily, without the same training at home that the first contingent had?—I have no doubt that was so.

21559. (Viscount Esher.) When you referred a military proposal to your finance branch, did you allow the financial officers to express an opinion on the merits of the proposal apart from its financial aspect?—They might have done so sometimes.

21560. Was it customary?—It was not customary; it was irregular, and if my attention was ever called—I think it was once or twice—to cases in which the financial officer—who perhaps after all knew a good deal about it—took upon himself to criticise the purely military merits of the proposal, I should always have supported the military authority.

21561. You said a little time ago that a proposal had recently been made to make the Commander-in-Chief a member of the Cabinet; was that precisely what Lord Rosebery did propose?—I understood he was to be a member of the Cabinet, although not on the same footing as the other members of the Cabinet.

21562. The proposal was, I think, that Lord Kitchener should be Secretary of State; was that not the proposal?—Secretary of State, and to attend the Cabinet whenever military business was before it.

21563. But he was to be Secretary of State?—I believe so.

21564. In point of fact, the Duke of Wellington was the first subject, not a member of the Royal House, to hold the post of Commander-in-Chief; am I right?—I take it from you.

21565. That was on the death of the Duke of York in 1827. Now he was a member of the Cabinet, was he not, as Master-General of the Ordnance?—Yes.

21566. It was in that capacity that he was a member of the Cabinet. Then at Lord Liverpool's death, when Mr. Canning formed the Administration at the beginning of 1828, the Duke of Wellington, who did not approve of Mr. Canning's political opinions, resigned, and then for a good many months until the end of that year there was no Commander-in-Chief at all; is not that so?—I will take it from you.

21567. The whole trend since that time has been to dissociate the officer holding the office of Commander-in-Chief from politics; is not that so?—To dissociate him from the general politics of the country, yes.

21568. Do you think that that is an advantage or a disadvantage?—An advantage.

The Right Hon. the Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.

27 Mar. 1902

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27 Mar. 1903.

21569. You think it is a distinct advantage?—Yes.

21570. Do you think it would be a retrograde step to re-introduce the practice or the custom under which the Commander-in-Chief were to become a politician?—I hold strongly that the more you can keep the Commander-in-Chief out of politics the better.

21571. You hold that in the interests of the Army generally?—Distinctly in the interests of the Army.

21572. Now, with regard to the certificate, which has been referred to, you think there would be an objection to the Commander-in-Chief giving a certificate to Parliament for, as I understood the reason, that it would complicate his relations with the Secretary of State. Was that your reason, or one of your reasons?—Yes, I mentioned that.

21573. Do you think the same objection would apply if that certificate were given to the Secretary of State? The point is a formal certificate, which could be produced if necessary by the Secretary of State?—I cannot get it out of my head that you would bring about an extremely difficult situation, and that, whenever the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief happened to disagree, there would always be a chance that the Commander-in-Chief might turn round and say: "Very well, all I can say is I cannot give you your certificate, you must do without it."

21574. You think it would have weakened rather than strengthened your position between 1896 and 1899 if you had had to call upon the Commander-in-Chief for such a certificate every year?—Yes.

21575. You do not think it would have strengthened your hands?—I do not think so.

21576. The appointment of the Commander-in-Chief is for five years, is it not?—Yes.

21577. When was that change first made?—When Lord Wolseley was appointed in 1895.

21578. I suppose when that change was made it was contemplated that the office of Commander-in-Chief might be held—not necessarily—by the senior officer in the Army, or very nearly the senior officer in the Army in point of age?—I do not think there was any such restriction on the field of selection.

21579. Has it ever occurred to you that a great difficulty might arise if a younger officer were made Commander-in-Chief at the end of five years as to his subsequent employment?—That it would be difficult to dispose of the younger officer at the end of the five years?

21580. Yes?—I think there would be a certain difficulty, but I do not know that it would be a very formidable one.

21581. It would be rather difficult to employ an officer who had held the high office of Commander-in-Chief under someone who had acted previously as his subordinate?—Yes, it would be difficult to employ him immediately under the new Commander-in-Chief; I think it would be difficult, for example, to put him back into the position of Adjutant-General under the new Commander-in-Chief.

21582. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) You are aware of the allocation of duty to the Quartermaster-General and the Adjutant-General of the Forces?—Yes.

21583. Was any objection to that raised during the time you were Secretary of State for War, more particularly with regard to the Quartermaster-General's duties?—I do not remember it.

21584. Have you seen Lord Roberts' evidence with respect to that?—No, but I have heard his views on the subject, and I think I know what they are.

21585. You are aware he does not approve of the present allocation of the duty?—He does not.

21586. Have you considered the matter at all?—I think I am hardly prepared to give you evidence upon that point.

21587. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You do not think it would be within the limits of practical politics that the Commander-in-Chief should be a member of the Cabinet; he must nominally hold the political view of those who are in the Government for the moment?—I am against bringing him into the Cabinet.

21588. But I see that Lord Roberts, in replying to a question here, where the second proposal of Lord Wolseley was spoken to, that is, that he should have an opportunity of conveying his own feelings to the Cabinet on certain occasions, said, on being asked if he had an opinion: "I think he has now. If I had had any particularly strong opinion upon a question, and Mr. Brodrick did not share it, I should have asked him to put it before the Cabinet." What I understood from Lord Wolseley was that it was not that his view should be put before the Cabinet by the Minister, but that he himself should have an opportunity of personally putting it before them?—As a matter of fact, Lord Wolseley did on one or two occasions attend the Cabinet himself; for reasons which, I think, I have explained, I doubt whether the practice is one which in the interests of the Commander-in-Chief himself is attended with much advantage. With regard to his opportunities of laying written statements before the Cabinet, I think it would be universally admitted that any minute of the Commander-in-Chief's which he desired the Cabinet to see should be seen by the Cabinet. There are two points, whether he should go to the Cabinet himself or whether his minutes should go to the Cabinet. With regard to his going there himself, that has sometimes been done, but I do not think it is desirable that the practice should be much encouraged. With regard to the Commander-in-Chief's minutes going before the Cabinet, I should always have admitted that the Commander-in-Chief had the right to require the Secretary of State to lay before the Cabinet any document that he chose to put forward, and I did on many occasions lay before the Cabinet the actual document which the Commander-in-Chief had supplied.

21589. What I rather understood from Lord Wolseley was that with the military experience of the Commander-in-Chief he would be able to explain any minute or anything better than a civilian could be expected to do if he had the opportunity of being before the Cabinet?—I have no doubt that if the Commander-in-Chief intimated that it was his personal wish to attend the Cabinet, the Cabinet would always give him an opportunity of stating his case.

21590. There was one point with regard to guns, as to which the Commission had some evidence here some time back from the representative of one of the manufacturing companies. He thought it better that there should be a larger reserve of guns than there has been in the past, but on its being suggested to him that this might not be very desirable owing to the great improvements that are taking place in guns day after day, he said that it would be better to have greater facilities than there are at present for making on an emergency any type of gun that might be considered the best?—It seems to me that there is truth in both those propositions. And we did, in fact, not only increase the armament of the fortresses and increase the reserve of guns, but we also added to the manufacturing power of our own factories, and we also by giving large orders to Armstrong's and Vickers' encouraged them to increase their plant, so that they might on an emergency be able to turn out material more rapidly.

FIFTY-FOURTH DAY.

Friday, 1st May 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
 The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
 ROYAL, G.C.M.G.
 The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
 GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.V.
 G.C.M.G., C.I.E.
 The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.
 Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.
 Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary*).

The Right Hon. ST. JOHN BRODRICK, M.P., called and examined.

21591. (*Chairman*.) You became Secretary of State for War, I think, in 1900?—In November, 1900.

21592. But before that you also had had experience at the War Office?—I was Financial Secretary at the War Office from August, 1886, to August, 1892, and I was Under Secretary of State for War from July, 1895, to October, 1898, so that I had been nearly 10 years at the War Office before I became Secretary of State.

21593. So that while as Secretary of State you are acquainted with the latter portion of the War, you also from your other experience are acquainted with facts relating to the previous history of the War and before the War?—Yes. Of course I was away from the War Office for two very important years, that is to say, from a year before the War actually broke out and for the first year of the War. I was at the Foreign Office; but I was not then a member of the Cabinet—I had no responsibility.

21594. In the first place, we are anxious to ask you to give us your views with regard to the various Boards or Committees, whichever you please to call them, in the War Office itself?—You have, I think, had a very full explanation of what the functions of the various Boards have been in the past.

21595. We have got all the Orders in Council?—You have all the orders, and I think the different witnesses, from the evidence which was sent to me to look over, have practically told the Commission what functions these Boards have had. The change which I made when I came to the War Office in 1900, or which I carried out afterwards and set on foot, was to establish the War Office Council on a permanent basis. Up to that time it had met intermittently. It had taken up only such questions as the Secretary of State from time to time submitted to it; it had practically very little in the way of records; there was a record only of decisions, and no record of the opinions expressed. I thought it necessary to have a Council with much more extended powers in which each member should be able to bring up any subject that he desired, and that the opinions of individual officers should be registered and notes taken of them for future reference. Of course I reserved the power which the Secretary of State is bound constitutionally to reserve of his giving or not giving an opinion, and of his, if necessary, over-ruling on the part of the Government the opinion of others. But I saw great advantage in that working because it left no doubt, and it leaves no doubt at present, after a subject has been discussed, first of all, whether there has been any difference of military opinion in the matter, and, secondly, what the Secretary of State's reasons are if he disagrees with his colleagues. Then, having put the War Office Council on that footing, I also changed in one very important respect the constitution of the Army Board, or the functions of the Army Board. Up to that time the Army Board, as understood before the War, had only met to discuss such questions as the Secretary of State chose to submit to the Commander-in-Chief and his military colleagues for their opinions. I thought it very desirable those should be the freest possible expression of military opinion, and for that reason I laid it down that the Army Board would meet

when the Commander-in-Chief desired to discuss questions submitted to it by the Secretary of State or any other questions which might be brought before it by the members of the Army Board. And that is the present status of the Board. In saying that I ought perhaps to say that the Army Board, as used for mobilisation purposes during the War, is not in any way affected by what has taken place. I believe it will be imperative in the case of any war, to have a continuance of the work of the Army Board as it was carried on during the War.

21596. But not in peace time; you do not want continuous sittings of the Army Board in peace time?—I do not think it is so necessary. The real importance of the Army Board is to focus military opinions on certain points. My own feeling is that the military opinion could be much better focussed at the War Office Council. Perhaps, if it is not too lengthy, I might give the Commission an illustration or two of what I mean. There are two ways of looking at all Army matters. There is the Council of perfection which would make it necessary for a Commander-in-Chief and his subordinates to ask for an enormous expenditure on services which, ideally speaking, it would be desirable to have, but which in reference to the public purse and to the probabilities of a campaign you cannot expect to have. Take for instance this: we might have to fight in India, or in South Africa, or in Egypt, or in some other climate. It might be argued that the Commander-in-Chief was bound to ask for all the clothing which would be necessary for troops to operate in all those climates, and for all transport which would be necessary to mobilise in all those different countries. It is very difficult for a body of officers sitting under the Commander-in-Chief not to feel themselves bound to ask for the extreme amount. Secondly, there is also great difficulty in getting officers of high rank to express opinions discordant from each other and from the Commander-in-Chief. Military subordination is at the root of the whole of their thoughts and feelings. The Artilleryman (the Director-General of Ordnance) would not willingly interfere with a proposal made by the Inspector-General of Fortifications; the Adjutant-General would be chary of interfering with the business of the Quartermaster-General, and all of them would be chary, and, I think, are chary, of differing with the opinion of their own chief, the Commander-in-Chief. Now, at the War Office Council matters are conducted differently in the last two years. In the first place, all the subjects discussed are discussed face to face with the civilians; and the one thing to which I have chiefly directed effort since I have had the control of the War Office has been to prevent the discussion of questions between the two sides of the House, the soldiers and the civilians, as if we were two antagonistic bodies sitting constantly and keeping a check upon each other. And I believe that the only way to do that is to bring soldiers and civilians face to face in the earlier stages of a controversy. When I first came to the War Office, in 1886, there was hardly a Paper that came to me as Financial Secretary, which the Finance Branch had, not as I thought legitimately, found grounds to criticise and to reduce proposals made to them from the military side. That, I think was due to the feeling that, instead of all working

*The Right
 Hon. St. John
 Brodrick,
 M.P.*

1 May 1903.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
1 May 1903.
Sec Q. 4572.

for the common object, it was the business of the soldiers to ask for the extreme amount, in the hope that they might extract from the civilians a half or a third of it. All that, I think, is gone. And I think the War Office Council has been one of the greatest means of stopping it. Now I will take an instance which I see was brought before the Commission by General Kelly-Kenny. He stated, I think, to the Commission that I had over-ruled a proposal to employ retired soldiers or civilians on all the fatigue duties which are at present carried out by soldiers, and which he contended interfered with their training. That involved a very large cost, I think something very near half a million of money, and when we came to discuss it at the War Office Council there was a very considerable weakening of the military opinion upon it, when they came to consider that this £500,000, or whatever it was, and whether they would prefer, if they had £500,000, to spend it on that service or to use it on any one of the other services in which they felt themselves deficient. Then, again, I do not think it had been considered, as was pointed out, that only just before the War, a year before the War, an addition of 80 men had been made to each battalion, solely to enable, or largely to enable, the battalion to be stronger on parade, and to provide for the fatigue duties. And also it was pointed out that, however desirable, this was not an expenditure which any foreign army found it necessary to undertake. It had been felt better to have more men in training, say for 10 and 11 months of the year, and for the other months to be doing fatigues, than to have less men and to pay men from outside to come in and do the fatigues. I mention that as an illustration. I think that at the close of the discussion at the War Office Council, if I had taken a vote, I should have found more people against the proposal than for it. Whereas, if that was brought up at the Army Board, and all agreed in the first instance, one could hardly expect, out of the body of officers, any one of them to go back upon it or discuss *de novo*. That is an argument, I think, for keeping the subjects for discussion at the Army Board and at the War Office Council to some extent distinct.

Sec Q. 10332.

21597. You spoke of General Kelly-Kenny mentioning that you had over-ruled a proposal. I think it only fair to draw your attention to what Lord Roberts said on the same subject. He said: "I proposed not long ago to the Secretary of State that we should take the matter up, but it was found to come to a very large sum, and consequently made the Secretary of State hesitate to agree to it."—Yes, I remember that.

21598. I only meant that I suppose General Kelly-Kenny used the word "over-ruled" in a loose way. He did not mean that you summarily over-ruled it?—I only want rather to point out that in a case like that probably General Kelly-Kenny would have found, if he had looked at the votes, that military opinion would have been on my side; that it was not a case where I had simply over-ruled it.

21599. But besides focussing military opinion in the Army Board to which you see those objections, might not the Army Board undertake a certain proportion of the decision, up to a certain point, of military matters, and relieve the War Office Council of work in that manner?—I think what they would more fairly relieve would be the minute-writing between themselves, between the military departments and the civil departments. I think there are many points where a question comes up affecting several departments, where the Commander-in-Chief might very well call together the Army Board to discuss and thrash out the matter in perhaps an hour, which at present involves a great many discussions on paper. I do not know whether it would be of any interest to the Commission to have an indication of the subjects which are discussed at the War Office Council.

21600. Very much so. We had the minutes of the Army Board, of course, during the War, but we have not seen any minutes of the War Office Council. I do not know whether you keep them?—I could with great pleasure put them in.

21601. Perhaps you would let us see them?—Perhaps the Commission would like to have a list of the subjects discussed, which are only three pages, put in in full; but I will take any particular day. On the 23rd of April, 1902, we discussed the "Appointment to Staffs of General Officers Commanding Army Corps of representatives of

Auxiliary Forces"; that involves a number of Parliamentary and other considerations on which it is most necessary to have the civilians' opinion as well as the soldiers'. "Inspection of the various branches of the Regular and Auxiliary forces and provision of Staff for the purpose"; that is a question of principle whether they are to have an Inspector of Garrison Artillery and Field Artillery as well as of Cavalry, whether the Inspector-General of Cavalry should inspect Yeomanry, and so on. That is a question of principle that it was most necessary we should discuss together.

21602. (*Sir George Taubman Goldie*.) It is also a question of money too—finance?—Yes, very largely involving money, and very largely involving the consideration of how far the new staffs of the Army Corps could perform the same duties. Then came the question of the "Treatment of soldiers suffering from tubercular and other forms of incurable disease"; that involved the whole question of how several hundred soldiers should be treated who had been sent home from India or elsewhere; for some cases remain in our hospitals for several years, and that, of course, although largely a medical question, is also very largely a question of politics. Then again, "Furnishing quarters of quartermasters and riding masters at public expense"; that follows on the question of furnishing officers' quarters, and there again the question of finance came in. All those four subjects were discussed probably in an hour or an hour and a half. I do not think it was a waste of time of anybody there. Take another day, the 13th of May of the same year. We discussed the Militia Reserve and the circumstances under which the Militia Reserve should be raised; the question of whether there should be a King's medal for service in South Africa, the second medal which was given, and, if so, what should be the limit. Then we discussed the "repatriation of Boer prisoners," and "Graduated scale of pensions to officers on voluntary retirement," a most important subject of finance, and one in which really considerable change was made, it having been hitherto necessary for officers to remain up to the extreme age on half pay, however certain it was that they would not be re-employed again. We devised that day a fresh system. Then there was the subject of papers concerning more than one branch being referred to the permanent Executive Committee; that was to facilitate the other work, a thing that the War Office Council alone could do. All those subjects were things, I think, that must have come before both soldiers and civilians.

21603. (*Chairman*.) I venture entirely to agree, but the point put before us was that there were a great many small matters brought before the War Office Council which took up their time that might have been disposed of by the Army Board?—I should like to hear an instance of them. The instance given me was some question of dress and buttons brought up by the Commander-in-Chief.

21604. Yes?—I may say that, so far as the Secretary of State is concerned, I leave all those questions entirely in the hands of the military authorities. But that was the best illustration I could have wished for of the utility of the War Office Council. The Director-General of Ordnance, who is responsible for dress, on three separate occasions had brought before me his difficulties. A general pattern had been agreed to, and the moment the pattern had been agreed to in order to facilitate mobilisation, he had been asked to change the pattern for individual regiments, and for other reasons in half a dozen different instances. He appealed to me on the ground that it would cause not only great delay in mobilisation but great additional expense, and he was face to face with the Commander-in-Chief, his superior officer. I brought the matter before the War Office Council in order to bring a little general opinion to bear upon the subject, and I am bound to say it had the best possible effect. It was discussed for a very short time, and I have had no more proposals to change patterns since. I think all parties benefited. And I might add that, in order to facilitate free expression of opinion, I have instituted in the War Office Council a system which I believe prevails in the Governor General's Council in India, of asking opinions, beginning with the officer lowest in rank, so that the very freest expression of opinion takes place before the dread fiat of the Commander-in-Chief is given. I hope I may not be supposed to suggest that there is

any friction between officers of the Headquarter Staff ; but of course there is a certain special respect for the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, in the case of a man like Lord Roberts who has such an unparalleled record.

21605. This does not quite conflict with the case I am endeavouring to put, that is, a case where there was difference of opinion between members of the Army Board, and which I should imagine must come before the War Office Council unless the Secretary of State decides it himself. But would you disagree that there are a whole class of questions, of which this might have been a type, which, if there had been disagreement, could be best disposed of—in fact, I think you said so—by military opinion, and not come to the War Office Council to take up their time at all?—There may be some, and I should be only too glad to be rid of them. But, after all, the War Office Council sits only once a week ; it usually sits for an hour to an hour and a half ; it generally discusses subjects of importance which all those connected with the War Office are concerned with. When I tell you that 40 or 50 papers go through my office a day, one would hardly say that that was an undue time to be occupied by discussion by all the heads of the office on questions mainly of principle. But I agree it should be carefully watched, and that as much preliminary work should be got through as possible before it comes to the Council.

21606. It must be a relief to the Council and the Secretary of State if such a thing can be done, so far as it can be done with efficiency?—I quite agree.

21607. But at present is there any distinct definition of business of that character which the Army Board would be authorised to decide without reference?—I cannot say there is. The Army Board has rather fallen into, I will not say disuse ; it has met twelve times since October, 1901 ; but that is entirely at the option of the Commander-in-Chief. I have referred nothing to the Army Board. The Commander-in-Chief has the power to call them together, or any member can ask for an Army Board, but he has not done it.

21608. But the view that the Commander-in-Chief put before us as the reason he did not call the Army Board together was that the subjects were taken up by the War Office Council. My suggestion is that if there was a clear definition of duties between the two Boards, that reason would fail?—I think that is a point which might be considered ; but I think the only instance that the Commander-in-Chief gave of subjects which had been seized by the War Office Council, which might have been more for the Army Board, were the Estimates of the present year.

21609. He did mention that?—That is a very special case. We had had a great programme the year before in which a new scheme altogether for the organisation of the Army had been undertaken, and we had this year to consider how to reduce the Estimates from 90 millions of war expenditure, to something like 30 millions, and a certain number of questions with regard to the Estimates were dependent on the decision as to what number of troops should be kept in South Africa, which was not arrived at until Mr. Chamberlain personally conferred with Lord Milner and General Lyttelton out there ; consequently the time for arranging the Estimates was very limited, and, speaking generally, I had to lay it down that this year we should not take up, after the great programme of last year, any considerable fresh services, that we should have to lie on our oars and reduce our Estimates and see how we stood. I hope that another year the Army Board will go carefully into the Estimates in October and November.

21610. That is their specific duty, I think?—Yes, You have, I think, the order establishing the Army Board?

21611. Yes, I think so. With regard to the position of members on the War Office Council, there has been some question before us as to the initiative of each individual member. Perhaps you will state what their position is?—Each individual member of the War Office Council has full power to bring any subject before it. The wording of the order was quite, I think, understood by all except one officer. The wording is quite clear:—"The Council will discuss such matters as may be referred to it by the Secretary of State, and any question brought before it by individual members ;" and then it says, "In order that a question may be prepared, a

notice of the matter for discussion, together with the office papers on the subject should reach the Secretary not later than Wednesday morning." General Brackenbury, who gave that evidence, and who very rarely fails in such matters, happened to be away at the time the Order was issued, and before he gave evidence before the Commission he was not aware of the fact of the Order. And I think General Kelly-Kenny has a little misapprehended it. But I know it was fully understood by the other members of the Council. As a matter of courtesy most of them who have asked to have a thing discussed, have done so through me, but they would be perfectly in order in putting a matter down for discussion by simply sending it to the Permanent Under Secretary. I think, as a matter of courtesy, it is desirable to put to the Secretary of State, "I should like this discussed at the War Office Council." One of my colleagues did so only yesterday, on a very important matter which I thought was decided and all agreed upon ; and I have ordered it for discussion next Monday.

21612. I mentioned the matter partly on account of General Brackenbury's case that you have just mentioned, because he did give that evidence, but he has since written to say that he did not see the Memorandum concerning it, being away in bad health, and that he quite appreciates it now. But that was the impression left upon our mind by his evidence, and that of General Kelly-Kenny, and perhaps one or two others, that though the rule might be so, it was not understood by the members?—Well, not only did I put it in the Order of October, 1901, but I stated it at the Council. I think perhaps it has hardly been appreciated how very much more regular this Council has become than it was before.

21613. And that rule has been acted upon, you say?—Yes.

21614. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) In cases of much importance or urgency, can anything be brought up without previous notice having been given in advance of the meeting?—Yes. Of course, generally matters are only discussed when a *précis* has been sent round ; but the Quartermaster-General a few meetings ago brought up a very important question which he thought immediate, and it was discussed on the spur of the moment.

21615. (*Chairman.*) Is it your practice to refer to the War Office Council any questions in which you differ from or overrule the military authorities?—I very much prefer getting the opinion of the War Office Council on a matter, if there are such matters, on which I found myself in direct variance with the military authorities, but I find it very difficult to recall such questions. I can only remember one on two occasions at the War Office Council where I have not been able to accept the view of the majority of the Council. You might possibly count the question of the fatigues, but I can only remember one on two occasions.

21616. My attention is called to the evidence given by Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke at No. 2457, when he was asked by Lord Esher about this matter of raising questions, "What would happen if you did raise it?" (this is on the question of military clerks) "Supposing you raised it next Monday, what would happen? Would you be precluded from going on discussing it? (A.) Well, it could not be raised unless notice had been given of it and the paper had been sent round ; that is the procedure of the War Office Council, the agenda are sent round on the previous Saturday, as a rule, with a *précis* of each subject that is to be discussed on the agenda. (*Chairman.*) And if you put this subject on the agenda next Saturday, would it not come up? (A.) I do not think so, because a decision has been given about it. The agenda are prepared by the Secretary to the Council." His view evidently was that he could not have raised the point?—It would be unusual in the War Office, after a decision of the Secretary of State has been given on a formal paper, to say, "I should like to have a fresh discussion of this matter," but I am not prepared to say that it would not be done. If any member asked for it I should certainly accede. This was a question, I think, with regard to military clerks.

21617. Yes.?—There were months that this subject was under discussion, when anybody might have asked to have it discussed at the War Office Council. But nobody did. In fact, it was a subject on which I had

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
1 May 1903
See Q. 1821

The Right
Hon. St. John
Brodrick,
M.P.
May 1903.

been pressed for many years, both in the War Office and in Parliament, to substitute military clerks for civilians, and it was only when the change was found to be imminent that the minds of some military authorities misgave them about the advantage of losing their civilian clerks.

21618. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do you recall any case where a question has been raised without notice?—Yes. The Quartermaster-General raised a question, I cannot tell you what, but it was about two meetings before Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke himself left.

21619. Did you stop it or let it go on?—He thought it was immediate, and he said he would be very glad if we could discuss it.

21620. And you allowed it to go on?—We did discuss it, and resolved it according to his desire.

21621. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) That is quite lately?—Yes, he went to Malta at the end of the year, and it was about a fortnight or three weeks before.

21622. (*Chairman.*) He gave his evidence on the 23rd of October, 1902?—Yes; but I never heard of the evidence at the time. I never saw it until two days ago.

21623. As you have mentioned that subject of military clerks, would you like to say anything more about it?—I think myself that the change is a very useful one. I do not think it would be possible to extend it, nor would it be desirable on the civilian and financial side of the War Office; I think we have an admirably trained civilian financial staff. But I do think that, especially in the Military Secretary's Office, it seemed to be an anomaly that when the Military Secretary and the Assistant-Military Secretary happened to be engaged or not in the office, an officer, possibly of very high rank, had to come and see a civilian, a gentleman no doubt of distinction in the civilian service, but who was not in any respect his superior in rank, on his own personal and private prospects in the service. I know civilians manage that sort of business most admirably and without friction. At the same time it seemed to me more natural, when you have a number of retired officers of military experience wanting employment, and not knowing what to do, and admirably calculated for that sort of work, that they should be used as assistants in the Military division rather than civilians, who might not happen to be equally equipped with regard to military questions. The Military Staff clerks are an admirable body, and I believe when the system gets into thorough working order there will be no complaint whatever. I gave orders that in every case civilians should remain in the Departments so long as was necessary to train the new military clerks, and, in fact, as long as was desired by their military chiefs; but I think the system must be considered to be confined to the military side of the War Office, partly because it is almost impossible to give a non-commissioned officer the financial and critical work to criticise or to bring before his chief the criticism of a general officer on finance and audit.

21624. I think Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke certainly was under the impression that he was obliged to substitute military clerks throughout. It is military clerks rather than military subordinates he was speaking of, because what he brought before us was that five of his sub-divisions could well be worked by military clerks, but not two particular ones, and yet he had been obliged to make a second representation on that subject, and, so far as we understood him, had appealed without success?—I may say that whatever his difficulty was, he settled it with the Permanent Under Secretary, and he never appealed to me, and I heard through his evidence for the first time that he was dissatisfied about it; so I assume that since October the thing has been settled smoothly.

21625. And it is not the case that military clerks are to be substituted *en masse* for civilian clerks in the War Office?—No, I never thought of proceeding as far as that.

21626. Is there any other point with regard to the War Office Council that you wish to mention?—I think not, except to say generally that there has been much criticism of the institution of Boards and Councils; but I believe that the only way of avoiding excessive minute writing and long deliberations and squabbles on paper is that men should meet together and discuss the thing, quite apart from Boards or Councils. I have endeavoured to lay it down, and shall press as much as I can, that officials should meet each other in each other's rooms and agree upon a decision, which can be done very often in ten

minutes, instead of sending papers to and fro half-a-dozen times to arrive at it.

21627. I think that the next point that you wish to draw our attention to is the position of the Commander-in-Chief?—I have had the advantage of reading the suggestions made by Lord Roberts and by Lord Wolseley with regard to the position of the Commander-in-Chief. I think the Commission will probably realise that the position of the Commander-in-Chief has been very much altered by what has taken place since 1900. In the first place, his power of discussing matters and putting them on record both at the Army Board and the War Office Council has been clearly defined. It would be no longer possible for any Secretary of State to say without clear evidence, "I have military opinion with me on that subject." The whole matter is now in black and white. Then an alteration of the Defence Committee, which I must perhaps treat as a separate question, as I understood I should be asked about it, has put the Commander-in-Chief into a most important position, in immediate touch with leading members of the Cabinet, and at first hand sitting and directing to a large extent policy in the preparation of schemes and arrangements of strategical moves; I think that in that respect his position has changed very much since the time of which Lord Wolseley was speaking. Lord Wolseley's proposal, as I gather it, to the Commission, was that the Commander-in-Chief should go back to the position, in which he was before 1895. I think Lord Wolseley used the expression that he should have "full control of all his staff officers." Well, my desire would always be to see the Commander-in-Chief in as strong a position, and with as large powers, as it is possible to give to any one man who is filling that position; but my experience at the War Office is that in practice the Commander-in-Chief was in the past vastly overloaded with work. At this moment even under the reduced powers of the Order in Council of 1895, as modified by the Order in Council of 1901, the Commander-in-Chief has a vast correspondence, an enormous number of papers of necessity come to him; he has got the whole of the appointments through the Military Secretary; he has got a great many points of discipline which must come to him through the Adjutant-General which have been again put upon him by the wish of the Commander-in-Chief and by the feeling of the Army; he has got to deal with the Estimates for two months in the year, and with all important questions which arise in connection with the Estimates throughout the year; he has now got the work of the Defence Committee, which at present is meeting one day a week for several hours, and besides that he is responsible for all the schemes of offence and defence and the preparations for mobilisation which are brought before him by the Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence; and beyond that, again, he has now got the new Director-General of Military education and training of the troops who comes to him. The mere dealing with that number of men and that number of subjects must exhaust the time and energy of any man. I served with three Commanders-in-Chief; the Duke of Cambridge worked with the utmost diligence at a great number of subjects; Lord Wolseley was a very active man in all the early years I was his colleague; Lord Roberts begins work at a very early hour in the morning, and I believe has done two or three hours' work before most men have breakfasted, and he gives the whole day—he gives an attendance in the War Office which is unusual even in the other high officials; he is there a great number of hours every day. I think those subjects are in themselves probably as much as any man can deal with, and I think the evidence given by Lord Wolseley itself must have brought that before the Commission. I saw that a great many questions were addressed to him as to the schemes of offence and defence. Well, I thought there were indications that the Commander-in-Chief with all his other varied duties could not give the full time to those which would be given in a foreign army by an officer who spends his whole time on the subject. Take the question of Ladysmith, if I may give an illustration. Two things were made clear. First of all was one that was within my own knowledge because I was at the Council at which the question was settled, of where troops were to be posted in Natal when they were first sent in the year 1897, I think. Lord Wolseley then gave an opinion that they were to be posted at Ladysmith in order to occupy a position (Laing's Nek, I think) in case of war. Then later on it transpired that a force was sent there, and Sir

See Q.
9051,
10781,
10815,
13233,
13317,

Q. 2442.

George White was sent in command of it in 1899, but that no scheme had been drawn out as to what was to happen in the various contingencies, nothing which a commander in the field could lay his hand upon and say, "If that happens I know what is going to be done." Now it seems to me that the first object of the Mobilisation and Intelligence Department is to supply that, if one might use a civilian term, *prima facie* course, to have it ready—it being clearly understood, as was pointed out by Lord Wolseley, that the Commander on the spot would have power to modify and change it and use his own experience. That evidence struck me very much because it made it clear to me that we ought not to burden the Commander-in-Chief unduly so long as he is responsible for that work. If you had a Chief of the Staff, which I do not suggest, if you divorced all these subjects from the work of the Commander-in-Chief, which I do not in the least suggest, then no doubt you could give the Commander-in-Chief further responsibilities. But if you are to hold him responsible in an Empire like this, at all events if war is on the point of breaking out, or, in the case of a small expedition like we sent to Somaliland, to consider the whole plan and advise the Government on all the various contingencies that may arise, you must free his hands from routine work to as great an extent as you can; and for that reason I should deprecate putting under the Commander-in-Chief again the control of the Director-General of Ordnance, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and the Quartermaster-General.

21628. But you would keep under him the Director-General of Military Intelligence?—Yes. I should certainly keep him under the Commander-in-Chief. I feel that the Commander-in-Chief must be master of that even if you have to take other functions from him. I feel that that work is so bound up with the work of the Commander-in-Chief that you must put the highest official and the best man you can under him. You may take off all the routine work, but I think the Commander-in-Chief's word must be the last word.

21629. You have altered the position of the Director of the Military Intelligence, and he is now one of the Heads of Departments, a member of the War Office Council, and so on?—Yes, his position is entirely different from what it was, and his inclusion in the Defence Committee, of course, makes his position one of the most responsible in the Army.

21630. I was first going to ask does not his inclusion in the Defence Committee make any difficulty in regard to his subordination to the Commander-in-Chief?—I have not found it so. I think it would be a very difficult thing if the two officers sat side by side and if one were separate from the other; I think we should get different advice.

21631. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Supposing that happened to-day?—The difficulty of having subordination, and at the same time equality, is no doubt great; but the same exists in the Cabinet as between an ordinary member of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister.

21632. But they are not soldiers?—No, but they have a proper sense of subordination, I hope.

21633. They may have a proper but not an improper sense—

21634. (Chairman.) Anyhow, that is a matter which you have deliberately decided ought to remain on the present footing, that the Director of Military Intelligence remains as one of the staff of the Commander-in-Chief?—I think there is no doubt it must be so, unless you change the functions of the Commander-in-Chief altogether; make him an inspecting officer and a mere commanding officer of troops; in which case you will make another officer who is far more important than the Commander-in-Chief; and that I should deprecate because the sentiment of the Army is, and always has been, to look to a Commander-in-Chief, and by no process will you ever get the Secretary of State for War to be looked upon by the Army in the same light as the First Lord of the Admiralty is looked upon by the Navy.

21635. And the result of that change that you have just described, would be to make the Secretary of State practically the executive head of the Army?—It would be so, and I think that is to be deprecated. I think the responsibilities of the Secretary of State are already sufficiently onerous, and I should deprecate adding anything to his responsibilities unless you can

add to his authority, which I do not think you can do with the Army.

21636. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) He would be the War Minister in that case—the Secretary of State?—Yes.

21637. (Chairman.) Of course Lord Wolseley's proposition came round in the end to the appointment of a War Minister, but I imagine that there also you would disagree with him?—I think it is a very attractive thing to suggest, making a soldier War Minister, but as has been pointed out since the proposal was made by Lord Rosebery, your difficulty is that you must at the same time make him a member of the Cabinet, and, therefore, make him a politician. You cannot make him a member of successive Cabinets, you cannot appoint him a member of the Cabinet *ad hoc*. And I very much doubt whether it is not better to make the Secretary of State and the Government responsible for policy, and to keep, so far as possible, military advisers outside the realm of that responsibility.

21638. (Sir John Jackson.) It would be rather awkward too if you had a Commander-in-Chief in a position like that in the Cabinet of different politics to the Government of the day?—It would be impossible. He must be responsible for the other measures introduced by the Government, and then what would you have? Take what has occurred in the last three months. There have been very vigorous criticisms of the policy adopted by the Government and the Secretary of State in regard to the Army. Well, that undoubtedly would bring the Commander-in-Chief's name a great deal more into the arena of criticism than is desirable for a man who is commanding, and whose authority is to be accepted in matters of discipline by the Army.

21639. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) He would be the one Member of the Cabinet not going out with a change of Ministry?—That, of course, would be an innovation in our constitution that is almost impossible to conceive.

21640. (Sir John Jackson.) And if that were the custom it would prevent your always having the ablest man as Military Commander-in-Chief?—That is another difficulty, of course. If you take your ablest soldier and make him Secretary of State for War you must have a Commander-in-Chief who is not your ablest soldier, and the division of functions would, I think, lead to the most certain friction.

21641. But if you had your ablest soldier made Secretary of State for War you could only make him Secretary of State for War if in politics he was on the same side as the Government. You could not put a man of Liberal politics, although he was the best soldier, as a member of a Conservative Ministry, could you?—No, he must be dependent on his colleagues for the acceptance of his estimates and all other matters, and his opinion would be required in the Cabinet on other occasions.

(Chairman.) That is what Sir John means.

21642. (Sir John Jackson.) But still he would have to give his vote on general questions of the Cabinet?—The only similar arrangement I can call to mind would be the arrangement by which, I believe in the German Reichstag, the Minister attends and explains his policy, although he is not a member of the Assembly. The essence of Cabinet government is collective responsibility for all that takes place, and you would break that in the most serious way by introducing a military member who would not take responsibility for what was done by his colleagues, whereas his colleagues must take responsibility for what is done by him.

21643. (Chairman.) And besides that, of course, in Germany the Emperor is Commander-in-Chief?—Yes, the Emperor is Commander-in-Chief, undoubtedly.

21644. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Besides which it does not follow that you would get the ablest soldier into the Government. It might be that all the ablest soldiers belonged to the other side of the House, and you might get a man who did not stand in the first rank as Commander-in-Chief?—It might be so, but I think you will find, if you go into it, that you must do one of two things: you must either make the Secretary of State (whether he is a soldier or not) responsible for all matters connected with the Army, in which case, if he is a soldier

The Right
Hon. St. John
Brodrick,
M.P.

1 May 1900

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
May 1903. you must make the Commander-in-Chief a comparatively very small man, or you must leave matters very much as they are now.

21645. (*Viscount Esher.*) But as the ablest soldier has been mentioned, do you assume that you will always get the ablest soldier to be Commander-in-Chief?—The Government of the day would naturally pick the best man that they could. We know that in 1895 one Government was succeeded by another, and they took different views as to the ablest man for the purpose; but so long as the appointment is kept as a five years' appointment, which I think is imperative, though with power to prolong at the end of five years, you ought to have presumably the best soldier of the day.

21646. Irrespective of seniority?—I think in any case you would require to take one of the highest soldiers of the Army, but, as the Commission knows, in 1895 it was proposed to make a general Commander-in-Chief, although two field-marschals existed who have both since been Commander-in-Chief.

21647. (*Chairman.*) But seniority would be quite a proper matter to take into consideration in the appointment?—Certainly, relative seniority. I do not think it would be reasonable to take as Commander-in-Chief a young Major-General, though it might be done, but amongst senior officers I can hardly doubt that any Government would feel themselves justified in going down even to the rank of Lieutenant-General.

21648. (*Viscount Esher.*) You might get a man, at any rate, in the prime of life rather than at the end of his career, might you not?—I think that certainly is so, and would have been so if it had not been that the appointment previous to 1895 was an unlimited one, and that so long as the Duke of Cambridge discharged the duties as he did, with the utmost assiduity and tact and knowledge, there was no reason for change in the appointment. But that is why the question put by Lord Esher exactly realises my view, which is that a five years' appointment has also the advantage of allowing a man to retire without the smallest slight when you may have a man in the prime of life to come forward. I think it would have been very much to the advantage of the Army, not if the Duke of Cambridge had gone earlier, because even to the last day his work was admirably done, so far as I could see, but if Lord Roberts and Lord Wolseley had been able to take the post, say, ten years earlier, or when they could have perhaps worked on for longer, and it might have been possible to extend their time, and so forth. In the case of Lord Wolseley, he was not appointed until he was 62 years of age, and Lord Roberts was not appointed until he was 68, which, of course, is late.

21649. Then you do not see any objection to extend the appointment?—Not at all. I think that if the Commander-in-Chief was obviously the best man for the post, his term should be extended.

21650. You have not yet been face to face with the difficulty of a man retiring from the Commandership-in-Chief in the prime of life?—I certainly should be highly against that. If a Commander-in-Chief were put in between the ages of 50, and 55 and he was equally efficient and obviously a man who possessed the confidence of the Army and the Government, I should reappoint him at once for two years or five years, and even again if necessary.

21651. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) That would apply to all high military appointments, would it not?—Certainly.

21652. (*Viscount Esher.*) Does it apply?—Certainly. Sir Redvers Buller was re-appointed Adjutant-General for two years. In the Colonial Governments of Malta and Gibraltar officers have been repeatedly asked to stay on for a year or two.

21653. But for as long as another five years?—I think not, because usually there is some promotion you want to give a man. The Commander-in-Chief in India is a case in point. Lord Roberts was there seven and a half years; he was renewed for two and a half years.

21654. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Would it be absolutely necessary for a Commander-in-Chief, on retiring from the position of Commander-in-Chief, to retire from the Army?—No question has yet arisen of re-employing an officer who had been Commander-in-Chief, but in all those matters a great change has taken place in the last few years, though it does not affect the Commander-in-Chief.

For instance, it used to be considered that an officer did nothing except go to Gibraltar or Malta if he had been Adjutant-General. Sir Redvers Buller, who had been Adjutant-General, went to command at Aldershot, and Sir Evelyn Wood, who had commanded at Aldershot went to the War Office as Adjutant-General. Sir George White became Quartermaster-General after being Commander-in-Chief in India. Other officers have been Quartermaster-Generals and have gone out to similar appointments, and so on.

21655. But you have not had a Commander-in-Chief taking a subordinate appointment after his term?—No; I do not know whether it would be possible, but I think it is quite possible that the Commander-in-Chief might become Governor of Malta or Gibraltar after he retired.

21656. Take the case of the Navy: you have members of the Board of Admiralty who take up commands after retiring from the Board of Admiralty.—Does the first Sea Lord?

21657. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) Very seldom; there have been some instances in the old days, but I do not think of late years. I think a man finishes there as a rule?—I can quite conceive a position in which the Commander-in-Chief might have to take command of an army in the field, in which case somebody else would have to be appointed Commander-in-Chief at home.

21658. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) In existing circumstances would the Commander-in-Chief be afforded an opportunity of bringing his views before the Cabinet personally if he desired to do so, or must it be done through the Secretary of State?—The Commander-in-Chief, since I became Secretary of State, repeatedly attended the old Defence Committee, which discussed the Estimates, and had an opportunity of bringing his views before five of the principal members of the Cabinet. Since that Defence Committee has been superseded by the New Defence Committee, as the Commission knows, he sits upon it. If he were to ask to be heard on a particular point by the Cabinet, there can be no question that he would be invited to attend and explain his views. As a rule I think that the Secretary of State can generally make, if he is in accordance with him, as good a fight for him as he can make for himself, but I should certainly favour, and on any important point I should ask, that before the Cabinet over-ruled a strong opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, he should be heard by the Cabinet. Such a question did seem likely to arise about a year and a half ago—perhaps I had better not give the actual facts. As it happened I did not agree with Lord Roberts on a particular point, but I did propose that if it came to a question of our diverging in opinion, he should be heard before the Cabinet, which I knew had a strong opinion in the same direction as my own, and explain his views before any decision was taken. As a matter of fact, the matter passed over, and was adjusted entirely to Lord Roberts's satisfaction.

21659. (*Chairman.*) But the Commander-in-Chief in past years has been heard by the Cabinet, I think. Was not Lord Wolseley heard?—Lord Wolseley was heard by the Cabinet on two or three occasions. I can recollect occasions on which, when I was Under Secretary, he was heard; he mentioned them, I think.

21660. Before the Egyptian War?—Before the Egyptian War.

21661. But so far as I recollect he was not heard before the South African War?—I think not. I think the evidence went to show that he was not. I was not a member of the Cabinet at the time.

21662. You would presume it was because he did not distinctly ask to be heard?—If I had representations made to me as strong as were made by Lord Wolseley at that time I should certainly ask the Cabinet to hear the Commander-in-Chief in order that we might be certain that any effect which might be produced by the Commander-in-Chief's personal advocacy of his cause should be produced.

21663. And that, you think, is a sufficient position with regard to the expression of the Commander-in-Chief's views before the Government?—Yes; I have a great feeling that a man can generally express his own views more strongly than another man can for him.

21664. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) I think Lord Wolseley said he looked upon it as being of vital

See Q. 9

importance that on certain occasions he should personally be heard before the Cabinet?—Certainly; but I think as matters stand now—if the South African War were taking place now, if we went back three years—the Defence Committee would unquestionably go into these points, and the Commander-in-Chief would be at first hand sitting there.

8948. 21665. (*Chairman.*) Yes, it has altered the position in that respect. There was one other suggestion of Lord Wolseley, that the Commander-in-Chief should give a certificate once a year to Parliament as to the completeness or deficiency of the Army in *personnel*, equipment, and stores?—That, I think, is a very attractive proposal, in the first instance especially attractive to me because I have raised, or assisted in raising, the stores to a very high level, and I agree with Lord Wolseley that the tendency of all Governments at the moment of the Estimates is to cut down and eat up the stores which have been laid up by their predecessors—it is almost human nature; and I think the Commander-in-Chief's certificate that the troops which were professed to be provided were properly equipped for their duties would be very valuable. But I see great difficulties in the working of such a certificate. The Commander-in-Chief would hold himself bound with the greatest accuracy to inform the Cabinet of any deficiency; or he would inform Parliament, if he gave such a certificate as that of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, with the greatest accuracy of any deficiency in our stores or power of mobilisation. When I come to think it over, it would be supplying foreign Powers certainly with an exact statement of our defences every year. If it was not given to Parliament I do not think it would be a very useful thing. If it was withheld from Parliament the Secretary of State would be pressed in every Parliamentary discussion as to whether or not he had got the certificate of the Commander-in-Chief on some particular point. Let me take one illustration of the sort of thing which would reasonably occur. Supposing the reserve of rifles ought to be 500,000, the Secretary of State may say, "We have no war in prospect, the reserve is rolling up at a very considerable pace at the existing rate of manufacture, and I am satisfied with it. I cannot pay an enormous additional price in order to induce firms to lay down additional plant to complete the whole thing in a year and a half, I must be satisfied to do the thing in three years." The Commander-in-Chief might, on the other hand, feel that his responsibility to Parliament forced him to say that we were complete in our immediate equipment, but that our reserve of rifles was lamentably deficient and ought to be made up at once. Then you would have the whole question debated out on each point, and I think that would add very greatly to the Parliamentary difficulties. And I think also when you are dealing with two men, one of whom has to defend anything done by the other, the Secretary of State must either dispense with the services of the Commander-in-Chief or he must defend him on any point which he has taken. He may influence him for the future, but he cannot throw him over. But to put the Commander-in-Chief in the position of saying at any moment, "I shall refuse you your certificate if you do not take my views," would be, I think, very difficult in the working of two high officials.

21666. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) There is an illustration of that in Lord Wolseley's pressing for more guns for the Artillery. At one time he said there was a great shortage in guns as compared with the guns of foreign Powers in artillery?—Yes.

21667. And he was pressing for those guns. And in giving his certificate he would have had to point out that there was that deficiency in comparison with the artillery of foreign Powers?—The case of guns is exactly a case in point. I think the Commander-in-Chief ought to have every power of pressing his view upon the Cabinet about it, but on that point I should be pressed to-morrow as to whether I had the Commander-in-Chief's certificate that we had the best gun that could be got. I should have to give the whole details, and I should be pressed—my position would be almost impossible—for every detail of military opinion; and although I am all for treating Parliament with the utmost frankness, I think our Parliamentary system is more difficult than that of any foreign nation with the view of keeping our deficiencies sufficiently from foreign observation.

21668. (*Chairman.*) But with regard to deficiencies in reserves, we have had some evidence with regard to the position brought out by a Memorandum of Sir Henry

Brackenbury, which you no doubt know, of the 15th December, 1899?—Yes.

21669. We had evidence from Lord Lansdowne about it also, and is it not necessary in some way or another to prevent a state of things such as was brought out by that Memorandum?—I think that it is absolutely necessary. I think the proper way to do it is the one which we have adopted. We have laid down exactly what troops we propose to send abroad. Parliament may at some time reverse it. We propose to send 120,000 men abroad. We then propose to mobilise a certain number of troops at home; and I think, whatever disadvantages such an organisation may have, it has the main advantage that you can, with regard to each Army Corps and with regard to each division, see at a glance whether they have or have not the requisite stores.

21670. But was not there the same position in 1899. You were acting then under the Memorandum of Mr. Stanhope, which laid it down that two Army Corps were to be ready for service abroad and one at home; and yet the Memorandum by Sir Henry Brackenbury brought out that the reserves were lamentably deficient in almost every respect even for the two Army Corps?—I think that the thing goes a little higher up than the Secretary of State. I was not of course a member of the Cabinet in which Mr. Stanhope sat, but my recollection is that some question of equipping even that force for service abroad was pressed by the War Office but was not accepted, I will not say whether by the Treasury or the Cabinet—I do not know; but I am aware that full provision of stores for that force was asked for and was not conceded at that time.

21671. But that might happen under your system also for the 120,000 men?—It certainly could happen, but I think that the danger is minimised from the fact that the stores will all be actually under the hands of the officers who have to use them. In old days, in the days you are speaking of, the stores were all massed in Woolwich in one body; it would have taken six weeks to have got them out of Woolwich. That was not a question that had been considered at that time. The decentralisation of those stores began under Mr. Stanhope, and now the point which we have reached is that of providing each Corps and each Division with its own stores in its own place. That, of course, makes a great difference, because you are immediately told by the General Officer Commanding, "I have not got proper stores to mobilise."

21672. Then is it the duty of each General Officer Commanding an Army Corps to report to the War Office if he has a deficiency of stores?—Certainly; and I think as soon as we have the Army settled down again, which is rapidly happening, every General Officer Commanding will be held responsible for seeing that he has got his proper number: the proper number of transport wagons, the proper supply of clothing, and so forth.

21673. For service abroad?—For service abroad Of course that is what is intended by the mobilisation system, but I quite agree that it would be a good thing that the Commander-in-Chief should draw up a statement yearly of the position so far as he is concerned. At the same time I should deprecate its being a public document in any shape or form. Personally, I should like to feel that that pressure existed on the Secretary of State; but I am looking at what would be the efficient working, and I hardly see how the system could work.

21674. Do you not get something of the kind now, because at the present time the Secretary of State makes an annual statement that is presented to Parliament, and I suppose it must be based on information with regard to stores?—I cannot call to mind any statement made by the Secretary of State which would have tied him down very closely in that respect.

21675. And you think that the Commander-in-Chief ought to make a statement for the Secretary of State that would tie him down pretty closely?—I think that it certainly should be so; but I must say that I think General Brackenbury had only taken office a short time before 1899.

21676. In January, I think?—And I think that if General Brackenbury had been in that post earlier he would have taken care that such a statement had not got to be made as was made in 1899. I think I may say that the officer who preceded him was overworked and

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.

1 May 1903.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick did not bring all these matters as much to notice as he otherwise would have done.

M.P.
1 May 1903. 21677. Would such a certificate help you in dealing with your colleagues?—I think so. On the other hand, the Commission will recollect that the wheel of public opinion goes round very rapidly, and that whereas the War Office was denounced two or three years ago for not having sufficient stores for 250,000 men, we are now considered voracious for asking to send 120,000 men abroad. Therefore we might not get the support.

21678. There is one question with regard to this statement coming from the Commander-in-Chief that I should like to be clear about. Under the present organisation he has only supervision of the greater part of the War Office that deals with stores; would he be in a position relatively, to those Departments, to give a statement of the kind that you mention?—I think that the difference between supervision and control is one of the most useful definitions which has ever entered into the public service. An officer who is under the control of another will, so far as my experience goes, never move if he can help it without covering himself with superior authority—it seems natural. Under the old system of control by the Commander-in-Chief a great deal was exercised by the Adjutant-General on his behalf. I have constantly seen at the Adjutant-General's door, under the old system, the Director-General of Ordnance waiting for an interview to ask whether he should try a certain type of gun; the Inspector-General of Fortifications waiting to know where he shall site a particular barrack; the Quartermaster-General waiting to know whether he shall adopt a particular store. All that has been got rid of by putting those officers under the supervision, and not under the control, of the Commander-in-Chief. They are bound to go ahead with their own business now and to complete it, and they are responsible to the Secretary of State for doing so, and to the Commander-in-Chief also. On the other hand, the Commander-in-Chief of course feels that he is consulted on all questions of principle connected with each Department. If there is to be a new field-gun he indicates whether he requires that it shall be a lighter gun with a longer range and greater muzzle velocity than at present. But all the steps to that are taken by the Director-General of Ordnance. At any moment the Commander-in-Chief can come in and say, "I want to know how you are getting on," or he can bring before me the fact that things are going too slowly, or that he would like three patterns made instead of two. But the work goes ahead without the overlaid Commander-in-Chief having to put his hand upon it. On the other hand the Secretary of State is not overburdened by it. The Secretary of State exercises less control and authority over these great officers than the Commander-in-Chief would feel bound to exercise if he had to control them. They come to me if they have a question of principle or difficulty, but the Quartermaster-General, Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, supplied the forces all through the war with the minimum of interference either by the Commander-in-Chief or the Secretary of State.

21679. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) Why does the Secretary of State exercise less control over them than the Commander-in-Chief would feel bound to exercise if he were in the same place?—Because he has not the same expert knowledge as the Commander-in-Chief.

21680. He is not a soldier?—He is not a soldier. He has to settle the principle, and he has to trust these officers (who, after all, are officers who stand only next to the Commander-in-Chief) to carry it out. On the other hand, if the Commander-in-Chief felt that he was going to be personally responsible for whether a barrack is sited in a proper place or an improper place, he would feel bound to go down and see it. I think it is a great advantage that the Secretary of State should go and see these things when he can—a new barrack, a new cantonment—but he does not feel bound to do it in the way that the Commander-in-Chief would. If it was under his control the Commander-in-Chief would feel bound to go to Salisbury Plain ten times for once that he goes now. And the system, I believe, has worked perfectly. The only danger would be this. Lord Wolsley stated that he had had no difficulty—that all the staff were loyal to him, and Lord Roberts, I know, feels the same. Of course, both Lord Wolsley and Lord Roberts had a very exceptional position in the Army, but it is possible that you might have at some future date a Commander-in-Chief who was not as loyally

supported by his colleagues—we have no reason to anticipate it; and the one thing that I think would be a mistake would be, what Lord Roberts suggests that you might have, though he did not wish it, an officer up to whom all these three or four officers reported, and who would deal directly with the Secretary of State. That, I think, would put the Secretary of State in a very difficult position. You would then have an officer independent of the Commander-in-Chief, and possessing very high administrative functions. Being independent of the Commander-in-Chief, he would almost certainly differ from him on important points, and I think it would be putting a very serious responsibility on the Secretary of State if the Commander-in-Chief were to say, "I cannot put my Army properly into the field without a new field-gun," and if the supply man who had the Director-General of Ordnance under him were to say, "In my opinion the gun is admirably fitted, and as good as that of any foreign army," if the Secretary of State had to decide between the two. At present you never reach that point, because in the last resort the Director-General of Ordnance is the subordinate of the Commander-in-Chief, the Commander-in-Chief is the principal adviser of the Secretary of State, and you would have both opinions, but you have got some subordination about it.

21681. Then in the matter of guns you must always have the Commander-in-Chief a higher authority than the Director-General of Ordnance?—Yes.

21682. (*Chairman*.) Not with more expert knowledge; the Director-General of Ordnance may be the greatest expert in the matter?—He may; not with more expert knowledge, but the Commander-in-Chief must have higher general experience. In India, I believe, the Commander-in-Chief has always been a man of higher professional capacity than the Military Member of Council, but such a thing might happen as your having a Commander-in-Chief who had not got the same experience in the field as the other great officer who is to set up beside him; then that would put the Secretary of State and the Government in a very great difficulty; you would have "two Kings in Brentford."

21683. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie*.) On the question of expert knowledge, should not the Secretary of State rather seek the opinion of a great expert than of somebody who has perhaps only general knowledge?—I think he would, but I think that the same argument which I ventured to use earlier comes in again, that so long as you have the same subordination of the Director-General of Ordnance to the Commander-in-Chief, and the Commander-in-Chief comes in to be consulted very early in the day, the opinions are not so likely to run athwart each other as if you had one man working it up to the last degree and then finding that he is entirely at variance with the other, that his professional knowledge and so on is called in question and he stands to his guns.

21684. (*Chairman*.) There have been comparisons made between the organisation of the War Office and that of the Admiralty. Do you think that the Admiralty organisation would be applicable?—My feeling is that the administration of the Admiralty is compared very favourably with that of the War Office without consideration of the different positions of the two services. It is possible to get, and I hope we have succeeded in getting, as nearly perfect a Navy as can be got; at all events, we have as good a chance of having a perfect Navy as any foreign nation has. But in the Army you are always comparing like with unlike. You are comparing a voluntary system with tremendous calls all over the globe with systems of compulsory service which have not got the same calls. You cannot have a perfect Army, you can have a perfect Navy. Therefore a system which in the Admiralty passes muster as the very best, and acts very well, does not get the same credit in the Army. A great deal which is perfect in the Admiralty, because the results can be made perfect, is imperfect in the Army, because the results must be imperfect. That is my feeling. And with regard to a Board, as I mentioned just now, the Admiralty have from time immemorial accepted the authority of the First Lord of the Admiralty. Unless the proposal suggested as to making a Military Secretary of State were carried out, I do not think you could ever clothe the Secretary of State with the authority in the Army which the First Lord of the Admiralty has in the Navy.

21685. (*Viscount Esher*.) Surely it is the Board of Admiralty rather than the First Lord?—Yes, it is the Board of Admiralty speaking through the first Lord.

21686. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It is always "My Lords"?—Yes; but that goes a great deal deeper than you think. Take one case. I have endeavoured to see every general officer, or most of the general officers, who have come home from South Africa, because it has been the greatest interest to me to hear, if they were good enough to call upon me, the part that they have taken, but there is not, and I doubt if there could be, any general system such as there is in the Admiralty. In the Admiralty it has been the custom for senior officers returning from services abroad to be more in contact with the First Lord of the Admiralty than has been the custom in similar cases for military officers with the Secretary of State.

21687. Are we always bound to remain in the same groove; is there any reason why a General when he comes home should not follow the practice of seeing the Secretary of State for War?—I have made it understood that I take it as a compliment if any officer coming home from active command will come and see me, so that I may have an opportunity of finding out from him what has been going on, and hearing anything he wishes to say; but, of course, he pays his respects as a matter of course to the Commander-in-Chief, and I think the Commander-in-Chief's position is one which, whatever changes we may make in Orders in Council, will always remain the same in that respect. The Army looks to the Commander-in-Chief; it has always had a Commander-in-Chief, or practically always.

21688. (*Viscount Esher.*) No, not always?—Well, for a great number of years. I know, of course, there was a hiatus, but for a great number of years it has been a Commander-in-Chief, and whatever you give him by Order in Council, or denude him of, I think the Army will look to him. Then it follows that the more you exalt the Commander-in-Chief the less you can exalt the opinion of a Board of which he is one. You must choose between the two. I think it would take many years to give a board the same authority as is now attaches to the Commander-in-Chief in the Army. I am not sure that you could ever do it; I am quite sure that you never could give the Secretary of State the same authority in the Army as is now enjoyed by the Commander-in-Chief, whatever functions you put upon him.

21689. You consider that authority of great value?—I do. I think that outside Parliament (which is a different question, on which I may perhaps be asked) the public will far more readily accept decisions if they are known to be given by the Military Head of the Army, the Commander-in-Chief, than if they were supposed to be simply the decisions of a civilian.

21690. That is not the comparison. I have in my mind the Board of Admiralty; do you think that a decision of the Commander-in-Chief is accepted by the public more readily than a decision of the Board of Admiralty?—No, I think that the Board of Admiralty has a very high authority attaching to it in naval matters, due, of course, partly to long tradition, which you could not set up at once in the case of any board that you might establish in the War Office.

21691. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But, in minor matters, would not the Generals who, under your system of devolution, command Army Corps to a large extent satisfy public opinion by their decisions?—I think so. I think that the authority of the General Officers Commanding Army Corps has enormously increased, even in the last year, and will increase as we put upon them, as we intend to do, more extended functions.

21692. Then, to some extent, they will fill the place, as regards minor matters of discipline and other questions, which has been hitherto filled by the Commander-in-Chief?—I think on some questions they will—on such questions as inspection. Hitherto inspection has been entirely from Headquarters, and I think under the system of the General Officer Commanding an Army Corps inspecting in his own district his inspection will become the most important event of the year.

21693. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) On such a question as armaments the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, I suppose, would be accepted probably before the opinions of the various Officers Commanding Army Corps?—True. As I said before the authority of the Commander-in-Chief in that respect, as the last word, would be accepted by the Army where even that of the Officer Commanding the Army Corps would not.

21694. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) I wish it to be

quite clear that I was not referring to such questions as Sir Henry Norman has mentioned. I quite understand that on such general questions you have to speak with the authority, you cannot call it of a Military Board, but, whatever name might be given to it, of a Board corresponding with the Board of Admiralty, which does speak with authority?—I only suggest that the Board of Admiralty all belong to one branch of the Service; and therefore I think every man in the service looks up equally to the different members of the Board of Admiralty. If you had a Military Board you would have some questions which affect only one branch of the service, but more than half the opinions would be given by men who were unconnected with that branch of the service. For instance, I think that the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief with regard to the substitution of the lance for the sword would be accepted more readily than the opinion of a Board which would necessarily include an engineer, an artilleryman, and of course an infantry man, and would also include the Army Medical Department, and that everybody who disagreed would pick out those various officers and say, "Well, but what acquaintance have they with that particular question?"

21695. (*Chairman.*) And it might not have a Cavalry officer at all?—It might not.

21696. (*Viscount Esher.*) But to take your own illustration, in point of fact has that decision been accepted by all eminent Cavalry officers with satisfaction?—It has not been accepted universally, but I have never heard any suggestion that the Commander-in-Chief was not the right man to deal with it.

21697. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) The present Commander-in-Chief?—Yes.

21698. The whole question is there?—I do not reflect on others, but of course Lord Roberts's position is exceptional; his experience is so great; no officer has ever before commanded a quarter of a million men in the field and come straight home with the most recent experience to take the office of Commander-in-Chief.

21699. I think that really sums up the whole argument, if I may say so?—I do not know. I have in the House of Commons heard Lord Wolseley's opinion quoted with the greatest possible authority and treated with great respect.

21700. Lord Wolseley, too, has commanded armies in the field, and carried on a number of successful operations?—Yes.

21701. (*Viscount Esher.*) Do not you remember Lord Wolseley's opinion also being quoted and treated with great respect when he was Adjutant-General between the years 1882 and 1885?—Yes. Lord Wolseley, of course, in his early days also enjoyed very great authority; it was not only due to the fact of his being Commander-in-Chief.

21702. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) But you assume that every Commander-in-Chief would be, or ought to be, an officer of very high standing?—The highest.

21703. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Of high standing and great experience?—Yes; that is my view, because of the authority he enjoys or should enjoy. In fact, just as in the Government I think the strongest man ought to be Prime Minister, and that the designation of a man who was a *persona grata* to many, and was accepted by two or three rivals and therefore became Prime Minister is an anachronism now, so it would be in the office of Commander-in-Chief.

21704. (*Chairman.*) I think, then, we might pass on to See Q. 1-1 your next point, the Intelligence Department?—I think 264-457. you have heard evidence from General Nicholson with regard to that.

21705. Yes, we have had evidence from General Nicholson. His position of course has rather altered since then by his being admitted to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet?—His position has been altered doubly, first by the institution of the Defence Committee, and, secondly, by his having been placed upon the War Office Council and given a greatly improved status. The work of his Department has enormously developed, and it was impossible until the last few weeks to see to what extent his Department would be taxed by the work of the Defence Committee. We now find that his work, his own personal work, and also the work which has to be prepared for him, is, at all events for the present, and so far as we can foresee will be for a long time to come, exceedingly onerous and of

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M.P.*
1 May 1903.

the first importance. I have waited until we realised that to make any change in his Department I felt sure that he must have an increase of staff, even apart from the work of the Defence Committee, but I felt that it would be much better to see the full extent to which it went, and then to go to the Treasury. I think it will be necessary, without going into actual details, to raise his staff certainly by half as many again, or something like that—by 50 per cent., of which more than half, probably two-thirds, will be due to the work of the Defence Committee. I think it is very important also that he should have a deputy who can represent him on many matters, because no one man could possibly carry out the present work and get the holiday that he has a right to in the year. We realise, of course, that it is impossible to prepare schemes for offence and defence in regard to the British Empire as you may for a nation that has only got two frontiers on the Continent of Europe. But at the same time I think, apart from the experience of the War, the Commission will feel that a great deal required to be done in that respect which has not been done.

Q. 327. 21706. The evidence which General Nicholson gave to the Commission when he came in October last was that his staff remained the same as formerly; but that you have explained was intentional, in order that it might be increased up to the proper limit now?—I appointed a Committee to consider his staff, and while they were in the middle of meeting, the first meetings of the Defence Committee began, and I adjourned the discussion of the matter until I had seen for two or three months what the work of the Defence Committee was, as it affected the work of General Nicholson, and I have a proposal now before the Treasury.

See Q. 10737. 21707. Lord Roberts suggested that the position of the Director General of Military Intelligence ought rather to be that of the Quartermaster-General?—I know that Lord Roberts has a very strong opinion on that point, and he has of course an experience in the field which makes it very difficult to differ from him. His view is, I know, that the work done by the Director-General of Mobilisation should include the training of officers, to select sites for camps, and a variety of work which is at present done by the Quartermaster-General who locates the troops. As regards the names I do not think that is very material; I think the functions are much more important than the names. Whether General Nicholson ought to be called Quartermaster-General or not, I think does not matter very materially; but what I would submit is of the first importance is that the Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence should have no executive functions at all. I feel that we must have a brain to the British Army. The man who has to do the thinking, to prepare the schemes and meet all the various calls which come in in that way, ought not to have his time taken up with writing letters and giving orders. In so far as he needs to communicate with general officers or others, let him have the fullest possible latitude in that respect; but I have a great fear that if he is to take a whole series of officers and to train them for field work, his time would gradually get eaten into by that, and that one of the greatest defects of the British Army that I have seen and that was found in the war, would not be redressed. Therefore, though I should try in any organisation to meet Lord Roberts in any way and as we have attached to the Army Corps Staff Officers for the particular work which Lord Roberts tells us was badly done in the war, I should deprecate making the Director General of Mobilisation an executive officer.

21708. I do not think Lord Roberts proposed that he should take over the Supply duties now, under the Quartermaster-General; it was only certain definite duties?—It is just those duties that I am a little afraid of. The Supply duties are so enormous that they take one man's whole time almost, but I think there is a tendency, which I am endeavouring to check, for the Director-General of Mobilisation to hold himself obliged to take a great deal of work that is not really thinking work at all, or advisory work.

21709. I mention that because in the notes that you were good enough to give to me you said Lord Roberts spoke of the little work that the Quartermaster-General had to do. I did not gather that that was the position exactly he took up. He rather argued that all the supply duties should be under one head, and that the little

work that still remained of the old Quartermaster-General should be transferred to the other officers?—I think that is what Lord Roberts intended. It will be realised of course that the Supply duties of the Quartermaster-General is one of the most important branches of training that an officer of the Army can have. The change was made by Mr. Stanhope. In the old days the whole Supply duties of the Army at home were done by civilians. The consequence was that when the Army was mobilised for service in the field you had no officer with any experience of that particular kind of work. At this moment the Quartermaster-General's Department consists of 16 officers and 55 clerks, who are employed on Supply, the Remount Department, the Transport, and so forth. He has under him besides the provision of remounts, the movement of troops, the distribution of barracks, stores and equipment, the administration of the Army Service Corps, the Army Pay Department, and the Army Veterinary Department, and the establishments employed on those services; and his charge is one of the most onerous in the War Office. I think Lord Roberts was only alluding to the little work he did with regard to mobilisation which he wished to transfer.

(*Sir Frederick Darley.*) I think he also alluded to the fact that as to a certain portion of the Quartermaster-General's duties there is no officer now really to discharge them. I refer to the answer he gave to question 10452. He is asked by Lord Elgin, "How would you get the training that you want for Quartermaster-General?" Then he goes on and explains; he says, "You must in the first place recognise the necessity for a Quartermaster-General's Department. Now there is no such Department. There is an officer called Quartermaster-General, Sir Charles Clarke, but he is really Director-General of Supplies and Transport. He has nothing to do with the work of Quartermaster-General, except as regards the movements of troops. The officer who is nearest to it is the Director-General of Military intelligence. Then he has only the bureau, as it were; he has nothing to do with the field; that is divided between the Adjutant-General and the Inspector-General of Fortifications. I do not know exactly how it is divided, but I do know that in many matters, such as encampments, water supply, etc., Quartermaster-General's training is needed. I remember finding a hospital at Bloemfontein pitched immediately over the main water supply. In order to have all such matters done well in war, officers must be trained in peace time."

21710. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I think Lord Roberts meant really that the duties which were originally discharged by the Quartermaster-General's Department have disappeared and have not been replaced. For instance, so far as I know, there were no officers in the War in South Africa, what we knew as the old Quartermaster-General's Department, who reconnoitred and took up ground for camps and that sort of thing. There were great complaints that camps were taken up in unsuitable positions, and, in consequence, a good deal of enteric fever and sickness occurred, which would have been prevented had officers been accustomed to select ground for camps?—I think there has been a little tendency towards removing some of the functions of these officers according to the great activity of the officers who have exercised the post of Quartermaster-General. We have had two most admirable Quartermaster-General's running in Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood, and there was a tendency when Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood each became Adjutant-General, for matters to become Adjutant-Generals' questions which had been Quartermaster-Generals'. I think there has been in a certain sense a little readjustment, but Lord Roberts is putting that right, and I think the name does not matter. The disappearance of a particular class of officers with a particular class of function would be a serious matter; and that, I think, is being set right by the Army Corps Staffs. I asked Lord Roberts to satisfy himself, and certain officers have been appointed on the Army Corps Staffs called, I think, Assistant and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-Generals, to do that work.

21711. And you think that evil which was brought to notice in the South African War has been properly provided for?—I think there is no doubt about it.

21712. On something like the system in India, in which there is a Quartermaster-General, or an Assistant Quartermaster-General or a Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-

master-General with every force in the field?—I think on doubt they are provided for now and provided for with the title by Lord Roberts' desires. The only difference really that remains now, as far as I know, is the main title of the head of the office. Lord Roberts would like General Nicholson to be called Quartermaster-General. I am afraid I am a little conservative. If you change his title I cannot, personally, quite see why the Quartermaster-General is the man who has to get the intelligence for the Army. He has to quarter the Army.

21713. (*Viscount Esher.*) You give him executive functions directly then?—Yes, you give the intelligence man executive functions at once, and I want to keep him from them.

21714. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You are aware that the Quartermaster-General was really charged in wars in India with what you call the Intelligence Department, and people under him were employed to get information?—Yes; but the Indian Command was more limited than the Home Command.

21715. So far as you know that might be done in India at the present day; it certainly was recently. The Quarter-master-General was really the head of the Intelligence Department?—I think, broadly speaking, there is that difference. The opinion of the Cabinet was strongly, I think, that we must not mix up advisory and executive functions. I do not think Lord Roberts sees the same objection.

21716. Then who would get intelligence in the field? Would the head of the Intelligence Department have to detach special officers in his Department as Intelligence officers for an army in the field?—The Intelligence officers in the field are trained of course by the Officer Commanding the Army Corps at Home, and I presume that he would indicate officers from his Department who would then come under the command of the officer commanding in the field.

21717. Under his immediate command?—Yes.

21718. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) On his staff in fact?—Yes, on his staff.

21719. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You consider that there would be more convenience in working and greater efficiency in having the Intelligence Department a distinct one, not connected with the Quartermaster-General?—I do.

21720. (*Viscount Esher.*) Then with that one exception that you mentioned just now, the difference between Lord Roberts and yourself to which he referred in his evidence has been adjusted?—Yes, that is so.

21721. At the moment when there was a difference at any rate of opinion between you and Lord Roberts upon that point, was the question raised before the War Office Council?—No, the question was raised very early in the day. I think it was brought before the old Defence Committee. I thought it was a point which went higher than the War Office Council, and I did not wish it to appear to overrule Lord Roberts, and it was brought before the old Defence Committee, where it was discussed by four or five members of that Cabinet Committee with Lord Roberts; and in the end, I know, Lord Roberts expressed himself willing to leave the matter as it was, provided that officers to fulfil these functions were attached to the staffs of the Army Corps, which was done.

21722. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) In your opinion then the objections raised by Lord Roberts here have been sufficiently provided for?—Yes.

21723. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) His evidence was not read to you. He was asked by the Chairman, "But how would you train a man to do those duties now?—He should be constantly with the troops, especially during the manoeuvres. He should select ground for camping purposes, report on the best position for outposts, make any sketches of the neighbouring country that may be required, etc. There is one officer now told off for these particular duties or for special operations in war, reconnaissances, and intelligence. They are all divided now amongst different people. Marches now go to the Adjutant-General. Encampments I do not know who does it." That was on December the 4th.

21723. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) But your decision was ten years later than that at the Defence Committee of

the Cabinet, was it not?—No, that point was brought before the old Defence Committee of the Cabinet early in 1901, if I recollect right, as read now. It is difficult to speak offhand; I have not got the designation of the duties; but my impression is that the duties have been in respect of the Army Corps Staffs redistributed as Lord Roberts there suggests. I think there may be some little overlapping of responsibility under the old Order in Council, which might be corrected; but of course our one desire would be to meet his views in that respect. I think, practically, the work is done as he proposed it should be done.

21724. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) He goes on in the next question; the Chairman asked: "Are not encampments done by an Engineer officer in charge of encampments?" and the answer was, "They ought not to be. Engineer officers have to do with the water supply, but the selection of ground is distinctly the duty of a Quartermaster-General." The questions to which I refer are 10452, 10453 and 10454?—I should like, if the Commission would let me, to look at the functions; I do not want in any way to seem to contradict Lord Roberts, but my impression is that he is under a mistake. I went into this question with the Permanent Under Secretary about six months ago, and he assured me that this particular point had been met and was now done by officers called Assistant Quartermaster-Generals. If you take the Army Orders of the 4th March 1902, this is what you find: "The duties of Staff and Departmental officers at the Headquarters of Army Corps comprise the supervision and control, under the General Officer Commanding, of all Army Services, including Mobilisation and Intelligence. These services are divided into the following groups (b) Movements, distribution, and quartering of the troops, concentration and manoeuvres, camps, selection in conjunction with the Engineer department of manoeuvring, training and camping grounds, land ranges, etc." Consequently this officer had distinctly got the control.

21725. (*Viscount Esher.*) But, of course, a question of that kind is a very technical question, and one would imagine that the Commander-in-Chief, carrying the great weight of Lord Roberts, would get his way at once upon a question of that kind. What were the obstacles?—Undoubtedly that would be so, but in this case it involved completely overturning the Quartermaster-General, making him the brain of the Army with executive functions, and in that way creating a new officer to discharge Supply and Transport.

21726. I was not speaking of the Quartermaster-General himself, I was speaking of the minor aspects of the question which you say have now been settled, but were only settled after a considerable time?—I do not think they were. When Lord Roberts first raised this—I remember very well it was very soon after he came home, in a memorandum—I almost at once got the Defence Committee of the Cabinet to consider the major questions. The moment they had settled the major questions I asked him to appoint, I think I am right in saying, at once to appoint a subordinate officer or two who, with one of the permanent officials who was aware of what had taken place before, would draw out a scheme for the future. And immediately those officers set to work upon the appointments under the Army Corps scheme. If there was any delay it was due to the fact that the new Army Corps scheme was being worked out. But his views were immediately acceded to. I quite agree with Lord Esher that it is a point on which Lord Roberts should be predominant.

21727. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What Lord Roberts seems to have thought, gathering it from the evidence, is that the Director of Military Intelligence part of the Quartermaster-General's duties might have been removed, leaving all the other duties exactly as they were vested still in the Quartermaster-General?—Yes.

21728. To make two officers out of one in fact?—Yes.

21729. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) We were told that the money furnished for Intelligence work in South Africa was miserably insufficient, and on one occasion, only I think something like £100 altogether. That was before the War?—Before the War of course I was not in a position to know exactly what was given, but I never heard any complaint. During the War there was no difficulty.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
1 May 1903.

See Q. 10454.

See Q. 5911.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
 1 May 1903.

21730. That was immediately before the War?—I never heard of any complaint, but I think, generally speaking, that up to the period of the War Secret Service money for intelligence had been very much stinted; Lord Salisbury, you may remember, made a statement to that effect in the House of Lords. Then it was largely increased. I should certainly think it my duty to apply to the Prime Minister if any such representation were made to me.

21731. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I think complaints were made not strictly with respect to what we have been accustomed to call Secret Service money, but as to the limitation of money to be expended on particular surveys, to prepare maps just previous to the War, which is different from Secret Service money during war, which is unlimited, I believe. That £100 only was given to some survey officer to survey the country, I think, near Ladysmith?—I think the importance of a large Intelligence branch has been only recently comparatively understood, but then I must call attention to this that neither Parliament nor the country in the least believed in our conducting any operations on a large scale anywhere unless it were on the Indian frontier. Consequently there was not even the disposition there now is to meet these services.

(*After a short Adjournment*)

21732. (*Chairman.*) You have mentioned the Defence Committee of the Cabinet once or twice; could you give us the main alteration brought about by the constitution of the new Defence Committee?—The change from the old Defence Committee is a very great one. I do not know whether the Commission is aware that the old Defence Committee, according to its constitution, did most excellent work and very useful work. It was appointed and acted mainly with respect to the Estimates and also in resolving questions which arose between the War Office and the Admiralty. In old days this had been a subject of prolonged correspondence and had often had to be brought before the Cabinet. The Defence Committee went into these subjects and decided what were the respective liabilities of the two Departments. It also was a most convenient machinery for threshing out the very serious questions which arise annually between the two Departments and the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the necessity of expenditure on a large scale; and to that extent I think the old Defence Committee was very useful.

21733. In what sense did the estimates come before them? Not in any detail, I should imagine, but only on certain points?—On questions of principle. For instance, when the new schemes which, after the War or during the War Lord Roberts and I introduced were discussed, we had a number of discussions under the presidency of the Duke of Devonshire at the old Defence Committee on them; Lord Roberts was present at four or five of them, I think; and the desirability of these changes was discussed with great care and attention. Lord Salisbury, of course, was a member of the Committee. But it was borne in upon the First Lord of the Admiralty and myself that however useful the function of the Defence Committee was, it was absolutely necessary that we should undertake a totally different class of investigation, and that it should be decided from the point of view of the relative equipments of the two services, what under modern conditions it might be necessary for both to undertake. We felt from that alone that any real economy in the two services could come. It was quite clear that the constantly-changing conditions of science may make all question of invasion of this country and our preparation for offensive and defensive action abroad very different. Consequently Lord Selborne and I brought the whole question before the present Prime Minister as soon as he took office, that being at the time of the conclusion of the War. During the War practically the whole War Office was worked to such a degree that it would have been impossible to attempt a fresh organisation of this kind, when the pressure was very severe. The new Defence Committee, as I think the Commission knows from the statements in Parliament, has, as I think, the great advantage of combining with members of the Cabinet the most influential representatives, experts, of the two services, and it also calls in as occasion needs representatives either of the India Office or Colonial Office or any other department affected. The effect of the deliberations of this Committee may be very extensive. It is obvious that their decision, so far as a decision of any body of men can govern it,

must govern our preparations both by land and sea. So far as my Department is concerned, nothing which has been hitherto resolved upon as our force either for defence or for offence abroad can be regarded as settled, as apart from the deliberations of this Committee. If, for instance, they should decide that the possibility of invasion has been so enormously decreased by modern science that we can afford to a large extent to disregard it, that would cause a considerable alteration in the Army Estimates. But, of course, as was explained by the Prime Minister, the functions which he assigns to the Committee are deliberative and not executive. He does not favour the Committee being used (as the old Committee was) as a means of discussing Estimates, at all events until they have dealt with the much more pressing question of what will be the policy of the country in a variety of contingencies which must be submitted to them, and on those questions of policy depend perhaps more largely than anything else what the Estimates for the year will be.

21734. Are the Estimates not intended to go before this Committee as they went before the last?—I think the Prime Minister's view is that the Estimates would not as a rule go before them, but that their business is the larger questions of policy. But I am far from saying that questions of high importance or principle would not go before them. I think, to take a case, just as I discussed with the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (and Lord Roberts was, of course, present) the question of abolishing the old Militia Reserve and substituting a new Militia Reserve, that might go before the present Defence Committee, but that is not what it was mainly founded for.

21735. Would they discuss what was under the Orders in Council one of the chief duties of the Commander-in-Chief, namely, the preparation of offensive and defensive schemes; would those schemes come before the Defence Committee?—I think that such schemes would not necessarily come before the Defence Committee. The Defence Committee would ask, and has asked in very great detail to examine the schemes, which have been proposed for certain operations, defensive and offensive, but the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief to provide such schemes would not be exhausted by what might be asked by the Defence Committee. For instance, the Defence Committee would take it for granted that the Commander-in-Chief had made up his mind on what principle our positions in South Africa should be defended against any possible incursion from natives adjoining. They would not very possibly have gone into that question; they would deal with the larger questions such as, say, the North-West Frontier of India, on which they would go with great minuteness into the proposals of the Commander-in-Chief in order to estimate what it was necessary for them to recommend in connection with it.

21736. Under the Order in Council of 1895 it was the duty of the Commander-in-Chief—he was the person responsible for all schemes of offence and defence. Was not that so?—Yes; the Order would not be the least disturbed by it; his functions remain the same, but he has at times to submit these schemes to a still higher authority, not in order to modify his schemes, but in order to estimate the effect of them.

21737. Quite so, but would it not be a function of the Committee in a case where there was a danger of complications in the immediate future to require from the Commander-in-Chief the schemes which it is his duty to prepare?—I do not think such a state of things as existed in 1899, as shown in the evidence before the Commission, could again exist. I think that the Committee of Defence would make it their business at a very early moment of the negotiations to call upon the Commander-in-Chief to inform them what were his plans, what would be his requirements under a variety of circumstances; and I imagine that the establishment of the Defence Committee on the present basis is the best guarantee that the country could have that we shall not again be placed in a position of doubt under such circumstances.

21738. Therefore, though the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief may remain as it was under the Order in Council of 1895, his position in the matter is considerably modified by the institution of the Defence Committee?—I should have rather said strengthened than modified. It is strengthened by the fact that his responsibility will be shared, or rather, the responsibility of adopting his schemes. He will be given the opportunity early in the day of urging upon some of the most responsible

members of the Cabinet to adopt his scheme, and his position will be strengthened by the fact that early in the day they will be aware of what they are committing themselves to.

21739. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) It would be within the province of that Committee to inquire into anything that the Commander-in-Chief might put forward—that would be entirely in order?—Yes, every member of that Committee has the same power of initiative.

21740. (*Chairman.*) You have said that one of your main objects was to bring about a combination between the War Office and the Admiralty?—Yes, there is no doubt that the whole position of the War Office and the Admiralty is brought much closer by such a Committee. I do not think anything the Committee can do will ever in any way release the head of the Admiralty or the head of the War Office from his responsibility, but it will undoubtedly co-ordinate their work to a much greater degree than heretofore, and I think it may lead in the end to a very considerable saving of public money.

21741. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) It lays responsibility upon them as members of the Cabinet; but surely *qua* chiefs of the War Office and Admiralty it absolves them of responsibility if a Committee of the Cabinet approve of any course over their heads?—It relieves the heads of the War Office and the Admiralty of the responsibility of making out exactly what may be required of them. The head of the War Office might in future say, "My instructions are that taking into consideration what the Admiralty can do, I should not require to put more than 100,000 men here or there into the field." But the responsibility for the equipment of their own Department remains the same.

21742. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) At one time it was a question of dispute, was it not, between the War Office and the Admiralty as to the defence of coaling ports? I allude to Thursday Island, as to which Department should take it up, whether the Military Department or the Naval Department. Was that a question that would come before the old Defence Committee?—We have not reached those questions at this moment. The position which I think is generally known, with regard to the coaling stations at this moment, is that the War Office is absolutely responsible for their maintenance; they do the work for the Admiralty. I think it costs us between £5,000,000 and £7,000,000 a year, which is usually charged on our Field Army very erroneously. But the whole of that question of responsibility might be raised before the Defence Committee. It is a subject which ultimately the Defence Committee will very likely investigate.

21743. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) But the Defence Committee is only advisory; it does not decide any point?—It is an Advisory Committee on whose recommendations the Cabinet will take action; and therefore the Committee would not lay down the law; the Committee would advise the Cabinet.

21744. It decides no point?—That is so.

21745. (*Chairman.*) Would it be possible to combine these functions of the Admiralty and the War Office under the Committee of Defence?—I think the Committee of Defence will carry that question as far as it can be carried. I remember that Lord Hartington's Commission considered that very carefully, and came to the conclusion that a Minister of Defence could not operate in the same way in this country; but I think the solution of the difficulty has been found by this Committee.

21746. (*Viscount Esher.*) You keep minutes of the Committee, do you not?—Very carefully.

21747. Would those minutes be handed from one administration to another?—Certainly; that is the great advantage of its not being mere a Cabinet Committee.

21748. (*Chairman.*) But they would be entirely confidential documents?—Entirely confidential and secret documents; but they would be certainly made available for our successors.

21749. One has heard them sometimes spoken of as if they would be available for the public, but that would not be intended?—No.

21750. As to decentralisation, do you think you have carried that as far as you can go?—I think we have got a little distance on the way. Certain principles have

been laid down, and a good number of details are following them. There is nothing in the world so easy to talk about and so difficult to carry out as decentralisation. The stronger the officers you get at headquarters, the more difficult the decentralisation is to carry out. In the districts they like to take the opinion of a strong officer at the head of a department, and the more active the officer the more he does. I am sanguine that we shall have got a great deal more done by the end of the present year than has been done yet. First of all, we happen to have at the head of the various Army Corps officers of great activity in both Sir Evelyn Wood and the Duke of Connaught, with great administrative experience, and they are very willing to take over any amount of work of that kind. We have got the Treasury to clear away a certain number of difficulties, and I have now appointed not a Committee, but a little executive body of two or three officers who can decide this, that, and the other question which comes up, to be remitted to districts and dealt with by them, and that that should be the rule for the future. It is only to be done by treating individual cases as they arise. You may lay down a principle, but the main thing to be done is to treat individual cases as they arise. One of my great difficulties about decentralisation is Parliament. The system in Parliament of asking questions on small points appears to make decentralisation almost impossible in some cases. It takes just as long for my secretary to write ten letters a day to members of Parliament saying, "Would you mind going to the General Officer Commanding the district" (who then has to be gone to separately, and then, if they are dissatisfied with that decision, there is a fresh appeal to me), as it does to answer a question and get it settled. But I am endeavouring (and in many respects members of Parliament have been very indulgent about it) to get it understood that all questions that can be settled by the General Officers Commanding must be referred to them. But the tendency is to complain of the Secretary of State taking up individual questions, and at the same time for each person interested to insist on his taking it up, no matter how small it is. I think Sir Evelyn Wood gave you a certain amount of information as to what had actually been done about decentralisation.

21751. Yes, I think he did. And do you think the Treasury are not hampering you unduly in that matter?—I think the relations of the War Office, and I should think of the Admiralty with the Treasury, have been immensely improved in my recollection. I remember seventeen years ago, when I was first in the War Office, it was the habit of the War Office to try the Treasury, to put the point to it, naturally, the Treasury being the arbiter of the point, and, as a rule, if you asked for a large sum it might be insufficiently supported. I made a great appeal to Mr. Goschen that we should act on a different principle; that we should only apply to the Treasury on matters really important, and on the other hand we should get increased consideration of those. And I think that the refusals by the Treasury are infinitely less now than they were; the points of principle of such matters are dealt with fairly expeditiously by the heads of the offices, and the small detailed work is much better done. Of course, with regard to salaries and pay and allowances there must be questions which it seems absurd that our official, to whom you pay £5,000 a year, should not settle. But on the other hand all those questions of pay and allowances are very difficult; they cause very great pressure from outside, and if the Treasury have a general rule which governs all, there is a great deal to be said for it. And I do not think our working has been very much hampered. There are certain rules which are not Treasury rules, but are rules of the whole country, the finance of the country which always must be hampering; for instance, the necessity of spending every farthing by the 31st of March or the balance goes to pay off the National Debt. That in itself is a hampering restriction when you are dealing with 30 millions of money. On the other hand, if you did not have it the Treasury may fairly argue on our expenditure that we should get a large balance over which they would have no control, the accounts would never be closed. But I think, speaking generally, there is a far greater desire to get business along, and it is treated in a far more satisfactory manner than it used to be in the relations of the Treasury and the War Office; and on certain minor questions of expenditure the Treasury have given us a certain sum which will cover writing off of small

*The Right
Hon. St. John
Brodrick,
M.P.*

1 May 1903

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Hon. St. John
Brodrick,
M.P.
1 May 1903.*

losses and so on which has stopped a great deal of trouble—some departmental correspondence.

21752. The larger questions, I suppose, are matters that go between the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer nearly directly?—Yes, and in those cases when I first had to do with the War Office, I think there was great cause for complaint. I think at the time Lord Randolph Churchill resigned, the relations between the War Office and the Treasury were as bad as could be imagined. There was a disposition not to go into the merits of the question among the Treasury officials as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but simply to say, "Well, you cannot have any money," and so on. That is all changed. But of course times must come, especially in preparations for an expedition, when the Secretary of State may be more convinced by his military colleagues than the Chancellor of the Exchequer is, and that is the time when the military authorities would feel the pinch very severely.

*See Q. 1420,
&c.*

21753. But the point I wanted to put was that we had a good deal of evidence from the departments in the War Office with regard to matters to which they had attached importance and which they had not obtained the money for; but it seemed to me that it all came to this, that in all those matters, at any rate in the case of new expenditure, the ultimate negotiation was between the Secretary of State himself and the Treasury, and not between the departments of the War Office and the Treasury. Is not that so?—That would be so; I think it is the only possible system, because the co-relations of the various demands made on the Secretary of State must be pressed by somebody, and very often the greatest desire of one branch of the War Office is not the greatest desire of another branch for expenditure.

21754. So that the department of the War Office has to convince the Secretary of State, and then he states the case?—That is so, and if he fights the case efficiently he will win though he may have to wait. Sometimes things are done later than he may desire, for instances as a rule I think it might take longer to convince the Treasury of the need of a strong Intelligence Department than it might the Secretary of State. But I do not think there is a disposition to be in any way unreasonable.

21755. And the other matters that you have spoken to would be matters arising out of consideration of the Estimates, the details of the Estimates which had been agreed upon by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in bulk beforehand, I suppose. Is not that so?—They are the sort of questions that do arise of course. There the difficulty generally arises on the intermediate questions after the Estimates have been settled. Our difficulty is that when you are dealing with so large a sum all over the globe and having to settle in December, 1902, charges to last on to March, 1904, all sorts of changes must come. You must have regulations, though nobody objects to red tape and regulations more than I do, but you must have them; and when we are continually asking the Treasury to break through regulations, naturally they have to be careful about it.

21756. And who conducts those negotiations on behalf of the War Department?—The Financial Secretary. But what has really improved the relations very much is that the Heads of the Departments, Parliamentary or Permanent, meet and settle the matter together. My belief is that a great deal more can be done in that way than by correspondence.

21757. You have also in the way of decentralisation introduced an Advising Board into the Medical Department, have you not?—I think the introduction of an Advisory Board in the Medical Department has been a great advantage, and I am following it up by the introduction of an Advisory Board in the Education Department. I think that the two things that the War Office has suffered from most in the past have been the division of military and civilian interests to which I alluded earlier, and which I hope has now disappeared, and the isolation of War Office Departments from similar civilian services. For instance, if the Board of Works had very good experience of building, the chances are that the military department which conducts building has a great deal to learn from the Board of Works. In the same way you have the great medical schools all over the country, and up to quite recently our Medical Department was kept quite aloof from them. It is obvious that you want to

interest if you can the heads of the great civilian medical schools in our medical service. We want to get the facilities that they give for study for our medical officers. By instituting an Advisory Board on which some of the most eminent men in the medical and surgical professions are giving almost gratuitous work, we have obtained touch and sympathy which, so far as it has gone, has been productive of the very best results. Exactly the same holds with reference to education. You cannot, in my judgment, treat the education of candidates for the Army before you begin their purely military education as apart from the general education of the country. The public schools and universities are quite willing to meet us and to work in with us, and we have invited representatives of both to join our Advisory Board, and I believe it will be of enormous value. I think in all these cases the head of the Army Department should be the Chairman of the Board, and I certainly have received from the medical people, and so, no doubt, I shall from the educational authorities, every encouragement to persevere in this system.

21758. I think we have had evidence from one member *See Q. 12* of the Medical Advisory Board that one immediate result was the discovery that the military hospitals in this country were very inadequately equipped?—I think modern science has, so far as I know, progressed extraordinarily quickly with regard to hospitals generally, and I think we have fallen behind hand as compared with civil hospitals. For instance, I do not know if you have gone in, say, to Guy's Hospital. You would not have found it ten years ago in anything like the condition it is in now. But we have undoubtedly fallen behind, and some of our hospitals want modernising very badly. On the new Advisory Board, I cannot thank them sufficiently for it; these surgeons who are earning enormous fees in the morning's work, have given up many days in the last year to go round and report on our military hospitals, and in order to promptly deal with many of the questions, I formed a small Committee of their Board, with a military medical officer on it as well, and have given them the administration of the money we have voted for such improvements, in order that they might promptly apply the remedy, and I have no doubt we shall get the whole benefit of the most modern medical improvements of science. Dr. Perry, of Guy's Hospital, who has practically had the whole management of Guy's Hospital, is giving a great deal of his time as Chairman to this Committee.

21759. But it is a very large work, I think we were told—it will cost a good deal of money?—It is a very considerable work. Even going over one hospital it is astonishing what a number of matters have changed completely, apparently in the last four years.

21760. It will take you some time, I suppose, to carry it out in its completeness?—We can only go gradually to work by taking the matter in hand as a matter of business and going gradually through it. Indeed, the construction of a hospital like Netley, which in itself is a very fine building, would render it impossible, even if you had the amplest funds, to make the change: it must be progressive. Since the Advisory Board was started I think our medical arrangements have progressed 40 or 50 per cent.

21761. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You consider that these changes in their result will be worth all the money that will be spent upon them? I am speaking now of the medical changes?—Yes, I think so. But, on the other hand, I am afraid I must say that there is no department which would find it easier to spend a very large sum of money in getting perfection.

21762. (*Chairman.*) Do you wish to represent that there is great over-work in the Secretary of State's office?—The conditions have been very abnormal for the last two or three years. We have had a war on a very large scale, and the re-organisation of the Army, of which, of course, only the first fruits are being seen at present, has caused an incalculable amount of labour and given use to a very large extent both the papers which come before the Secretary of State and the interviews. I do not think that anybody would complain that there was a difficulty in getting decisions on important papers, and personally for some time past I have not had any papers in arrear except for a day or two. But it is obvious that the Secretary of State at the time when there is a war, or when there is any considerable re-organisation going on must be very heavily burdened. For instance, that Parliament

now meets at two o'clock in the day, and there generally is a number of questions. Before that he must prepare his answers. On Monday he has a War Office Council in the morning; on Tuesday a Cabinet; on Wednesday a meeting of the Defence Committee; therefore in the morning of three mornings in the week, quite apart from other meetings on other things, he is pretty fully employed until Parliament meets at two o'clock, when he has questions to answer. It happened before Easter, I remember, on one occasion, that the first four days of the week I was in charge of business in the House; my business was before the House from 2 o'clock to 7, and again from 9 to 12 at night. It is obvious under these circumstances that it is difficult to keep up with papers and with the rest of the work. But I do not think that under any ordinary circumstances there ought to be any congestion of business provided that the Secretary of State is willing to give a reasonable amount of time to the public service. When he sits in the House of Lords, as Lord Lansdowne did, he has not much in Parliament to think of; but if he is in the House of Commons he ought to be free under whatever Government always to return to his office unless he is wanted for his own business in the House. I do not think it is possible to administer a department of that magnitude by sitting and going through papers in the House of Commons. I have been liberally treated by the Prime Minister in that respect, and I do, as a matter of fact, return to the War Office nearly every day until I am wanted for some important division. There is no question that during a war the Secretary of State is overpressed, but then so is nearly every officer in the War Office. People who only look at the results and can find subjects of criticism, probably are not aware that many men in quite lower positions in the War Office whose services are never heard of have given their attendance there willingly till ten and twelve o'clock at night on countless occasions during the War. Putting that aside, there is no doubt that the Secretary of State for War must always be one of the busiest members of the Government, but I do not think there is any business which, from what I know of it, is as continuous as the business of the Governor-General of India, and there are some other members of the Cabinet—notably the Foreign Secretary—who never expect to get half a day's holiday during the time they hold the office. I do not think that is the case in ordinary times with the Secretary of State for War, but I think that the number of questions that are referred to the Secretary of State ought to be very carefully watched with a view to their diminution. I do not know whether the Commission would care to see a list of the papers that come before the Secretary of State in a day, as a guide to them. I might put it in if you did not care to have them read out; but I believe, roughly speaking, on most days, quite apart from correspondence and interviews, the Secretary of State would have to deal with 40 or 50 different papers. A very large number of them, of course, may be in connection with reorganisation; and when we have got the Army completely disembodied from South Africa, and everything is going on under normal conditions, I imagine that the number of papers will be very considerably reduced.

21763. (*Chairman.*) You will put them in?—Yes.

21764. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) You do not think that the number of papers could be reduced by providing that certain questions should be settled finally by other persons, unless of course you are asked in Parliament about them?—An enormous number of papers are now settled before they come to the Secretary of State. For instance, the Financial Secretary is empowered to advise the Secretary of State on all his papers, but as a matter of procedure he settles nine questions out of ten, but if anybody appeals against his decisions he is bound to send it to the Secretary of State. Or, of course, one of his military colleagues may object to his decision, in which case he appeals to the Secretary of State. Then any question which involves a novelty must come to the Secretary of State. The authorisation of a new Volunteer Corps, which of course involves a large increase in the Estimates, must come to the Secretary of State. And questions of defence, which have to be sent to the Defence Committee, must come before the Secretary of State. All questions of the highest appointments must come to the Secretary of State.

21765. And you think that as much is now done as is possible to relieve the Secretary of State?—I have given very strict directions to all who can stop papers to stop them; that is to say, Sir Edward Ward deals with a great many papers, and I certainly have never found fault with

anybody for not sending up a paper. But most papers bear on the face of them the reason for their having to be settled by the Secretary of State, and very often it is that nobody else's decision is taken. Then of course the real difficulty of the Secretary of State's position is not only that, but he has a vast correspondence, which I believe can be dealt with very rapidly, but people write about all sorts of subjects, and many of them are questions which must be answered by somebody. I myself deal with them as largely as possible by sending them to the proper departments to be answered.

21766. Although they are addressed to you personally?—Yes.

21767. (*Chairman.*) I see that this list which you have put in comprises 35 papers, all on large questions of principle, or involving special political or Parliamentary points, and that it is exclusive of ordinary unregistered memoranda, enquiries, letters, and papers for the Secretary of State to see?—Yes, that is the daily work. I do not know whether you wish to examine me upon it, but I think that but for the constitutional position of Parliament you might leave a larger number of discipline questions in the hands entirely of the military authorities. My desire would be, and has been, to concern myself with discipline questions as little as possible.

21768. (*Viscount Esher.*) That would not relieve you of your responsibility in face of the House of Commons?—That is the difficulty.

21769. But do you feel that if you are responsible to Parliament you must necessarily know the decision beforehand, that is before it is come to?—In all cases in which Parliament is likely to call attention to them I think there are only two courses. There is the one which Lord Roberts suggests, that all the Secretary of State should do is to say, "This particular question has been gone into with great care by the Commander-in-Chief," or as I think Sir Ian Hamilton suggested by the Army Board, "and they have come to a certain decision." All those who are acquainted with the procedure of Parliament would know that that would practically mean that no discussion could take place in Parliament on any military or discipline question. There is no way between that and the Secretary of State being responsible absolutely and knowing the whole case. Then if he is to defend the whole case he must, to some extent, have something to do with the settling of it.

21770. Have you not very often defended a case with the settlement of which you have had nothing to do?—That does happen, undoubtedly.

21771. So I should imagine?—But on the other hand the Commander-in-Chief gave a very admirable illustration to the Commission of how badly in some cases that works—at least how badly that is taken by the public. Last year there was trouble at Sandhurst, the Commander-in-Chief did inform me of the sort of line he was going to take. I said, "This is a question of discipline; I hope you will deal with it as you think proper"; and he did deal with it; but when that reply was given in the House everybody fell foul of the reply, and said, "It is the Secretary of State's business to deal with this." I rather wondered at the time what people would have said if I had said, "This is a question of discipline, I shall take it into my own hands"; whether I should not have had an attack made upon the other side, "Why, you have taken the matter out of the hands of the Commander-in-Chief." Of course one must take whatever is the proper course; but I think myself that every discussion which takes place in Parliament on discipline is a disadvantage to the Army.

21772. But putting that case aside, take the independent action of your Financial Secretary; he very often acts without direct reference to you, does he not?—His action is not generally on subjects which give rise to such questions.

21773. But I am now going to assume that it is, for the purposes of argument. He does in point of fact take action without reference to you, very frequently?—Yes.

21774. Supposing that some action of his gave occasion for a question in Parliament, you would cover his responsibility even though you did not know anything about it?—Yes.

21775. Then why should you not act in a similar manner towards the military authorities?—I do in nine cases out of ten.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.

1 May 1903.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
1 May, 1903.

21776. Exactly?—But the tenth case is probably the one troublesome one. I think too much may be made of this because we have had a great war, and the questions of discipline which have arisen, have arisen in almost every instance in consequence of the war either directly or remotely; the public mind has been very much more intent on these subjects, and therefore, undoubtedly, my time has been much more largely taken up than it ought to have been. The Commander-in-Chief, I think, would himself say that in the more prominent cases of discipline he has wished to confer constantly with the Secretary of State, but I should really be unable to tell the Commission how many hours certain prominent cases have taken of his time and mine, not from any disagreement between us of any sort or kind; but if I were to say that one of these cases has taken every working hour, 14 hours a day, for a fortnight, I should not be over-stating the case, between the number of people that had to be seen, the number of memoranda to be written, and so on. The Commander-in-Chief, I think, has raised—I do not know how far he raised it with the Commission—the question of his opinion being taken alone on a matter of discipline. All I can say on that is that I am prepared to rely to the greatest possible degree on the opinion of the military authorities on a discipline question; but when it comes to the actual handling, or to a decision which has been given being challenged in Parliament, it becomes absolutely necessary for the Secretary of State to be consulted.

21777. You do not think that Parliament would ever take an answer from you to the effect that the decision was the decision of the Commander-in-Chief?—I am afraid it would not. I am afraid the interest of these subjects is too great to enable them to take anybody's decision.

21778. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Not even the decision of a Board?—I think the decision of a Board would be even less taken.

21779. I mean a Board including the Commander-in-Chief?—I do not think it would be taken. I know perfectly well that in one of the first cases I had to deal with I happened to have something like the decision of a Board, and quoting it had no effect whatever.

21780. What happens generally is that you promise to give them a special Committee appointed by the War Office. Take the Sandhurst case; I think a Committee of Officers was appointed there to investigate it; that is practically a Board. People must ultimately rely on the opinions of capable and trustworthy men. In the long run, whether they accept it in the first instance or not, they have to fall back upon the opinions of a certain number of men put together—you may call it a Board, a Committee, or whatever you please?—If I may say so, the only experience that I can give the Commission on that is with regard to the Promotion and Selection Board. One of the most difficult things which falls to me is to satisfy, or to attempt to satisfy, people who have been neglected by the Promotion and Selection Board. At one time or another, either the officer in person or people on his behalf, come to appeal to the military authorities, and nothing which appears in the statement of the prominent officers who have decided the case has the slightest effect.

21781. I never supposed that you could satisfy individuals; I was only speaking of satisfying the majority of the House of Commons and the nation?—Quite so.

21782. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Those questions have arisen much more frequently in the House of Commons now than they formerly did, have they not?—I think that the general interest of the House of Commons in military affairs has very much increased.

21783. Might not some means be taken for discouraging these questions on discipline, for instance, in some cases by refusing to answer a question when a decision has been come to which cannot be got rid of?—I think it is difficult; Parliament interferes more than it used to do.

21784. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) That would lead to a discussion probably in the House which might be endless?—I think so, for as I said, Parliament does interfere more than it used to do. One thing I am quite certain of is that nobody ever gains by bringing a personal case before the House of Commons; but still there are many people who will. Personally, of course, I feel that

the influence of Parliament is indirectly very often a very great advantage.

(*Sir Frederick Darley.*) Still the House of Commons cannot be a court of appeal from a decision of the Commander-in-Chief. If he has once given a decision it cannot get rid of the decision.

21785. (*Viscount Esher.*) I think Sir Frederick Darley suggests that you should refuse to answer questions. Do you think a minister can do that with any satisfaction to himself? Have you ever tried with success?—I have refused to give information on particular questions, and of course, the Speaker upholds the power of refusal; but that is usually met by an adjournment of the House. And what is more, I may say I think that there is hardly a personal question with which I have had to deal in the last two and a half years—or I will go back to 1895, when I represented the War Office in the House of Commons, in regard to which I have not first of all laid the case before the person who wanted to bring it on or shown him all the papers. It rarely has any effect. There are a certain number of people seized with one side of the case, and they mean to have it out at whatever cost, and I am afraid you must not baulk them, or you cannot.

21786. (*Chairman.*) Then the next point is about officers. Have you any general statement to make about the changes, education, training, and promotion since the War?—I think the Commission would probably take what was said in Parliament as governing the general principle. I think that considerable changes will be necessary with regard to training officers in future. On that, of course, you would rely on what you have heard from the military authorities. I think that our difficulty will always consist in making the Army a career for officers without any means or with very small means, and the amount of training that we require certainly involves now much more the sort of attention that naval officers give to their studies than some military officers have given in the past. There are great difficulties in this country in the proper training of officers, and the greatest difficulty, I think, is in the general change in the habits of the nation, who give a great deal more time to leisure, and take a great deal more amusement than they used to do. The naval officers are exempt, to a great extent, from that influence, from being constantly on service and away. I think also that it is one of the greatest difficulties our Headquarters Staff will have to deal with. The training of foreign armies is carried on on a machine-like principle, and with very great advantage. On the other hand, I think our Army has seen so much more of War under different conditions that in all probability the difference between our officers and foreign officers has been very much overstated; indeed, I very much doubt whether in many respects the training of our officers has not been better. But the two things which seem to me to be clear are that we want a more highly-educated class of man to start with, and that we want to find some means of inducing the young officer to study his profession, and to study to some extent in the first ten years after he joins the Army. If we can do that, I think we shall raise the general standard considerably. Our Army has never lacked officers of prominence and keenness. The question, I think, has been whether, with the extended formations in which armies now fight, you can possibly forego having more of such officers, or having it almost universal amongst officers that they should have a higher standard, as so much more falls on the individual officers. I think we can do something by means of promotion, but more by means of rejection. I do not agree with the system, except for very important commands (Major-Generals, and commands of that description) of taking three officers who are all fit for promotion and putting the one who may seem to you a little the fittest over the other officers who are subsequently to be promoted; but I do very much believe in the rejection of officers who obviously are losing time and setting no example of keenness. But I think that the new Education and Training Department, which Lord Roberts has taken a great personal interest in, will probably have a great effect on officers generally. I am sure that the class of officers who are presenting themselves is thoroughly equal to that we have had at any period of our history.

21787. Do you think we have enough of them?—No; our great difficulty always will be that we can get as many officers as we want on the Active List; but war demands now a much larger number of officers, and I

think the problem that is coming before the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers is a very serious one. The Militia are very short of officers, and the Volunteers still more so. I have halted a scheme which we have for forming an efficient reserve of officers, until we get the Report of that Commission. The idea in my mind, and of which Lord Roberts fully approved, and the Military authorities with whom it has been discussed at the War Office, is that we do not want too many officers in peace; and what is more if we had too many officers in peace it is an enormous expense to have them. What we propose to do, but we have not started the plan yet, because we are afraid of drawing the men away from the Militia and Volunteers, is to allow the Commanding Officer of each regiment to appoint or to recommend officers who should serve with the regiment six months or longer, learn and so forth, and then should be *a la suite* the regiment without further attendance for three or four years, or whatever time it is that the Military authorities may decide. We find a great number of officers who are willing to take commissions at a moment of emergency, and go out, but who practically have had very little training. Our idea is, that supposing the Gordon Highlanders had four such officers attached, a boy just leaving school would put in a year and get his training, and he would then go into his profession, and he would be available for the next four or five years; he would have the privilege of wearing the uniform of the regiment, and so in the next four or five years, in case of mobilisation, a man of adequate age and certain training could be called up at once. But it is obvious that if we did do that, if you take the Line alone, with 170 regiments, to take four officers for each of them would be asking for 700 or 800 more officers, including the Cavalry; and I think it is very likely that that would suit young men who wish to give some military service, so much better than the Militia, that we might find we had only reinforced the Line to wipe out the officers of the Militia. It is a very serious question. I think it is one of the most difficult questions we have to deal with. There is no difficulty in getting non-commissioned officers and men in numbers for the Auxiliary Forces, but there is the greatest possible difficulty in getting officers.

89. 21788. It was stated to us by Sir Coleridge Grove, who is a high authority, that he estimated that about 3,000 or 4,000 additional officers were required to put us on a proper footing?—That may be a very large order, but I am afraid a very large number would be required, the more so that the experience of the War has made Lord Roberts and all these officers feel that you must depend more on the knowledge and training of individual officers, which you require more than numbers.

21789. But Sir Coleridge Grove thought an officer, in order to give him the training that would make him really efficient, would have to be practically in the same position as the officers of the Army; in fact he would have to be an officer on the strength of the battalion; and Lord Roberts, when he came, did not quite concur in that recommendation, because he thought it would mean too many officers on the strength of each regiment?—I think there is a difficulty. I think that Lord Roberts practically hangs the whole utility of the Auxiliary Forces on the training of the officers. He thinks it would be hard to put Auxiliary Forces against trained troops with the amount of training that our officers now get. That training is very difficult to get in this country; at the same time a great deal more is being done every year. We are setting up, for instance, a Yeomanry school on Salisbury Plain, and I have no doubt the Yeomanry would gain under Sir Evelyn Wood a great deal of experience in a few weeks.

21790. (*Viscount Esher.*) Have you thought at all of increasing the cadres of officers of regiments, which was Sir Coleridge Grove's suggestion; it was his suggestion that a certain number of officers should be actually added to the cadre of each regiment; instead of having 30, have 45?—That has occurred to us, of course, but then there comes the question of money and the question of the size of barracks in each case. Already our regiments are pretty fully officered for time of peace. Of course it will be remembered that every man you take extra takes him away from something else. You keep in the Militia a certain number of men who would like to get into the Army, and if you put them into the Army the Militia will be shorter of officers.

21791. (*Chairman.*) But Sir Coleridge Grove's intention

was that while you doubled the cadres of the regiment you would not keep double the number of officers with the regiment, but would draft off some of them to the Militia, and thereby have efficient officers in the Militia as well as in the Regulars?—I think that sort of proposal ought to be considered. But, again it is a very serious one in the way of money, and the more so that you cannot train your militia except in the summer; and for the officers it is very difficult to find them work all the year round. I have proposed to the Commander-in-Chief that we should relieve the Militia officers, when they have nothing to do and give them a chance of coming up for a certain number of weeks and be attached to regiments at Aldershot, and we take £10,000 or £11,000 in the Estimates for it. That would give them an opportunity.

21792. May I read one question, No. 9387? Sir Coleridge Grove was asked: "At all events, you would desire to have a good number of them" (that is additional officers) "away at classes?" and his answer is "Yes; and I should also wish to see some of them away with the Militia battalion when they were training. I should like to see an interchange between the officers of the Regular battalions and the officers of the Militia battalions. Some of the Militia officers could come up to the Regular battalion and serve with them at a time, and some of the Regular battalion could go to the Militia battalion and serve with it, so as to keep up a sort of continuity of feeling between the two, and similarly with the Volunteers"?—It is a very nice scheme, but it means really that you would be paying the men for 12 months instead of one.

21793. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) They would be in receipt of pay equally as the others as on Active service?—Yes, they must be. The Commission will recollect—I only want to remind the Commission—that our total number of troops on paper is very large. You have to find officers for 700,000 or 800,000 men. We know that they are not all equally efficient, but still the mere officering of 700,000 or 800,000 men is a very large amount and out of all proportion to the population. I never made the calculation about officers, but of the whole population of this country the men who go into the Army, Navy, Militia or Volunteers are one out of every four who arrives at the age of 18, for service of one kind or another.

21794. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Then your officers must be confined to a particular class; even under the recent arrangements with the expenses cut down a man must have some income?—In practice he must; and practically a man must be of a somewhat superior class to command respect as an officer.

21795. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) And he must have some means?—Yes, some means.

21796. Referring to your proposal of taking boys from school for training, as I understand, for a year or so, and then allowing them to return to be educated further, you would take them on probation. I think you spoke of taking boys fresh from school and then giving them training for a year, but that they should not be taken on regularly as officers then?—I do not think we have got any scheme of that kind. We should train them and then let them go to the ordinary avocations of life. In the new arrangement with regard to the University there is an arrangement for commissioning young men at 20 who have done one year's training at Aldershot or elsewhere, and who on condition of doing another training and passing another examination would be commissioned at 20 instead of 22. But the real difficulty of giving any general training is this: either a young man is going into the Army or some other profession, in which case it is worth all we can do to train them so that they shall be at our disposal; for in all these proposals for training Volunteers from schools who do not undertake to go into one or other branch of the Service, are outside the numbers really that we can undertake to deal with.

21797. (*Chairman.*) As to the men, have you any proposals for getting a better class of recruits?—A great change has been tried in recruiting, and anybody who predicted what would be the result would, I think, be rash, but I believe we shall obtain men of a better class. I believe it is already understood that the lot of the soldier is considerably better; and of course after next April when the men are actually getting the extra sixpence after

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.

1 May 1903.

The Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
1 May 1903.

two years' service, we should see much more result. Prospective benefits do not go so far as money actually in hand.

21798. (*Sir John Jackson.*) What will be the actual pay of a private after next year when he gets the extra sixpence?—After next year the private who has served two years will get 1s. 6d. a day, 10s. 6d. paid into his hand every Saturday night, all his necessaries, messing, and other expenses being met.

21799. Against the old 1s. 1d.?—Yes; but of the old 1s. 1d. up to the year 1896 or 1897 what he got was 7d. Out of his 1s. he paid 3d. for messing and 2d. went for stoppages of all sorts which were a great advantage to him, like libraries, repairs, washing, and all sorts of things; but still he got practically 7d. into his pocket, that is 49d. After the 1st of April next the man of two years' service will get, so far as I can judge, 1s. 6d. clear, which is 10s. 6d.

21800. Against the 4s. 1d.?—Yes. That is an enormous addition per cent. I think it must tell, and will tell very considerably. But I think that we shall probably see a bit of a set-back after a while for a time until the new conditions are fully appreciated. Then I think the additional money, with the power of taking only a three years' engagement instead of eight years ought to prove very attractive. And I do notice a very great change in the attitude of people towards employing Army men since the War.

21801. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is promotion from the ranks more general now than in the past both in time of war and in peace?—I think promotion from the ranks has been encouraged very much of late years, where it can be done. Of course, the difficulty is about money really. We do provide the men with an outfit, but he finds it very difficult very often to live in the regiment unless he has some means; and after all, as a rule, the man who cannot get a commission is a man who cannot have the education. But I am very much in favour of having picked men from the ranks. I often hear a Colonel say that he sees within six months of a man coming in the man will be fit to promote, and he recommends him as soon as he can.

21802. So that it is really better for them in many cases that they should be Serjeant-Major than Lieutenant?—Yes.

21803. Because they cannot afford it?—Yes.

21804. (*Chairman.*) Have you considered the suggestions for compulsory service in the Militia?—For years past I have considered all compulsory questions for service of all kinds, because with the very great difficulties for administering the War Office on the voluntary system naturally anything like compulsory service is a thing which must have attractions. But I think, with regard to the Militia for Home Defence we have to satisfy ourselves before we adopt any compulsory system that we cannot attain what we require on the voluntary system; and I think with regard to the Militia we shall probably find that to a large extent the great gaps in the Militia, which has to make up the one-third of recruits at present, will be filled if the new Militia Reserve, which is of the same class as the Line Reserve, becomes effective. The men are coming in very steadily for it. It was only established two months ago, and if we get anything like the number Parliament has allowed us to raise, namely 50,000, I think we shall probably fill up the Militia with very serviceable men without any compulsory service. And, generally speaking, with regard to compulsion, without going into whether it is desirable or not, I think until we have tested what can be done by giving reasonable pay, which is what I think we are now doing, we have no right to go to the public and say we cannot get men voluntarily. Hitherto, so long as the 1s. has ruled, which was paid, I believe at the Battle of Agincourt, as the pay of the soldier, with the increased pay all round him, you cannot complain that you did not get the best article.

21805. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Probably since the time the 1s. was established the wages of the ordinary labourer have advanced something like 400 per cent?—Yes, I should think quite. Of course, we shall never get what you call a competitive wage in the Army; but taking 10s. 6d. into the man's hand after he has been paid, I am very delighted to hear what high wages those who leave the Army consider they must get in civil life in order to compensate them for what they lose by leaving the Army.

I made a great deal of inquiry last autumn, and I found that men would not look at places at a guinea a week.

21806. What pension does a private soldier get on leaving the Army?—He does not get a pension; the short service man does not get a pension.

21807. I beg your pardon?—Unless he is allowed to serve on to a pension he does not get one except he suffers from some disability. The least pension used to be 8d. a day after 21 years' service. Now, above that there is nothing less than a shilling for those who put in the full period of service, and it varies according to his rank. I established for the garrison regiments a new system, which I believe to be much better, that a man gets 6d. a day when he comes away after he has finished with the garrison regiment, which he can join after 14 or 16 years' service, and then he can serve in the Militia Reserve until he has 21 years' service. After that he becomes entitled to a pension. Instead of giving him 1s. a day for life we have arranged that he should get 6d. a day until he is 65, and then get 1s. 6d. We find that not unpopular, and it is not a bad bargain for the State either.

21808. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Do these Reservists who join during the War get a higher pension than on the scale of to-day?—During the war the decision was given that pensions previously given for wounds should also be given for sickness. All who joined during the War got the advantage of this.

21809. So that those who had 7d. only before would now have 1s.; those that rejoined?—The man who has been already settled up with ten years ago does not get any increase.

21810. (*Chairman.*) Then as to the Auxiliary Forces, how does the Yeomanry case stand now?—The new Yeomanry conditions have been most successful. The Yeomanry were about 10,000 in number, and trained for seven days or eight days. They have now been raised within two years until actually I think the numbers are 26,000 at this moment, and they are rising every day. I think that we may consider that the experience of the War, showing us that we required more mounted troops, has been taken advantage of. In a certain sense they are an expensive force, but I believe it is far the best investment we could have for our money.

21811. Do you consider that these new Yeomanry regiments would go on an expedition as units?—My own conviction is that we ought to a large extent to depend upon them; that we should do well if a considerable body of Yeomanry and the Militia, and even the Volunteers, were at some time or other given reserve pay in order to come out when the line is exhausted. I believe that our difficulties in keeping up an expedition abroad will always require some support of that kind. I made a proposal, which a good many of the Yeomen in the House of Commons objected to, because they did not like having two classes of Yeomanry, those who were to fight abroad with the reserve pay, and those who were to remain at home. Personally I do not doubt that in the end that system will be adopted.

21812. That means that you would have to form the units for service in something like the same way as they were formed during the War?—I do not think that there would be any harm in leaving the units unformed and allowing a certain number of men to go from each. In any case of a foreign war some time must elapse before you embarked your Yeomanry, consequently, if men were trained they would break into the new units with very little difficulty.

21813. The reason I asked the question is because I want to know whether anything had been done to formulate the organisation necessary. We have had a great deal of evidence to show that at the beginning of the War there was really nothing on which people could work?—No, nothing has been done. The evidence that your Lordship is referring to, I suppose, is the evidence with regard to the Imperial Yeomanry sent out.

21814. Yes?—I should certainly propose as soon as I got power from Parliament, if I do have that organisation properly worked out so that we may know who the colonels and officers would be of these combined regiments, but the time was very short in December, and I had to abandon that portion of the Bill.

21815. But would it not be an advantage to gather together the experience of the men who were concerned

in the organisation for the war as a preparation for any scheme of that kind?—We have got a very careful report from the Yeomanry Committee which gives us everything that took place.

21816. We saw that, but we asked a good many officers who came forward who were concerned either with the Imperial Yeomanry or with the Colonial Forces, and we could not find that their experience had been made use of in that particular way?—I think it is a point which certainly should be thought of. I think the Intelligence Department and Mobilisation Department ought certainly to be prepared with a very precise scheme for proceeding in any future war, especially as we all have the conviction that mounted troops would play such a part in it.

21817. Several Yeomanry officers said that if there had been a manual of some kind laying down the general lines of such organisation, it would have assisted them very greatly, but we could not hear that anything was in prospect?—That point certainly ought to be attended to.

21818. Is there anything you wish to say about the Colonial Forces?—The question of Colonial Forces was dealt with very fully at the Colonial Conference. It was there put before the Colonial Premiers how very useful it would be for Imperial purposes if any force, whether with their reserve pay paid by the Imperial Government or not, could be held in readiness for Imperial needs. There were notable exceptions, especially in the case of Mr. Seddon, who was very much inclined to it, who was willing to adopt it, but with certain notable exceptions the general feelings of the Premiers was that everything must be left to the decision of the Governments and peoples of the Colonies when the emergency arose. Of course we fully recognise the excellent spirit which animated the Colonies in the last war, and we cannot press for anything that they are not prepared to tender. On the other hand, looked at from the Imperial military point of view, there is a very great difference between arranging your own organisation with the certainty of a certain trained support from the various Colonies and arranging it without; you cannot depend upon a thing which the circumstances of the time might cause not to be proffered to you, and, therefore, in a certain sense I was sorry that other Prime Ministers did not take the same view as Mr. Seddon. But I think the subject must be allowed to rest at present. It is evident that there is a strongly pronounced view in the Colonies against committing themselves beforehand, and until that view changes we must recognise that valuable assistance has been given us of a less regular kind, and we may hope that we shall be met in the same spirit on the next occasion. But, of course, it will be recognised that it is useless for us to talk about using an Intelligence Department and a Mobilisation Department without being prepared at the same time to put at the disposal of the military authorities the force which they consider necessary to operate in various countries.

21819. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Or upon being able to operate without it?—Quite.

21820. That is taking as your basis that there will be no help?—You cannot include in your calculations troops about whom there is a doubt, that is the difficulty.

21821. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) You cannot count on those from the Colonies in any certain numbers?—That is understood. I make no complaint of the decision, only it makes it necessary for the Mother Country to provide for all these questions, especially in regard to operations in some countries from which we are more remote than our Colonies. It complicates the arrangements. It is possible that at the last moment we might have most valuable assistance proffered us and that the plans we were making were unnecessary; but we must make the plans.

21822. In the meantime it must be gratifying to find that in some Colonies, say Canada, they are taking measures for increasing and more thoroughly training the number of their Volunteer Militia very considerably, and having depôts in different parts of the country?—I am sure very good progress is being made in many places. On the other hand, a "bird in the hand" is an old adage.

21823. (Chairman.) I think the next point you mention is as regards contracts. Are you satisfied with the present

system, or do you think it possible to decentralise further? —I think taking it all in all the Central Contracts Department has come out very well during the War. My object in decentralising contracts would be twofold so far as it can be done. The first reason would be in order to get rid of as much as possible of these references to the War Office in matters which are not necessary, but the second is to train the officers who will have to make the contracts in time of war. When the history of the South African War is fully written, I think it will be found that most of the mistakes which have been made about contracts have been made upon the spot; and if they had been made upon the spot it is chiefly because the officers have been called upon to do a work which it is very difficult for them to learn in time of war. Years ago I persuaded the then Secretary of State to allow Aldershot to make a number of its own contracts. We found sometimes it meant that they were buying in the same markets that we were; but at all events officers got the experience. Personally, I am favourable to all small contracts being done as locally as possible; to take one instance we never interfere with canteens, all that is done regimentally, and officers get a certain experience out of it. But there has been an inquiry, as the Commission are aware, into contracts both during the War and also by the Dawkins Committee, and I generally adopt the view taken by both those inquiries.

21824. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Do you intend to utilise the Army Pay Department more in that way during war time?—I have constantly tried to make more use of the Army Pay Department. It is a very difficult thing to do, because the officers in the Department at present are only trained to disburse money and to account; and if you want to have a trained financial staff at the disposal of the General Officer Commanding, I am disposed to think that on the whole it will have to come in connection with the trained civilian staff which now does the audit.

21825. That would be for the Commander-in-Chief in the field and the headquarters; but generals of divisions and generals of brigades and commanders of columns want men with them who have had some experience of buying and making contracts. You could not have the financial experts with them. Would you not have to rely upon the Army Pay Department to some extent, or some corresponding body?—It would be a very valuable experience for them, but I do not think it can be properly carried out unless we can in some way amalgamate the Army Pay Department with the Finance Department, and I have found that is a very thorny subject upon which I have embarked, and been shipwrecked more than once.

21826. (Chairman.) We have had this expression of *See Q. 218.* opinion given to us: "There is a marked want of financial assistance to generals in the field, which, if it were met by the appointment of competent military financial advisers on the staff, would result, I am sure, in a more efficient and economical expenditure of the public money supplied." That was from Lord Kitchener?—I think there is no doubt the experience of the War shows that general officers ought to have some financial assistants, and I think it would be possible. We have already sent an audit office, a branch of our audit office, to Salisbury Plain, to Aldershot, and to Ireland, and I think it is probable that if the Aldershot Army Corps went on active service, or any considerable portion of it, the General Officer would wish to take that staff with him to assist him. You cannot send a whole staff of auditors into the field, but you might at all events make them available for his guidance and assistance.

21827. I think the point raised before us was whether that delegation of the audit staff was quite the thing that was meant. This is more an officer who would be on the general staff as a financial adviser?—The present Auditor is in a sense his financial adviser, and is so used, and I am only awaiting the experience of this delegation. If it turns out that it only means that Sir Evelyn Wood sends his accounts into the office at Salisbury, and has them reviewed there more rapidly than in London, then we would gain something; but we should gain a great deal more, I think, if it is found out that before Sir Evelyn Wood authorised expenditure, he (as he probably does) went into the next office the next door or sent an officer in and said, "What will be the effect of this financially?" and reviewed the thing. In that case he would use the

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1 May 1903.*

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Auditor as financial adviser, and in that case I think we shall gain very largely.

21828. Are those auditors civilians?—Yes, and they were wished to be civilians. I consulted the military authorities repeatedly about it, and they wished it; and, what is more, in two cases I sent the civilians that were asked for by the Army Corps Commanders in command to take charge.

21829. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) I gather from what you say that you do not think the training of the Army Pay Department is sufficient to qualify an officer to become a financial adviser to the General Officer Commanding in the field?—I do not think they have the training which qualifies them. They disburse money and they account for it, but they have no training in making contracts or in the higher work, and principles which underlie the whole thing, and I think they would have to have a regular training and go through other branches in the War Office.

21830. (*Chairman.*) I think some witnesses carried that still further, and said that the financial adviser ought to be a military officer for that reason, that the crux of the matter was to train military officers in finance?—I see no difficulty whatever in the financial adviser being an officer if he is trained. For instance, I think the training of the Quartermaster-General's Department, if it was supplemented by some financial training, would be very useful.

21831. Then, with regard to remounts, I do not know that we need trouble you with any details on that subject, except as to what is to be done for the future?—With regard to the future we have made far better arrangements for purchasing, we have made what I hope will be a complete arrangement as to information; we have formed, or are forming, in time of peace, a nucleus of Remount Establishments which, after the experience of the War, it will not occur in future to any general officer to treat as mere depôts from which you can draft specially efficient officers to commands in the field. The Remount officers would have to remain doing remount work, recognising that it is very important work. I think all that is being now properly organised. But, of course, the fact remains that, if at any time we were again called upon to raise a supply of 2,500 a year to 250,000 a year, it must cause a very great strain, and a certain number of animals will be sent which ought not to be sent; but I think really that what we have gained most during the war is not only experience in buying and as to the places where we can purchase, but in the utilisation of horses when they arrive. You may have noticed that even as late as last March (March of last year), in Lord Downe's Report which was presented to Parliament, it was found that a great many officers then in South Africa did not even then know that Lord Kitchener had issued order that no horses were to go to the front until after they had been landed a month. No Remount Department in the world can provide against that sort of thing. If, when we had already got 40,000 horses waiting to go up in South Africa which had been got into condition, horses were being sent past them straight from the base the moment they landed, of course the old evils went on at once. Therefore I do not think that the reorganisation of the Remount Department depend only on the changes which will be made for the provision and purchase and care of horses at home, but especially on the care of them and the administration of them on a campaign. And we propose to make these Remount posts tenable for a definite time, so that there shall be no question of withdrawing an officer who is responsible.

21832. And would the staff be sufficient to provide for these officers on service in the field?—I think that the staff, as we propose to organise it, will be sufficient so far as we can go with due regard to expense, but the Commission will realise that we may not have another war for a very long period, and if we were to keep a very large number of officers kicking their heels we should find that the best class of officer would not take the post, and the public would soon weary of it.

21833. Undoubtedly it must be a system that is capable of expansion?—Yes.

21834. I think, so far, we only had it from Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke as a scheme he mentioned to us as probable; it was not passed at that time. Has it been

adopted since?—Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke I think gave his evidence in October, and the decisions about the Remount Department have been taken since then. They were explained by Lord Stanley in the House of Commons I think in the month of March.

21835. I mean is the new system actually in operation now?—It has just been put into operation; the appointments have been considered for the different positions, and it will really actively come into operation when the successor to General Truman takes office. General Truman retires in a month or two's time, he having reached the limit of age, and we thought that the most convenient time to start a new system.

21836. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is there still a registration of horses in the United Kingdom?—Registration we shall certainly continue as we did before.

21837-8. We had evidence from an Indian officer that there the horses are all furnished through large contractors, who take all the risks; they deliver the horses to the forces in India, and if any are found unsuitable it is their risk and their loss?—Those are Australian horses.

21839. (*Chairman.*) The only other point you have noted here is about ranges and manœuvring grounds; can you tell us anything about any steps that have been taken with regard to that?—We have, I think, made a very considerable step forward in the last seven years. We have bought Salisbury Plain; we have now a considerable tract of land in Scotland, which will, we hope, be largely added to; we have increased our training ground in Ireland, and we have obtained manœuvring rights over a certain amount of land in the North-Eastern District, and I want more at Aldershot. But in all these cases the increased range of rifles and the increased extension of forces makes training very difficult. There is no doubt that they are utilising Salisbury Plain to the full. I do not know what we would have done if we had not got it at the time we did. We have brought troubles on our own back by requiring or authorising more shooting among all classes of soldiers. We have provided ammunition for the Cavalry to fire 200 rounds instead of 150, and the Infantry 300 instead of 200, and there is more shooting for all classes. That, of course, means more ranges, and ranges are one of the most difficult things to deal with.

21840. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) How do you mean that you have brought trouble upon your back?—Because some of the existing ranges are being used to the fullest extent, and we have to find more. If you multiply the number of Volunteers by so many you must help them to more ranges. As a matter of fact, very large sums of money have been spent; we have spent since October, 1899, nearly £400,000 on ranges and we have got to spend nearly £500,000 more. Fortunately, long before the War we had been acquiring ranges and manœuvring grounds to a very large extent. When I say that I mean training ground, not manœuvring ground. Manœuvring can only be done by taking large tracts of country under the Manœuvres Act. As the Commission knows there are considerable drawbacks to that in this country, but, on the whole, I think we have been fairly met by Parliament.

21841. Is there anything else you would like to add?—I think not.

21842. (*Sir John Hopkins.*) I should like to put one question to you. We have had it in evidence that the mobilisation of the troops rather suffered from those concerned not being able to put their hands on a certain amount of money to prepare them for the place to which they were going. General Stopford told us, for instance, that the forces might have been mobilised more quickly if the money had been forthcoming when the order for preparation for mobilisation was given, and he rather points that out as a defect. I will read you what he said. He is asked: "But your point is that you gave warning, at any rate on 5th August, that unless the expenditure was sanctioned there would be delay?" And his answer is: "Yes, and my point, as I put it later on, is that this is inherent to mobilisation for service abroad, when special equipment has to be provided." Then he goes on to point out that the essence of mobilisation is to make that preparation, but to make that preparation you must "know exactly how to act and also that the equipment, etcetera, should be forthcoming." I merely ask you that because it may

See Q.

direct your attention to that point?—I think a greater amount of such stores ought to be, and would be under General Brackenbury's existing scheme now, in readiness. As regards the remainder, I quite agree; but in my opinion delays in mobilisation are not due in the least to any defect in our system of calling out the Reserves by a Proclamation by Parliament. We can in any case provide our troops and get them together quicker than we can convey them across the ocean. No Admiralty can have transports all ready waiting for years together; they require a few days to fit. But I think the greatest difficulty will always be in providing and giving the orders beforehand, outside the Estimate for the year. The same political reason which prevents the Government from issuing a Proclamation to call out the Reserves also prevents their taking a credit for money. I think it is a question which might well be considered whether, if it is constitutionally possible, it should not be in the power of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a view to any emergency, to give some special credit with a covering sanction from Parliament within three months or something of that kind.

21843. It was pointed out elsewhere in two or three directions that the absence of this money when the order was given to prepare for mobilisation hampered the movement. For instance, it was stated they had to buy horses and boots, and things of that kind, and that they were also short of equipment in some cases, because there was no money?—That is true, but you will readily see that if you had once begun buying horses you would have advertised in this case to Mr. Kruger exactly what you are doing.

21844. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Were you Secretary of State at the time when Lord Roberts went out?—No, Lord Roberts went out when Lord Lansdowne was Secretary of State, and I was appointed in the middle of November, 1900, when Lord Roberts was about to leave South Africa to come home. He left about three weeks afterwards. Lord Wolseley was Commander-in-Chief for a fortnight, and then there was an interregnum for a month.

21845. The question I was going to put was, before Lord Roberts went out were there any important communications discussed between him, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Secretary of State? Would it be the usual thing that there would be?—I was not at the War Office

at the time, but in point of fact I happened to be at a meeting at which the present Prime Minister was, at which I heard Lord Roberts discuss a variety of plans very closely.

21846. And it would be the usual thing of course before a General went out?—I should think, certainly. If I were Secretary of State at the opening of a war I should hope the General would confide to me pretty generally what he intended to do, because it would enable me to assist him much more efficiently.

21847. We have had it in evidence, I think, that when General Buller went out nothing of that kind was done?—I have seen General Buller's evidence and I have seen Lord Wolseley's evidence. General Buller had access to every department of the War Office, and was so well known there and had so great authority there that I think it was assumed on all hands that he had had access to every document and to everything he desired to see.

21848. And if he had wished to have had his plans discussed with the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State he would not have had any difficulty in bringing such a discussion about?—I cannot imagine any difficulty. I think the only feeling which would have actuated the Secretary of State in the matter would have been the desire not to hamper General Buller by appearing in any way to interfere with him.

21849. (*Chairman.*) But as a matter of fact there were no written instructions for any of the generals?—No. I do not know how far it would be usual to give written instructions, but I think it would be most desirable in the event of any campaign that any General with an independent command should go out with the fullest possible plans or schemes.

21850. In writing?—In writing, which the Intelligence Department might have drawn up of the country he was going to engage in.

21851. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Allow him a free hand when he got out as to a change of operations?—Yes entirely.

21852. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Still having a general knowledge of the policy which the Government desired him to adopt?—I think he should have the fullest general knowledge, and I think that knowledge ought to be, not merely from his military chiefs, but from the members of the Cabinet as well.

FIFTY-FIFTH DAY.

Wednesday, 10th June 1903.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. The Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. (*Chairman.*)

The Right Hon. The Viscount ESHER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
The Right Hon. The Lord STRATHCONA AND MOUNT
ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir GEORGE DASHWOOD TAUBMAN-
GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.

Field Marshal Sir HENRY WYLIE NORMAN, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., C.I.E.

The Hon. Sir FREDERICK MATTHEW DARLEY, G.C.M.G.

Admiral Sir JOHN OMMANNEY HOPKINS, G.C.B.

Sir JOHN EDGE.

Sir JOHN JACKSON.

BERNARD H. HOLLAND, Esq. (*Secretary.*)

Major-General R. G. KEKEWICH, C.B., called and examined.

21853. (*Chairman.*) You have submitted to us a *précis* of your evidence, and it might be convenient to put it on the record of evidence as your first answer?—The following is a *précis* of the evidence prepared by me:—

1. Details of the preparations made, and steps taken to defend Kimberley, will be found in my despatch dated Kimberley, 15th February, 1899 (date of termination of the siege), published in "London Gazette," dated 8th May, 1900 (*Vide Appendix, page 668, post*). Paragraphs 1 to 37 appear to give most of the information required, but the following may be of use.

2. On 11th September, 1899, I was informed I was

to go to Kimberley, and I had a long interview with the High Commissioner. His Excellency informed me that Major Scott-Turner, Captain O'Meara, and Lieutenant McInnes had been for some time at Kimberley in connection with the defence arrangements, and that Commissioner Robinson, of the Cape Police, was in command there.

The High Commissioner wished me to inquire carefully into the arrangements already made and suggested for the defence of Kimberley the frontier and communications, and that if I thought they offered reasonable security against danger immediately apparent, he would be glad to let matters rest undisturbed

*The Right
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1 May 1903.

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C.B.

If, on the other hand, there was any serious risk involved either to Kimberley or to communications between Orange River and Mafeking, by a continuance of the state of things as they then existed, I was to report accordingly.

10 June 1903. For political and other reasons I was informed that my mission was to be kept strictly confidential, and that any inquiries I made were to be conducted as secretly as possible.

3. Owing to reports as to the enemy's movements, I considered it advisable, soon after my arrival in Kimberley, to recommend strongly that troops should at once be sent up, and on 20th September the Imperial troops, as detailed in paragraph 6 of my despatch, arrived.

4. Until communication was cut off, the necessity of sending up guns, arms, ammunition, etc., was often represented.

5. For political and other reasons the organisation of the Town Guard had to be most secretly dealt with, but every effort was made to get all details of the work well forward, so that immediately authority was received for its formation the scheme prepared was brought rapidly into operation. Every endeavour was also made, not only to increase the efficiency of the Kimberley Regiment (Volunteers) and Diamonds Field Horse (Volunteers), but also to increase their numbers.

A mounted regiment (Kimberley Light Horse) was formed later (*vide* paragraph 22 of my despatch), and this, together with the Cape Mounted Police and Detachment of 21 Mounted Infantry (Loyal North Lancashire Regiment) brought the mounted troops eventually up to about 864.

The strength of the Town Guard was only limited by the number of rifles available, the last detachment formed of it having to be armed with Sniders.

6. State showing the strength by corps on 26th November, 1899, is attached (*Vide next column*).

7. A detailed scheme of defence had been prepared, and on 11th October the garrison moved into the different sections of it.

The main line of defence round Kimberley consisted of a number of closed and open works constructed at suitable intervals. The existence of debris heaps much facilitated the choice of sites for the works referred to. The field of fire in front of the line of defence taken up was cleared, and some of the material thus obtained was utilised in the construction of a line of obstacles to fill up the gaps between the works.

The Premier mine was strongly held, being the source of the only pure water available for so large a population as that contained in Kimberley.

The debris heaps between Kimberley and the Premier mine were entrenched and garrisoned in order to make the communications between Kimberley and the Premier mine as secure as possible, with the numbers of men available for the defence of the diamond fields.

8. On 13th October issued orders to withdraw all rolling stock and engines from Vryburg and south to Kimberley, and this was successfully carried out that day.

9. De Beers Company and the merchants and dealers of Kimberley had, according to their usual custom, a large reserve of supplies at Kimberley. I endeavoured to arrange for an increase in the former (De Beers) before the siege commenced, but although the company had a large quantity "on order," and tried to assist in this matter, very little was, I think, actually received before communications were cut.

10. A rough stock of supplies in Kimberley was taken in September, and this was checked as soon as the siege commenced (15th October). A proclamation was issued under martial law fixing the maximum prices to be charged and the amounts that could be bought or sold for all absolute necessities of life, and regulating the proportions of Boer meal and flour of which all bread was to be made.

With the exception of meat, of which the price was slightly increased, all supplies had under this proclamation to be sold at the same prices as previous to communications being cut.

All licensed dealers were subsequently required to furnish complete statements of stocks of supplies in hand and of all bread stuffs, and these were bought from them at a cost of about £60,000.

In order to facilitate and regulate the distribution

and to minimise the chance of loss by fire, six depôts were formed in different parts of the town.

The ration and the quantity allowed to be purchased by individuals were settled, altered, and reduced as necessity required during the siege.

Towards the end of the siege nothing extra to the ration (which consisted of bread, meat, sugar, coffee, or tea) could be bought except as a medical comfort on the certificate of a medical officer. Milk, vegetables, and anti-scorbutics of any kind were particularly scarce. Horseflesh formed the principal portion of the small meat ration from early in January, 1900, to the end of the siege. At times, owing to the heavy shelling, there was great difficulty in arranging for the drawing of rations.

11. Searchlight signalling communication by night with the relief column was commenced on 28th November, 1899, and helio by day and night on 13th January, 1900.

12. From a rough census taken during the siege at a time when food supply permits were in force, there were in Kimberley and Beaconsfield about 48,000 individuals, of whom 18,000 were Europeans and 30,000 made up of races of varying colour. Out of this total population there were about 12,000 women and 10,000 children.

13. During the siege the number of shells fired by the enemy was about 8,500, and by us with our 7-pounders about 2,141.

14. The following, taken from the report of the Medical Officer of Health for Kimberley, gives information as to health, etc. :—

"During the first few weeks of those dreary 124 days (October 15th, 1899, to February 15th, 1900) during which we were besieged there was not more sickness than is usual at that time of the year, but from the middle of November onwards sickness rapidly increased, chiefly among the women and children and the natives of all ages, whilst the mortality rate became excessively high. The men in the forts and redoubts kept fairly well, in spite of their unusual trying work and scanty variety in the matter of rations; this was due largely to constantly living in the open air day and night, instead of life in an office or shop or close rooms; but we had many women and children—some 22,000—about 70 per cent. of whom were Europeans and Cape coloured, and among them there was much sickness, which caused a large number of deaths, especially among the children. Amongst the Europeans infants died at the rate of about 500 per thousand, or about half of those born; amongst the coloured races the death rate (935 per thousand born), had it continued, would have meant total extinction of those born in 1899.

"The number of deaths from all causes in each of these four months was 133, 302, 585, and 609 respectively, giving a total of 1,629, which almost equals the number of deaths in a complete year in ordinary times.

"The most serious disease we had to contend with during the siege was scurvy; this was, however, almost entirely limited to the native population. Only two or three decided cases, which incapacitated them, occurred amongst Europeans.

"We had no less than 483 fatal cases out of about 1,500 known cases of this disease, or, in other words, a mortality rate of about 30 per cent."

R. G. KEKEWICH, Major-General

Commanding in Kimberley during the siege.
31st May, 1903.

STATE OF THE GARRISON OF KIMBERLEY BY CORPS ON 26TH NOVEMBER, 1899.

ARTILLERY.

	Officers.	Men.
23rd Co. R.A.	4	90
Diamond Fields Artillery (Vol.)	4	104
Maxim Battery (Town Guard)	0	32
Cape Police Maxim Det.	0	18
Cape Police Gun Det.	1	21
	9	265

ROYAL ENGINEERS.

7th Co. R.E.	1	50
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MOUNTED TROOPS.

	Officers.	Men.
Cape Police - - - - -	18	327
Diamond Fields Horse (Vol.) - - -	8	157
Kimberley Light Horse (Irregulars)	18	343
Ambulance Det. - - - - -	1	13
Transport - - - - -	0	1
Mounted Infantry of Loyal North Lanc. Regt. - - - - -	1	20
Brigade Staff - - - - -	4	3
	50	864

INFANTRY.

Royal North Lanc. Regt. - - -	10	403
Kimberley Regt. (Vol.) - - -	15	386
	25	789
Headquarter Staff - - - - -	2	0
Staff Officer, Town Guard - - -	1	0
	3	0
Town Guard - - - - -	130	2,520
Army Service Corps - - - - -	1	8
Royal Army Medical Corps - - -	1	5
	132	2,533
Grand Total - - - - -	220	4,501

The following are my replies to the points raised in the Memorandum (*Vide Appendix, page 575, post*), which was sent to me by the Secretary to the Commission.

1. After the relief of Kimberley I commanded my battalion (1st Loyal North Lancashire Regiment), which formed part of the 9th Brigade, 1st Division.

On Major-General C. W. H. Douglas being invalided to England in December, 1900, I was appointed to command his column, but I only did so for about three weeks, as I was admitted to hospital—the result of an accident owing to my horse falling with me.

On discharge from hospital I was placed in command of a section of the lines of communications, and in July, 1901, I was appointed to the command of a mobile column which operated in the Western Transvaal, and which I held until February, 1902, from which date I commanded a mobile force until the end of the war.

2. With reference to paragraph 1 of the memorandum, I consider the number of troops in the Western Transvaal during the time I held a command until within a few months of the termination of the war inadequate.

I conclude the starving of this district in the matter of troops was considered necessary, as they were required for more important work elsewhere.

3. With reference to paragraph 2:—

I consider the shooting of our men was, as a rule, very indifferent, and that the Boers were better at snapshots and short ranges. The necessity of a better system of training men in shooting was most strongly brought out by the war.

4. I consider the marching of the infantry, and often under scanty rations, was magnificent.

5. Physique will not, in my opinion, be of the highest standard until the pay is increased.

The second contingent of Imperial Yeomanry were in many cases very bad riders, and had little knowledge of horsemanship.

6. I consider the training of officers, as carried out at the Staff College, produces, as a rule, excellent staff officers. I cannot speak too highly of the qualifications and work of those Staff College officers who have been with me during the war. I think that many more officers should be passed through the Staff College.

7. Supplies were, as a rule, sufficient, and the quality of them excellent.

Bad pattern pouches and bandoliers led to a great waste of ammunition.

There was a great difficulty in obtaining soap in the early part of the war, which caused much discomfort to the men.

8. I am most strongly of opinion that as many men

72C.

as possible in every battalion should be trained as mounted infantry, also that there should be a distinct cadre of mounted infantry kept up in peace time, and always available.

The value of a force of men of this kind, who are good shots and good riders, cannot be over-estimated, and such a force would be available to relieve the cavalry, when required, in many ways.

9. The Remount Department could never keep pace with the demand for horses, and in consequence horses were not kept sufficiently long at the depôts to get them fit for the hard work in the field, where they were underfed, had to carry excessive weights of saddlery, equipment, etc., and often bad riders.

10. I think that to get the best value out of all irregular corps it is very important that regular officers should command, and that the staff and at least one non-commissioned officer per squadron should be regulars.

11. I think there should be more officers, and that the pay of the junior ranks should be greatly increased.

I lay great stress on the value of the officer, and his leading, zeal, and influence were generally of a very high order.

Owing to the wear and tear of war, and to many officers being required with irregular corps and for other duties, such as commandants, commissariat and transport, etc., the numbers of officers with regiments were often reduced far below what was necessary for efficiency.

12. I consider *esprit de corps* and discipline of very great importance, and that corps possessing these have great advantage over those who have not.

13. The war has brought out most strongly the necessity of training all in peace time for the work they will have to do in war. My experience is that, owing to want of suitable ground at almost all home and many foreign stations, troops cannot be properly trained for active service.

The difficulties of training under these circumstances (generally over the same small piece of ground) takes the heart out of officers and non-commissioned officers. It is hardly reasonable to expect good results and the interest to be kept up unless suitable ground for all tactical training is in some way made available.

It seems likely that the men will at last be available, but to bring about the best results and to develop the qualities required in all ranks, such as individual intelligence and initiative, it is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary that suitable training ground should be available.

The importance of this cannot, I think, be over-estimated.

R. G. KEKEWICH, Major-General.

31st May, 1903.

21854. You were in South Africa before the outbreak of war, I think?—Yes, for some months.

21855. In command of your regiment?—Yes, in command of my regiment at Cape Town.

21856. It was not until the 11th September, 1899, that you were consulted about the defence of Kimberley?—On that day the High Commissioner sent for me and told me the general situation. He was not very satisfied with the arrangements really under the Police Commissioner; he did not think them satisfactory. The Police Commissioner, of course, was a Cape Government official.

21857. And he was in charge of the place at the time?—He was really in charge of the place, the senior officer up there, and the High Commissioner was not very satisfied; he wanted to leave matters alone if he possibly could, but he did not want them to drift into a dangerous state. I had confidentially to explain certain things to Commissioner Robinson about his interest being Imperial, and that kind of thing; my mission up there was very confidential. I was not originally sent up in command, it developed into that afterwards.

21858. There was a scheme of defence though before you went up?—Yes, I did not know much about that then; in fact, I was sent for and left a few hours afterwards, but I had a long interview with the High Commissioner, and was handed certain papers about the defence. The scheme had been originally prepared by

Major-General
R. G.
Kekewich,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

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Major-General
R. G.
Kekewick,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

Colonel Trotter for the defence of Kimberley, but, of course, that was not eventually entirely acted upon, parts of it were and parts not.

21859. It was a groundwork?—It was a groundwork, and there had been different officers up there. Lieutenant McInnes, of the Engineers, had been sent up also further to elaborate and work it out.

21860. And he remained there?—Yes; I think Major Scott-Turner got there early in July, and Lieutenant McInnes, I should say, in August.

21861. You went up somewhat on a confidential mission in September?—Yes, it was entirely confidential. I, as it were, sneaked into Kimberley, and was kept there as a sort of secret agent for two or three days, but things developed so quickly. As the situation appeared to me, from everything it was perfectly clear that they meant business. I reported it at once, upon which they sent up all Imperial troops that they could spare.

21862. And then you assumed command?—Then I was appointed to command in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland.

21863. I see you sent reports almost immediately after your arrival in Kimberley that troops were necessary, and troops were sent up on the 20th of September?—Yes.

21864. That is only nine days after you were first summoned by the High Commissioner?—That is it. Of course, I reported at once that the situation was very unsatisfactory, no steps had been taken to protect the bridges or to do anything of that kind. Of course, the Orange River Bridge at that time, if it had gone, would have been a most serious matter for the whole colony and the whole country.

21865. Was that under the Police Commissioner?—Everything of that kind was, but nothing was being done at all. I then had to make arrangements with him to pretend to paint it, and things of that kind, in order to get a guard over it, and watch it, because at any time it might have been blown up, and that would have upset everything.

21866. What force had the Police Commissioner at his disposal before you came up?—I cannot say for certain, but I should think, between Mafeking and Orange River, about 600.

21867. Police?—Yes, echeloned along at small posts. I really would not be certain about those figures, but I could get them.

21868. Were most of those gathered into Kimberley afterwards?—A great many of them were.

21869. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Did those police include the Dutch race as well as British?—Oh, yes, and it was a very serious thing that it did.

21870. What proportion of them, should you say, were Dutch?—I could not say; for a long time the Cape Government had been working the Dutch element into it, and no doubt the bad way in which the Cape Police behaved in the early part of the war was owing a great deal to that; they crumpled up entirely everywhere. I do not mean to say they fought badly when they got into Kimberley; when we got them together I think they fought very well, but all the posts that I had arranged for north of Kimberley—four distinct posts with from 100 to 150 men at each place—practically came into Kimberley without firing a shot. At Fourteen Streams Bridge, where they had a most elaborate defence, and everything of that kind, they simply crumpled up and retired into Kimberley. I think that was a great deal owing to this Dutch element in the Cape Police.

21871. (Chairman.) What was the Kimberley regiment?—It was a regiment of volunteers that developed into a good regiment.

21872. Was it in existence before?—Yes.

21873. And would have been at the disposal of the Police Commissioner?—Yes, it was at the disposal of the Police Commissioner until I took over the command.

21874. Was it embodied?—It was embodied subsequently.

21875. But not before you came?—No, nothing was done; everything was kept very quiet as to any embodiment or anything; one dare not talk about it.

21876. And the Diamond Fields Horse?—The Diamond Fields Artillery is a part of the Kimberley

regiment; it is the artillery portion of the Kimberley regiment of volunteers.

21877. It was not embodied either?—That was not embodied either until later.

21878. And the Town Guard was the other body?—The Town Guard was, of course, a force entirely raised out of local people.

21879. For the siege?—For the siege.

21880. It had no organisation practically beforehand?—No, we had to arrange it all secretly. I can give you the papers about all that, showing how it originally stood.

21881. Later there was a mounted regiment of Kimberley Light Horse?—Yes, I think there were only 21 or 22 mounted infantry sent up to Kimberley, and, of course, that number with a perimeter of nearly 12 miles was positively dangerous and ludicrous, and in the town itself I had to raise a mounted corps, for which the Governor, Lord Milner, gave me authority.

21882. You have given us a statement showing the state of the garrison on the 26th of November, which brings out a grand total of 220 officers and 4,501 men?—Yes. I am sorry to say I could not find amongst my papers any other state. I hope that is a correct statement, but it is only out of my private diary. I took the 26th of November as it was the only state I could find. That gives a very fair estimate, but, of course, it was varying from day to day.

21883. The Cape Police is put down at 327 men and 18 officers, besides the small detachment of artillery?—Yes, you see the Taungs detachment of Cape Police got back into Mafeking; I arranged that with Colonel Baden-Powell, when things were becoming very dangerous; there was no use leaving them out, and I let him take them back; he was anxious to get them, and I really did not think there was much chance of their reaching me, and I let him have them.

21884. That is not included in the 327?—No; when I said before 600 I was only guessing at it; but I should think it was about 600. It had been represented over and over again by Commissioner Robinson that he wanted more Cape Police, and more war arrangements. He had been very loyal and staunch about all arrangements.

21885. Did that show all he had at his disposal at the time?—Yes.

21886. Could he have done very much with so small a force?—Not, of course, against any serious attack; the danger was that they might try to rush Kimberley in some sort of way.

21887. It was on the 11th October that you took up the different sections of the line of defence?—Yes.

21888. Would you like to state the main lines of it?—I did state it somewhere in my summary; I do not think I can state it better than that. I refer to paragraph 7 of the *précis* printed at the beginning of my evidence.

21889. That you consider was the best line of defence that was available under the whole circumstances?—Yes; of course it was an enormous perimeter, and it extended really, if you take in Beaconsfield, 11½ miles round. Of course, if you work it out in any scheme of defence lines according to the numbers you are supposed to have, it is a very small garrison. It was also very difficult to arrange to have a sufficient reserve to reinforce at any threatened point.

21890. How do you account for your being able to hold it then?—I think that the great thing was keeping them perpetually on the move. I kept on sortieing at them, making reconnaissances in force, and that kind of thing, and they did not know where and when these were coming off. They never made any serious attack on Kimberley. Of course, they got our daily paper every day, we knew that; it went out at night, and I used to publish in it information about mines, and cautioning the inhabitants in different parts as to their danger, and things like that; all kinds of ruses to deceive them went out in the paper. There were many enemy's sympathisers in the town; not so many as I daresay there were in many other towns, but so many that there was daily communication with the Boers outside, and it was impossible to stop it.

21891. That rendered them less anxious to come on?—Yes. I tried to retain as many as I could round the town, but also to prevent them from attacking.

21892. But I suppose the Boers were not so anxious

to attack throughout the war, were they?—Not at all, I think.

21983. What would have happened if you had had to deal with another enemy?—If they had been English troops they would have been into us in no time.

21894. You speak of the supplies; you were able to make some arrangements with the De Beers Company and the merchants?—You see, everything I had to do had to be done in the most confidential and secret manner. I only really dealt with the general manager of De Beers in those days and with the secretary. Mr. Rhodes had not come up in the early days, and although I think a large number of supplies were on order from King Williams Town and Port Elizabeth, and places like that, I do not believe they arrived in Kimberley before the siege, but it happened to be the season of the year when there was a large amount of grain in the town; there always is at that season of the year.

21895. You say you had to act very confidentially; can you speak more precisely of that now?—Well, of course, I could not speak a word to anybody; I had to go about as a sort of secret agent; we did not want in any kind of way to influence the war or political action about that time, and everything had to be kept exceedingly secret.

21896. Do you mean that any action in the way of preparing for a war would have led to a war?—Yes.

21897. That was the feeling at the moment?—Yes, that was according to my orders; everything had to be absolutely secret.

21898. In order that the Boers should not imagine that a war was being prepared?—Quite so.

21999. It was more with a view to the enemy than to any sympathy with the enemy on our side of the border?—Yes, it was with a view to the enemy, and owing to political events then; they did not want in any way to influence them. Paragraph No. 10 of my *précis* of evidence states the arrangements I made about the supplies.

21900. It states: "The ration and the quantity allowed to be purchased by individuals were settled, altered, and reduced as necessity required during the siege." Does that mean that they were on very short rations by the end of the siege?—Yes, I think it was five-eighths of a pound of bread—indifferent bread, because we had not the proper quantity of flour in it; we had to make our bread according to an ordered proportion of breadstuffs—and about a quarter of a pound of horse flesh was the meat ration at the end.

21901. And that applied to the whole population, civil, and military?—No, the military always had a better ration, the actual fighting men; I always arranged that the military had an increased ration, because it was so important to keep up their strength for fighting. I do not know that it was ever known in the town, but it was so. I never heard it cavilled at in any way.

21902. There was no movement in consequence?—No; most of the defenders were actually inhabitants themselves.

21903. Meat was scarce?—Very scarce.

21904. And it was chiefly horse flesh?—Yes; I think I gave the exact date in my *précis*, but early in January we first took horse flesh into use.

21905. Does that mean that the whole cattle had been consumed by that time?—There were a few cattle left, and a certain number of milch cows, but, of course, milk was our greatest difficulty; nearly all infants died, and we dared not slaughter the milch cows.

21906. At the end of the paragraph there is a sentence I should like to ask a question upon: "At times, owing to the heavy shelling, there was great difficulty in arranging for the drawing of rations"?—You see the actual meat dépôt was in the centre of the town by the Town Hall, and, of course, it had to be issued at certain hours, and people really preferred to stop in their bomb-proof shelters to coming and drawing their rations, as it entailed great danger.

21907. They were in danger, but does the paragraph in the despatch of the 20th March, paragraph 2, state the full number of casualties?—I think so.

21908. It says this, "The casualties during the period above referred to" (that is the period from the 13th September, 1899, to 15th February, 1900), "together with those of the 16th February, appear to have amounted to two officers killed and 12 wounded, and 34

non-commissioned officers and men killed and 97 wounded. In addition, four Europeans and one native of the civil community were killed, and 16 Europeans and eight natives wounded during the bombardment." Is that the total loss during the whole siege?—I think so.

21909. Because it sounds rather a small loss if you had to carry out even the giving out of rations under a heavy bombardment?—Well, you see they seemed to throw their shells with mathematical accuracy into nothing; an enormous number came into the town, but really there was a great deal more ground than persons, although there were over 50,000 people there, and one always imagined when each shell came in that there would be the most frightful loss of life; it was not so. It took about 900 shells to kill a person, and four hundred and something of that kind to wound anybody during the siege.

21910. You had a very large native population, had you not?—Very large; the total population of the town, natives, and Europeans, began at about 54,000.

21911. I should have thought the natives would have been difficult to keep under cover?—The natives in these places are a great deal under control; they are in locations, those not employed at the different mines. Those employed at the De Beers Company were in compounds, and they were never released. There was a danger of a shell falling into the compound where a lot of men were crowded together, but we tried to keep them separate as much as possible, so as not to have any big loss.

21912. I see that in paragraph 12 you give the number: "There were in Kimberley and Beaconsfield about 48,000, of whom 18,000 were Europeans, and 30,000 made up of races of varying colour. Out of this total population there were about 12,000 women and 10,000 children." Was this failure of the Boer shell from ineffective fire or from any defect in the shell itself?—Well, the shrapnel which they fired burst very high, and they really only dropped on the town, and the ground all round these *debris* heaps (the stuff that is worked up out of the mines) had a wonderful control over the shells, they pitched into it and there was no harm done, they were controlled at once.

21913. They buried themselves?—Yes.

21914. Did the shells burst well, do you think?—The big gun, the 94-pounder, did very well, but I think most of the others did not burst well.

21915. We heard that at the beginning of the war at any rate the fuses were defective?—They were not well timed, I think, and were generally defective.

21916. You calculate that there were 8,500 shells fired into the town?—Yes; it was rather difficult to get exact numbers all round the town, but I found a note in my diary, and put that in as the amount in my summary.

21917. And your own shells were 2,141 in number?—Yes, they were 7-pounders, very little guns, quite outranged by the Boer guns, of course.

21918. You had nothing bigger?—Nothing bigger.

21919. (*Sir Frederick Darley*.) What was the range of the 7-pounders?—I suppose the effective range would be about 2,500 yards, but we used to pitch them as far as 4,500, but that is very inaccurate fire. They were quite useless guns for defence purposes.

21920. (*Chairman*.) I suppose you would also call attention to the report of the medical officer of health, given in the fourteenth paragraph of your *précis*?—Yes, and I have got the original here if you would like it.

21921. This is all you consider material?—Yes.

21922. The most serious disease was scurvy I notice?—Yes.

21923. And the mortality did increase very much during the siege?—Yes, in the four months they had as much mortality as they usually had in a whole year.

21924. There is nothing you wish to add to that?—No, I think not.

21925. Is there anything else with regard to the siege that you would like to mention? You have referred us also to the despatch?—Yes, I have put everything in that, and I thought I had better refer to it, and I supplemented it by this report. I had not very much to go upon; I had only my private diary; I could not get hold of any of the official papers until too late.

Major-General
R. G.
Kekewich,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

Major-General
R. G.
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10 June 1903.

I got a few days ago a copy of the Official Diary, but I could not get my Intelligence Diary.

21926. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Where were the people buried who died during the siege?—Outside the town in the cemetery.

21927. (*Chairman.*) This is what you think is sufficient to put in?—I think it is quite sufficient.

21928. You have been good enough to give us some remarks upon the general memorandum?—Yes, of course, it is very difficult for me to speak with any strength as to the first part of it, because I went off to Kimberley, and half of my own regiment followed me up to Kimberley, and I really do not know anything about the condition of the troops that arrived in the early part of the war, and therefore I have omitted all reference to that.

21929. But after the relief of Kimberley you took command of your battalion again?—I did, and in the First Division, Lord Methuen's.

21930. On the western side?—On the western side. We started at Kimberley, and went across to Kroonstad, and eventually worked up north of the Vaal, and got into the Western Transvaal.

21931. And later you had command of a column?—Yes, and latterly a mobile force.

21932. You say that you consider the number of troops in the Western Transvaal while you were in command there was inadequate?—Quite, for any cornering of Boers.

21933. Did that have an effect upon your operations in the way of restricting them?—Very considerably; you cannot catch Boers without a great many columns, and even then they get through.

21934. What did your column do during that time?—We cleared the Magaliesberg, and did other work; we had a very serious attack at Moedwill, where they attacked my camp early in the morning, and I had heavy losses, but they got nothing. Then later in the war, quite late, in April, 1902, I had a biggish fight at a place called Rooival; that was just as the negotiations were going on.

21935. You were moving about all that time?—All over the country—Klerksdorp, Rustenberg, Ventersdorp, Lichtenberg, and all that district.

21936. The inadequacy of the troops meant that you could not act in combination to surround the Boers?—Yes, Lord Methuen was there too, but it is a very big district, and they could really play round you.

21937. That was probably because the troops were more wanted in some other part of the country?—I conclude that. I do not know what was in Lord Kitchener's mind about it, but it was not until Lord Methuen's reverse and the situation became very serious over there that they realised there were a good many Boers in that part of the country, and took the matter up seriously.

21938. As to the shooting of the men?—I think it was very indifferent.

21939. Do you mean both before and after the war? Did they improve during the war?—I had not much experience except of my own battalion, which was a good shooting battalion before the war, and during Kimberley there was very little chance of getting any idea as to that, but I have never seen any good shooting.

21940. A good many witnesses told us that it was very difficult to tell what the effect of the fire is?—Yes, but, of course, at Rooival, to give a sort of idea, there were as many as 1,800 Boers coming at us in very close formation, and I really do not know how many we killed. I have forgotten, but about 50, and they got to within 300 yards.

21941. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Without any cover?—Practically; there was a certain amount of cover from ground, but they were coming on in close formation, and firing magazine fire off their horses—a regular roar.

21942. Did their fire produce much effect upon our men?—No, we had very few casualties at all, because it was really unaimed fire off horses, but it is the same kind of way in which I understand they succeeded against Lord Methuen and on other occasions, and they tried those tactics on again; but it shows how bad our fire must have been when they could get away with such a very small loss.

21943. (*Sir Frederick Darley.*) What was your force

composed of—regulars?—No, I had a mounted force in which was Scottish Horse and the 7th Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry; I had two columns made up of all kinds of irregulars. If I had had any English infantry probably then I should have got a good lot of them.

21944. (*Chairman.*) You are speaking more of the irregular troops?—Then, certainly.

21945. Do you consider that the English infantry shot better than the irregulars?—Yes, I say so, on the whole.

21946. Are you speaking of all irregulars, or do you draw a distinction between the Imperial Yeomanry, say, and the Colonials?—The Imperial Yeomanry were, as a rule, bad at shooting, I consider; I think the Colonials were better than they were.

21947. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Which Colonials do you mean, the local Colonials or those from over-sea?—The over-sea I think were very good. In the early part of the war I saw a good deal of the 6th Imperial Bushmen and the 4th and 5th New Zealand, and these were all good fighting men, who knew their job well.

21948. (*Chairman.*) You say the Boers were better at snap shots at short ranges; does that mean that they were not better at long ranges?—I do not think they were better at long ranges; they are not accustomed to it, they had never done any long range practice.

21949. Where do you draw the line between short and long range: 500 yards?—I really forget; I would not like to answer that for certain, but it is laid down in the regulations.

21950. I wanted to know what you meant by the observation you made?—I meant they were much better at any sporting range—the range at which you would shoot a buck.

21951. A couple of hundred yards?—About 300 yards; they are very much better at that range, as I think they showed in the attacks; they bowled over a lot of our men in the final stage of an attack.

21952. When our men were attacking, and they were under cover?—Yes; I do not think our men would have bowled over so many of them under similar circumstances.

21953. You want a better system of training in shooting?—I think that is very important; more ammunition and a very much improved system of training.

21954. What do you say to the marching?—I think it was magnificent; quite wonderful.

21955. And the physique?—The physique was good.

21956. Of the infantry soldier?—Yes.

21957. But you say it will not be of the highest standard until the pay is increased?—I think that is so; I do not think we get the very best men.

21958. Are you speaking of the pay as it was at the time of the war?—Even now, I doubt if we shall get the very best men. I think we shall have to work up to the same amount of wages given for every kind of labour before we eventually get the very best men.

21959. But even with the pay as it stood you get men who could do the marching?—Oh, yes.

21960. And very severe marching?—Yes.

21961. Had you much to do with the second contingent of the Imperial Yeomanry?—I was commanding a sub-section on the lines of communication for some time, and during that time I saw a great many of them, and I had the 7th battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry under me for the last eight or nine months of the war; at times only portions of it, but still the battalion was the one that was feeding me with Yeomanry.

21962. We had a good deal of evidence about them, that they were not sent out in very good condition, but that they improved very much during the war?—Oh, yes, they improved with the training immensely.

21963. That would be your opinion of them?—Yes.

21964. As to the training of officers?—I do not know if I have said anything about them in my summary.

21965. You speak very highly of the Staff College?—Yes, that is what I think of the Staff College officers; I have the very highest opinion of them. I am not a Staff College officer myself, but I am sure the staff training of those that I have seen has been of the greatest help to me.

21966. That is for work on the Staff?—Yes.

Major-General
R. G.
Kekewich,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

21967. What about the training of officers for other duties?—For war purposes?

21968. Yes?—I think that wants to be carried out on the system they are trying to work now; they seem to me to be awake to the importance of that.

21969. You think as it stood at the time of the war it required expansion?—Oh, yes, very much.

21970. In what direction?—The officers never got any chance. I have seldom seen any chance of training officers properly in the whole of my service; no ground at all; they cannot have any natural aptitude for ground or anything of that kind, unless you have ground to train over, and we really never have ground.

21971. Larger manœuvring grounds?—Yes, and larger training grounds for even companies of infantry; the ground is now so cramped that it takes all the initiative and all the interest out of everybody. Something I think should be done with owners of property in this direction. There should be some big scheme or arrangement for getting leave to manœuvre over grounds. As it is now it takes the heart out of all, I think; you cannot work up any interest; you have to train at home recruit after recruit, very young boys, and to keep up a real interest in it and energy you want ground. I have seldom seen any ground except in India.

21972. You mean a place where the junior officers can get out of sight of the commanding officer?—Yes.

21973. And make mistakes if they like?—You train over a bit of ground probably with one hedge in it, or something of that kind, and the whole thing gets so cramped and small that no body can take any interest in it.

21974. Was your regiment complete with officers at the time of the war?—Yes, but it was broken up very much at different times; two companies here, two there, and three there, and that kind of thing, and, of course, that means that extra staff was required with these different detachments, and then owing to the wear and tear of war and hundreds of other causes, officers being required for all kinds of appointments, I think they run the thing very dangerously low in the case of officers. It always must work so in war.

21975. You became short of officers?—Yes, a great deal too short, I think, for efficiency.

21976. What officers did you get sent out to you? Were they very young men?—I only got officers in the usual course; some came to me from Yeomanry and Colonial corps and different ways of that kind, and officers in the usual way to fill death vacancies.

21977. But during the war there were a number of officers sent out above the ordinary supply, were there not?—Yes, but we were always short, because so many were taken away.

21978. You were always short?—Always short.

21979. You never had the full number?—Except just at the very beginning.

21980. And when you became short, when officers were called away for other purposes, did you report those vacancies as existing?—Yes, those were reported periodically in the states.

21981. Did anything follow upon that?—It is difficult to say; officers came along, but I contend that there are not nearly sufficient in a regiment.

21982. You mean there are not sufficient to begin with?—Not sufficient to begin with; the wear and tear of war requires so many officers to be taken away for every kind of thing.

21983. All that you have said means that the general supply of officers for the Army, as a whole, is deficient?—Yes; I think we have too few officers, particularly in war.

21984. That means that the regiments are depleted in order to supply men for the other services which emerge in war?—Yes, it is to an enormous extent; it is quite ridiculous how they work down to a state verging, I think, on inefficiency.

21985. (Sir Henry Norman.) Was not the number of officers withdrawn from the regiments in the war in South Africa quite abnormal, so many officers being taken away for various civil offices?—Yes; and, of course, it was an exceptionally long war. You will find that ridiculously small numbers were left for duty with the regiments; when the posts as commandants and other offices were filled, the numbers were, I think, dangerously low.

21986. But you do not think they would be withdrawn to the same extent as they were in South Africa in many other wars; the Town Commandants, for instance, were really to look after the civil population rather than troops?—Yes, and defences of course they had to work too—everything in connection with the place.

21987. (Sir Frederick Darley.) I suppose the more efficient the regiment the more likely its officers are to be withdrawn from it?—That is so; you have pitched on the very point I used to mention to Lord Methuen, that because I happened to have good officers they were taken away.

21988. (Sir John Edge.) When a General officer calls for officers from a regiment, does he select the officers, or does the Colonel select the officers he intends to send?—I think generally the Officer Commanding is consulted. I think they generally say, "I want an officer for such and such a thing; whom do you recommend?" and you talk it over, but you have to send one.

21989. In such a case, would you expect that the officer commanding the regiment would invariably send his best men?—I think you would talk it over. I should talk over with the General the pros and cons about that, and complain very much about taking my life blood away to supply other people.

21990. (Chairman.) You have not much to say about supplies?—No, I think they were marvellously good, taken on the whole.

21991. You would like to increase the mounted infantry?—Very much; I think any force having a large number of mounted infantry will have a great advantage in any war.

21992. Of course, the conditions in this war were specially in favour of that?—Yes.

21993. Do you think it would be the same in a war against regular troops?—I think so; I think unless you turn positions you will have enormous losses in frontal attacks.

21994. You can speak also as a regimental officer. Do not the regiments rather complain of the numbers of men taken from them?—Very much.

21995. What would be your remedy for that?—Regular cadres of mounted infantry at home.

21996. Independently of the regiments?—Oh, yes, formed as regular regiments of mounted infantry at home; I have said so in my summary.

21997. I did not gather that that was what you meant by your note here, but there are the two systems, one to make a force of mounted infantry independent of the infantry regiments, and another to train men belonging to the regiments as mounted infantry?—Yes, I would like a separate force also of trained men. I would train every infantry man, if I could, to ride.

21998. If you did that, would there be any necessity for an independent force also?—You see directly a war comes you lose all your good shots; it really comes to that; the mounted infantry must be good shots, men of good character, and men who can ride, and that kind of thing—in fact, all your best shots go straight away to mounted infantry. I never saw the mounted infantry of my battalion from the beginning of the war till the end; it went straight away from me, and I had to keep it supplied with drafts throughout the whole war. It never came near me once during the war.

21999. And that, you think, was against the interests of your regiment?—Certainly I think so, but not against the interests of the Service.

22000. (Sir Henry Norman.) You would keep up permanent battalions of mounted infantry in time of peace?—I certainly would.

22001. Do you think they would not deteriorate rather, or else try to become a sort of cavalry?—I do not know about deterioration; but I do not think the last alternative stated in your question matters very much myself; I think practically in war time they have got to do every duty that cavalry does.

22002. (Chairman.) Including a charge?—No.

22003. You make some remarks about the supply of horses?—Yes.

22004. You say there were not enough?—We never could get enough; the wear and tear when you are doing long night marches on short food, etc., is enormous. I think I got through in the last month of the war over 1,500 horses.

Major-
General
R. G.
Kekewich,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

22005. You mean they were done for?—They had to be sent into depôts, and were useless; they would come along again, but they were useless for the time.

22006. (Sir Frederick Darley.) How many men had you?—I had about 4,000 men under me then.

22007. (Chairman.) If a horse could have been sent from the beginning of the war into a dépôt when it was worked out in the way you describe, that would have increased the number of effective horses, would it not?—In the field?

22008. Yes?—Of course, I was never quartered at Johannesburg, and I cannot say how the thing was worked there; but I know we did not get enough horses, we never could get enough. We had usually a lot of dismounted men.

22009. Even during the later stages of the war?—Oh, yes; it was a perpetual fight to try to get horses.

22010. What did you do? Did you requisition headquarters?—Yes, we made every kind of side attack to get them. Everybody had the same experience; they were all competing against one another, representing their cases so as to get more horses.

22011. But these horses had exceptionally hard work; you say they were underfed, and they had to carry excessive weights of saddlery and equipments, and often bad riders?—Yes.

22012. All that would tell against the lasting powers of the horse?—Yes, very much; and then there were heavy night marches and fighting the next day, away from their transport, and with most of the food tumbled out of nosebags; and one thing and another, they did not get much; in fact, they got too little at these times.

22013. You say you think that to get the best out of irregular corps it is very desirable to have regular officers in command?—I think that very important, and staff also; at least one non-commissioned officer a squadron.

22014. Had most of the corps you saw that advantage?—Not most; the Scottish Horse had, and it was with me during almost the whole of the latter part of the war, but the 7th Battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry had not; they had a certain number, but were not fully completed with them.

22015. Of course, all those officers were officers taken from the regiments in the Service somewhere or another?—Yes, that is what happens.

22016. That bears upon the same question you were discussing just now?—Yes, you cannot get them.

22017. And therefore you think there should be more officers?—I think there must be more officers on account of the wear and tear. Immediately you have a fight if you lose a dozen officers in your regiment the efficiency of the regiment is immediately influenced.

22018. You think the pay of the junior ranks is too small?—I think ridiculously small, and it is not fair to expect a subaltern to perform his duties for 5s. 3d., or whatever it is he gets a day.

22019. You wish also to dwell upon *esprit de corps* and discipline?—I think those are very, very important; in regiments where those were of a high standard the regiments were proportionately better than others.

22020. Are there any particular directions in which you think those points can be encouraged?—I would encourage and foster in every kind of way *esprit de corps* and discipline; they are most important.

22021. And as to the training of the men, you remark, as you did when speaking about the officers, on the want of suitable ground?—That is so; it runs through all ranks, not so much in the case of the men perhaps, but it must for them be very hard to experience the kind of nonsense which goes on—I call it nonsense—in the training on bad ground.

22022. In questions of judging distance, and so on, the men should have ground also?—You can judge distance over other ground; but you are always judging from one particular place, and they soon get to know the distances all round.

22023. (Sir John Jackson.) Could you not get some very good ground in the Highlands of Scotland?—I have no doubt it could be got, but I think there must be some scheme in which civilians and owners of property over the country could help, with an understanding that the troops should not go more than once or twice over the ground, so as not to disturb game, but that they should only occasionally go. This would give

us a chance. Now you cannot make out any fair scheme for training, as a rule, owing to the want of ground; you have to make the scheme work so as to fit in on an extremely small bit of ground, which is not instructive; all know it must be brought on to that ground.

22024. (Sir Henry Norman.) Did the enemy ever make a real assault or attack upon Kimberley?—No.

22025. You were alluding to the difficulties of training owing to the want of ground; have you had experience in battalions at home of late years?—In Ireland I have; I was second in command of a battalion in Ireland shortly before the War.

22026. Of course the initial training of troops must take place here. Have you found from experience that there has been difficulty in training owing to the want of men available for training?—Immense difficulty every now and again, but I think that is past now; I think the men will now be available.

22027. I heard the other day the case of an officer who had been some time in the Service and had never been on parade except Church Parade owing to their being no men, and the companies when they do turn out are so very small?—That, I think, has been generally my experience throughout my Service—that there have been no men to deal with, but I think that has been rectified now—I hope it has.

22028. I have heard reports which seem to show that it has not yet been rectified at all events. Lord Roberts, when he was before this Commission, gave evidence to the following effect:—"I reached Modder River on the 10th February, and came into heliographic communication with Colonel Kekewich. He informed me of the trouble he was having with the leading civilians who threatened to surrender unless they could be assured that they would be speedily relieved. In reply, I ordered Colonel Kekewich to impress upon the inhabitants the disastrous and humiliating effect of surrender after so prolonged and glorious defence; that every endeavour was being made to relieve Kimberley, and I added that as martial law had been proclaimed, he had full power to prohibit by force, if necessary, any public meeting he considered undesirable, and also to arrest any individual no matter how high his position, who acted in a manner prejudicial to national interests." This evidence of Lord Roberts was more or less borne out by some evidence given by Sir Redvers Buller. Can you supplement that in any way, or give us any information about this state of feeling in Kimberley?—Of course, this opens a very big question; but if the Commission wish to go into that, I can only say I had very serious trouble with Mr. Rhodes during the siege, and it brings up all that, and I do not know whether the Commission wish to touch upon that or not.

22029. Mr. Rhodes is not alluded to here; it says "the leading civilians"?—That is Mr. Rhodes; the leading civilians were really nobody in this matter.

22030. Were you given really serious trouble by this decision on the part of some people to surrender?—I never used the word "surrender" in any kind of way. I have looked over all my notes, and I never did use it in any kind of way.

22031. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) You do not suggest for a moment that Mr. Rhodes ever wished to surrender?—No, I do not—not to surrender.

22032. (Sir Henry Norman.) In Sir Redvers Buller's evidence he says the impression was that surrender was contemplated?—Of course, I do not know what they sent down; that was in the latter part of the siege, during the last two or three days.

22033. Sir Redvers Buller said there was a very great risk?—That was a very early period that Sir Redvers Buller must have referred to, when he was in command.

22034. This is the passage from the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller to which I desired to refer you:—"I had to take Kimberley into account, because I knew of my own knowledge the immense importance that the natives attached to Kimberley. The following is a telegram from the De Beers Directors, Kimberley, to the High Commissioner, Cape Town, dated October 31st:—"We hope with the arrival of General Buller measures will be taken for the immediate relief of this place. Our information, which is reliable, gives not more than 2,000 to 3,000 Boers between this place and Orange River, and in our opinion we could already have been relieved without risk by the present force in Cape

Vide
462,
Vol.

See Q.
15111.

Colony. We have a very limited supply of coal, and when it is done we must close down the works, which will cause serious trouble amongst our 10,000 savages in our compounds, who are now kept quiet by being kept at work. If we discharge them, and send them home, they are sure to be driven back to the town by the Boers, which must lead to heavy loss of life. As to the question of food supply, though well provided with some things, we have only nine days' tinned meat in case cattle are taken by the Boers, which, of course, is probable. We do not know the reasons which have delayed our relief, but we think your Excellency ought to weigh the risks caused by delay to this place with its 30,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of whom are raw savages. Now that the General has arrived we respectfully request to be informed as to the policy to be adopted regarding our relief, so as to enable us to take our own steps in case relief is refused. We are sending this by special messenger to Orange River, and will await your reply.' Telegrams much to the same effect came from the other magnates at Kimberley. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Were they ever more explicit as to what the steps might be?—(A.) I never asked them. (*Viscount Esher.*) What did you understand by that expression at the time?—(A.) I understood that to be a threat to surrender. (Q.) Did you discuss it with Sir Alfred Milner?—(A.) I did. (Q.) Was that the view he also took?—(A.) Well, he thought so. He felt very much the state of Kimberley, and he was most anxious that I should take immediate steps for its relief. I was rather unwilling to do so, and I telegraphed to the officer who was commanding at Kimberley, who sent me a more reassuring telegram, but he said in it that he was of opinion that it depended upon whether the Town Guard would stand the strain of trench work; and I gathered, reading between the lines, that that rather hinted at the same sort of condition of affairs that was expressed, as I understood, by this telegram which I have read, and I thought the two together sufficiently serious to make me take a much greater risk than I liked taking by sending detached expedition to, at any rate, get near Kimberley. (*Chairman.*) You say that was from Colonel Kekewich?—(A.) Yes. (Q.) Have you got his telegram?—(A.) His telegram was that he was fairly well off, and that he was not afraid of Kimberley being taken at all so long as the Town Guard did not get worn out by duty, or words to that effect. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) Was there any more definite suggestion of surrender made at that time?—(A.) Well, I was given the impression such a suggestion had been received, but I cannot say more than that; I did not see it?—You see, anything that took place between Mr. Rhodes, who, of course, knew everything that was going on in Cape Colony, and others in the early part of the war was done behind my back.

22035. (*Chairman.*) Referring to the statement of Lord Roberts, did you at any time receive from anyone a definite threat of surrender?—No.

22036. A public meeting is also referred to; can you explain this?—Mr. Rhodes was anxious to hold a public

meeting, and I was obliged to inform him that this could not be allowed.

22037. What was the object of the public meeting?—It no doubt was intended to discuss and influence the situation. I must add that Mr. Rhodes was throughout clamouring for the very early relief of Kimberley, and at the time in question he was I think, under the impression that the relief was to be abandoned, and the action which he took in consequence of this impression caused great trouble. This was really due, I think, to information which had reached Mr. Rhodes from private sources regarding the movements of Lord Roberts preliminary to his great turning movement.

22037* (*Sir Henry Norman.*) Was there from a military point of view at any time any reason whatever for contemplating surrender?—No, none whatever.

22038. (*Sir John Edge.*) Had you any officers acting as Staff Officers under you who had not gone through the Staff College?—Yes, at different times during the war.

22039. How did you find them as Staff Officers?—Very good; but I consider the special training that the Staff Officer gets at the Staff College is of the very greatest importance. They came knowing their work, how to conduct staff work and that in the case of those officers I have had with me who were Staff College officers, this was of the very greatest assistance to me.

22040. Is it your opinion that more officers in the service ought to be put through the Staff College than are put through now?—I think so.

22041. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) You had only fifty of the Royal Engineers with you?—Yes.

22042. Who commanded them?—Really Lieutenant McInnes, my Engineer officer, and who was there before the siege, was the senior officer of Engineers there, and really arranged all the Engineer work.

22043. Do you look upon Lieutenant McInnes as being a very capable officer?—Really for his rank the most capable I have ever met.

22044. I mention it because he was one of the officers from the Royal Military College in Canada?—I look upon him as the best junior officer I have ever met.

22045. You had only one medical officer I think of the Army Medical Corps?—Yes.

22046. But you had several other medical men?—No, only civilians.

22047. They were all civilians?—Yes.

22048. You had only one military medical officer?—Mine was a surgeon-lieutenant, a very junior officer, who came up with the Imperial troops when they came up, and really he had eventually to become the president of all the doctors and run the whole of the medical arrangements in Kimberley.

22049. (*Chairman.*) Is there anything you would like to add?—No.

Major O. ARMSTRONG, D.S.O., called; and Examined.

22050. (*Chairman.*) You went to South Africa from India, I think?—Yes.

22051. And you became financial adviser to Lord Kitchener after Sir Fleetwood Wilson came home?—Yes.

22052. At what date was that?—I took up the duties about July, 1901.

22053. And you have only lately come home?—I have just come back.

22054. Is that because you were closing up accounts there?—I was closing up various outstanding accounts with the Colonial Governments and other accounts.

22055. How would you define your duties as financial adviser?—In assisting the Commander-in-Chief to control expenditure.

22056. What powers had you to enable you to do so?—I could always refer questions to Lord Kitchener, and take his orders on the subject.

22057. You have stated some definition of your duties in the paper you have handed in to us: is that the way in which you would prefer to take them?—I put that

down so as to more or less define my duties, in case it might be of any assistance to the Commission.

22058. Would you like me to take the first part of your statement as your answer to my question with regard to your duties?—Yes. "My duties as Financial Adviser were, to exercise a supervision over all disbursements of public monies in far greater detail than would have been possible to the Commander-in-Chief in person, and so enable him to generally control expenditure. To bring to his notice any economies which might be effected, and to suggest means to this end. To watch the incidence of expenditure, and as far as possible ensure that no charges fell on the Imperial funds which should legitimately have been debited against the various Colonies in South Africa. Most of the contracts which were entered into during the later stages of the war were sent to me for scrutiny, and approval of the Commander-in-Chief, by the various heads of departments. It was thus possible to ensure an equalisation of prices paid for local purchases at the various buying centres. I used periodically to visit such centres, and was enabled by this means to obtain a comparative knowledge of prices and conditions,

Major-General
R. G.
Kekewich,
C.B.

10 June 1903.

Major O.
Armstrong,
D.S.O.

Major O.
Armstrong,
D.S.O.
10 June 1903.

which rendered it possible to make my office a more or less co-ordinating centre in so far as expenditure and principles were concerned. Some of the larger questions dealt with were:—Shipping—demurrage, landing charges, etc., rail charges for transport of troops and stores—Imperial military railway expenditure and revenue; telegraph rates and expenditure; purchases in South Africa by the various departments; banking, exchange, and raising funds; Customs questions; all claims and adjustments as between the Colonial Governments and the Imperial Government; also the final adjustment at the conclusion of hostilities; expenditure on Colonial forces; monthly expenditure by the various spending departments; contracts entered into in South Africa."

22059. As a matter of fact after June, 1901, did all disbursements come under your supervision?—Statements of expenditure were sent to me. I used to scrutinise them and ask any questions which might seem necessary on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief.

22060. They were sent to you from whom?—There was a monthly statement of the expenditure which came through the Chief Paymaster for each Colony separately, and a summary of the total expenditure in South Africa. The Paymaster of each Colony furnished a statement, and this was summarised in the All South Africa statement. Heads of Departments also furnished similar information.

22061. What happened with the accounts of each separate column?—Those went direct to the Paymasters and Departments concerned; those I had nothing to do with.

22062. But they must have been summarised in the accounts that came to you?—They were all summarised under Vote heads in the War Office Form.

22063. When you say you had to bring to the Chief's notice any economies that might be effected that would mean going in some detail into the accounts?—Yes, but it implied going into details of Departmental accounts and Departmental expenditure, which practically embraced any expenditure incurred by columns or other branches.

22064. And you had to watch the expenditure as between the Imperial and Colonial Governments?—That also.

22065. Did that involve much work?—A good deal.

22066. And then you had all the contracts, or most of the contracts, in the latter part of the war?—Yes.

22067. At what stage did they come to you?—Expenditure over £1,000 was generally sent for scrutiny or covering authority.

22068. Do you mean before the contract was accepted?—If possible, but if there was emergency the contract was accepted, and it was sent on afterwards for covering authority.

22069. Did you find it necessary to make observations upon many of these contracts?—Occasionally one had to make a few observations.

22070. On what sort of grounds?—Sometimes the prices paid at one place would be higher—disproportionately higher than they were at another. The chief purchasing centres were, of course, the various ports in South Africa, and the prices varied, sometimes, unduly.

22071. Were you able, do you think, to introduce economies by this supervision of contracts?—I think buying was considerably cheaper in the latter half of the campaign.

22072. The contractors found out that the high prices would be discovered?—I think so, but I also think that officers at the ports got into a better system of buying by being told how prices and supplies were ruling in other places, and by having general information in regard to the markets placed at their disposal.

22073. It was want of information in the purchasing?—Very often.

22074. You mention a series of larger questions dealt with. Shipping—had you much to do with the shipping?—The shipping was mostly done from home. There was a certain amount of inter-port shipping which was done in South Africa, but the charters of ships were all drawn at home and entered into in London. They affected us in so far that very often the question of demurrage came up, and we had to write home and ask that if possible

more lay days should be given, owing to the difficulty in discharging ships.

22075. Was the demurrage heavy in your time?—Very heavy sometimes.

22076. We had some evidence that in the early part of the war some of the demurrage was due to a desire to retain the ships that they might be on the spot; that, I suppose, had rather passed away?—That had passed away. Great difficulties existed in landing goods at the various ports and in getting them away from the ports on account of the general block on the line. The harbour boards had not sufficient lighters or sufficient accommodation to discharge ships.

22077. The rail charges was a subject which Sir Fleetwood Wilson reported upon?—Yes, but we reduced the Cape charges subsequent to his leaving.

22078. To the Cape?—Yes, to and from.

22079. He mentions specially the Natal charges?—Yes.

22080. They had been reduced in his time?—Yes. Later on we pressed for a further reduction from the Cape.

22081. And do you think they were reasonable afterwards?—Quite reasonable.

22082. The Imperial military railway expenditure I suppose gradually increased?—No, it decreased because we were taking the Civil Revenue, and as time went it was possible to allow more civil traffic to come up and to open more stamps on the mines. That gave us a certain amount of revenue to set off against the gross expenditure.

22083. I meant rather that there was more railway under your charge at the end, was there not?—Practically not, as the whole line was really open at the time I took over the duties of Financial Adviser.

22084. And telegraph rates?—These were reasonable.

22085. You speak of purchases in South Africa by the various departments: how is that separate from the contracts and expenditure of which you have spoken already?—It is practically the same, but very often it was not quite in the nature of a contract. There might be expenditure, for instance, in buying large quantities of oats, hay from farmers, or buying wagons and things of that sort. I practically meant that all expenditure over a thousand pounds was sent up for scrutiny.

22086. Who were the purchasing officers in that case?—They generally belonged to the various departments—the Ordnance, Army Service Corps and Transport, &c., all these departments had purchasing officers in different places.

22087. And do you think the work was well done?—I think quite well done towards the latter half of the campaign.

22088. They wanted experience in the earlier part?—I think so; many had had no experience in buying at home, and then were called upon to buy very largely out in South Africa.

22089. Do you wish to say anything about banking exchange?—No.

22090. That was dealt with by Sir Fleetwood Wilson?—Yes, and subsequently by me.

22091. Customs?—We had a good deal of trouble with the Cape Government; duty had been paid on certain articles purchased by us on which we claimed a refund.

22092. Has that been settled?—No, it is still pending.

22093. "Also the final adjustment at the conclusion of hostilities"; is that the work that you have been doing just now?—That is the work I have practically been doing for the last year.

22094. Is it now concluded?—Not entirely; there are one or two questions still outstanding as between the Cape, the new Colonies and the Imperial Government; Natal is practically concluded.

22095. Are you fairly satisfied with the results?—Quite satisfied as far as Natal goes, and as far as the Cape I hope they will adopt the suggestions made. I do not know what line they will take on the subject yet. They have not treated the Imperial Government very liberally.

22096. "Expenditure on Colonial forces"?—That was

eventually accepted by the Cape Government. It was a very heavy item, and Lord Kitchener thought the Colonial Government ought to bear it. I went down to negotiate with the Cape Government about it, and eventually they took it over.

22097. You are speaking simply of the African forces?—Yes, only the Cape Defence forces.

22098. Not the oversea?—No.

22099. They took it over and undertook all the expenditure?—They undertook about £250,000 a month, I should think—between £200,000 and £250,000 a month—but they only took that over as from November 1st, 1901; up to that we were paying it.

22100. That, of course, has been discontinued, I suppose?—Yes.

22101. "Monthly expenditure by the various spending Departments." What do you mean by that?—The summary of expenditure that was submitted every month showing what had been expended under the various Vote heads and sub-heads of Votes. I used to scrutinise it and take it up to Lord Kitchener. If there was any rise in expenditure in one month as against another I used generally to write and ask whether there was any explanation why it had risen in that month, I used to enquire into it and see if there was any way we could reduce expenditure generally.

22102. Were you able to effect economies in that way?—I think there were very considerable economies effected.

22103. Then you mention contracts entered into in South Africa; were you satisfied with them?—The later contracts were all satisfactory.

22104. And the earlier?—With those I had nothing to do; that was before my time.

22105. That you do not wish to speak to?—I have not sufficient detailed knowledge of them to do so.

22106. Do you consider that the experience of the war has proved the necessity of a Financial Adviser?—I think certainly.

22107. And also that there should be such an appointment in peace time in case of Army Corps?—I think so.

22108. You may be aware that there is a Financial Member of the Staff?—Yes.

22109. You are not prepared to speak of that particular form of it?—I do not know exactly what form the duties take so should not like to give an opinion.

22110. What is it that you, in your mind, would require from an officer who was Financial Adviser to the General in an Army Corps?—I think he should have certain discretionary powers granted to him to deal with expenditure generally without constant reference and correspondence. That he should be allowed to decide whether certain charges should be either wiped off, or charged to the public; he should be allowed to have discretionary powers in certain cases—fairly large discretionary powers.

22111. Do you mean him to be a military officer?—I think it would be better.

22112. Where is he to get his training?—I think you could find men; if we had a Commercial Intelligence branch, I believe you could very soon train a certain number of officers for the duties of a Financial Adviser.

22113. There is a Minute which you have been good enough to give us which I suppose you would put in—the Minute on Commercial Intelligence?—Yes.

MINUTE ON COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE.

I think it may be admitted that the South African campaign has demonstrated that, in time of war, a central bureau, exercising financial control at the seat of operations, becomes a necessity. Further, that such an office can render valuable service by fulfilling the function of co-ordination as between various Departments, and individuals at the several purchasing centres, and markets.

It is obvious that the officers, or officer, in whom such control is vested should be acquainted with business methods, have a knowledge of trade questions and markets generally, and understand how to deal with business men bankers, shippers, etc., etc.

The average officer has little or no experience of business. Under normal conditions he is never called upon to assume the responsibility for large purchases, or contracts involving the expenditure of very large sums of money. When, therefore, under Service conditions, he is suddenly forced into a position where such responsibility devolves on him, he is of necessity unfitted to accept it, and has at the same time no means of obtaining such information as would, at all events, save him from committing serious errors, entailing considerable waste of public monies. He is no match for the business man, so may have to buy his experience at a most critical time when the cost is heaviest to the State, and at a time when control is of necessity relaxed.

If I may speak from experience gained in South Africa, I would unhesitatingly say that officers, generally, are quite ready to effect economies, and save the State money if only they can obtain assistance, or the necessary information how to set about it. Once it is known that they can apply direct to a central office and get an early reply, they will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity, time rarely admitting of reference through long official channels.

In view of being prepared in case of a future campaign to meet the demand for a trained staff to carry out the duties of financial control, I would venture to suggest the present establishment of a Commercial Intelligence Branch. I believe that were another campaign to occur, an organisation of this description would prove a necessity, and that it would more than justify its existence in times of peace by enabling considerable economies to be effected.

It should be so organised that on the outbreak of a campaign it would be possible to send out a Financial Adviser or Financial Board of Control to the seat of war, thus ensuring a very close touch being maintained between expenditure, and methods followed abroad with those obtaining at home. By this means the co-operation necessary to effect economies, or to ensure a better organisation which might be dependent on joint action being taken both at home and at the seat of war, would be ensured, since the organisation and methods of working would be understood and in consonance in both offices.

The Board at the seat of war, while in no way hampering the action of any individual or Department, would exercise control over contracts and agreements; would ensure that comparative knowledge was made available for all purchasing officers and co-related Departments, both in regard to purchasing as well as in regard to mutual requirements. The difficulties which arose in South Africa, through widely divergent agreements having been entered into in the earlier phases of the campaign, for similar or cognate services, in various parts of the country, would not arise. Any measures or suggestions involving more than a determined sum of money would also be referred to the Board for advice and approval.

The Financial Board would centralise local information and with their knowledge of home conditions, markets, shipping exchange, would be in a position to point out where more economical courses could be followed.

In the earlier days of the late campaign the lack of "comparative knowledge," due to the absence of a central bureau, resulted in a want of co-operation in purchasing between branches and Departments. Quotations could not be circulated, since no central organisation for this purpose existed. This point the merchants took full advantage of, with the result that prices, which should not have varied in the case of ports beyond the freight or shipping basis, were put up 10 per cent., or even 20 per cent., as between adjoining centres. Another point in this connection, which showed the necessity of a central control, was the omission to consider prices in relation to freight and rail charges at point of delivery. This was due in part to the incidence of expenditure falling under our present system of accounting on separate votes.

During peace the Commercial Intelligence Branch would be in touch with all foreign as well as home markets. It would obtain information from Consuls, Military Attachés, and other sources in regard to available supplies, animals, and other articles likely to be required, and keep in touch with prevailing rates of shipping, freight, exchange, etc.

It would collate local information as to the reliability of large firms, breeders, agents, and others who might come forward or be called upon to undertake large contracts.

At present, each Army Department has to face the difficulty of endeavouring to obtain its own intelligence

Major O.
Armstrong,
D.S.O.

10 June 1903.

Major O.
Armstrong,
D.S.O.
10 June 1903.

on such points without any organisation being at its disposal.

Under the suggested scheme there would be a distinct organisation for this purpose, which would be in constant communication with official and business people in various countries. It would generally be possible to obtain information on the various points asked for through or from the same sources, or, in cases where this did not prove feasible, there would be no difficulty in getting into touch with persons able to furnish special details on the various matters under inquiry.

It certainly would seem probable that by entrusting the collection of such information to one office, instead of to the several Departments concerned, more satisfactory results could be obtained without any corresponding increase of expenditure. Many large business firms now admit the necessity of an inquiry office which is organised on similar lines and with the same object. A Commercial Intelligence Branch would be an acceptance of this principle on an extended scale.

By this means, in course of time, a fund of valuable knowledge would be accumulated, which would prove of service in all cases where organisation or reorganisation was under consideration. In the case of an impending mobilisation the state of all the large markets in direct reference to our probable requirements would be known. It would, by a distribution of orders, be possible to at once enter into provisional agreements and contracts, or to secure options on large quantities of stores, supplies, or animals without seriously disturbing prices. It would also minimise the danger of the fact that preparations were being made becoming public knowledge.

It would be possible to play one market against another, ensuring an even distribution, and so avoiding the error of throwing large orders successively on any given market where a supply was known to exist, with the consequence that, as delivery would have to be given within a time limit, prices would instantly rise against us. Instances where such action has operated to our detriment could easily be quoted during the rush in the earlier phases of the campaign.

Again, experience has shown, certainly in South Africa, that once it is known that any definite person or department is willing to receive or consider information or details in connection with business matters, many practical suggestions and useful hints are forthcoming. It has often been stated that one of the objections to offering assistance is the difficulty civilians or business men experience in knowing to whom to apply, or finding that the same points require elucidating to various people as more than one Department is affected, a point which business men particularly object to.

By working in co-operation with the Director of Contracts there is little doubt that such an Intelligence Office could contribute largely towards saving public funds in times of peace, and *a fortiori* in time of war.

The data available would permit of a closer check or control being kept on expenditure incurred in the various Colonies or Dependencies where troops are quartered.

This branch of the Intelligence Department need be neither large nor costly. I would, therefore, venture to submit that it is an experiment which might deserve consideration.

22114. I do not quite follow how your Commercial Intelligence Branch would be manned—would it be manned by officers taken from the Service or otherwise?—I think you could find suitable officers for it as time went on.

22115. Selected from the various regiments in the Service?—I think so.

22116. And seconded for this particular work?—They would have to be seconded for a considerable time. It would be no use training a man and then letting him revert to regimental duty, so losing his services just when he became valuable.

22117. (Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.) Would they be military officers?—I think it would be possible to find military officers who could do the work.

22118. And eligible for promotion afterwards to any position in the Army?—I have only put forward the idea, and have not so far worked out the details of the scheme.

22119. Where would it cease? Would he go to the rank of major?—Promotion might continue though it

would not necessarily follow that the individual would be fitted to take command in the field afterwards. It might even be treated as a non-combatant branch if necessary.

22120. (Chairman.) Has it any connection with the Paymaster?—Not necessarily. What has been proved in this campaign is that there is an absence, under the present system, of combination. There is no central office to which all such questions can be referred and co-related so enabling Departments to work together and reduce expenditure. That is what I think is a necessity.

22121. I suppose the Contract Office would in a sense bring them together?—It does, but not sufficiently; only in so far as actual contracts are concerned. What seems a necessity is to bring all contracts into direct consideration with shipping, freight, exchange, etc. All these points seem at present to be treated separately and not collectively, in fact, where expenditure is concerned to bring one Department more in touch with another.

22122. And especially to provide officers who would have the experience to act as financial advisers, I suppose, not only to the Commander-in-Chief but also to columns in the field?—Certainly.

22123. You say that there ought to be an auditing staff also at the base?—I think that was certainly shown in this campaign. Accounts were sent over sea. These often came out with queries entailing correspondence and an oversea reply involving an immense amount of work and delay in auditing accounts. If there had been an auditing staff at the base with wide discretionary powers, I believe it would have assisted very materially in keeping the accounts up-to-date all through the campaign.

22124. A wide discretion would be inevitable; it would be only a different way of carrying on the correspondence unless there was a wide discretion?—Of course.

22125. Do you think a wide discretion could be safely given?—I think so.

22126. (Sir Henry Norman.) You recommend that consolidated pay should be given on service; what is the object of that, because little allowances are constantly given to men for performing special duties?—I do not mean that these should be abolished, I mean that they should be carried to credit of the man, but whatever rate of pay was actually given to the man on Service should be a determined rate. He might have any allowances that might be due to him brought to his credit and set against family allotments or any other liabilities at the base or in the Paymaster's Office, so as to minimise the actual work of disbursement of pay in the field.

22127. And you think that could be carried out?—I think if each man had a small book similar to that issued to an Indian follower (which practically acts as a letter of credit), it could be carried out.

22128. But these service small books, which I am glad to see you recommend, apply to the soldiers, do they not?—Not in the same way; they are generally issued to followers.

22129. Do you not think a small book is a good thing for a soldier to carry?—An excellent thing.

22130. I understood they had been re-established?—I did not know they had been re-established.

22131. And the same system is in vogue with followers in India?—Exactly the same system.

22132. You think your system of accounting, which is I suppose, the War Office system of accounting, does not show outstanding credits or liabilities of the various Departments?—That was one difficulty experienced; it was never possible to tell from the monthly statement of expenditure whether we were really reducing expenditure or not. It was found, at least at first, that there were a tremendous number of outstanding liabilities, and after a great deal of pressure and trouble it became possible to get these gradually cleared off. In consequence the monthly returns showed an increasing expenditure, while there was actually a decrease. There was nothing to show how a Department stood until Lord Kitchener started a system by which outstanding debits or outstanding credits were shown.

22133. And it is impossible to arrange that so that all the outstanding credits and debits could be shown?—

It was arranged all through the latter part of the campaign.

22134. And they were shown?—They were shown, by means of a separate return, but there was no provision for that in our system of accounting.

22135. Have you been asked by the War Department to make any suggestions?—I mentioned that point to the Accountant-General, and I think he rather agreed with it.

22136. Do you think it possible that it may be carried out?—I think so; there did not seem very much trouble once it was started; once it was ascertained how Departments stood it did not seem to involve any very great labour.

22137. And as to these small books which are now issued to followers in India, you think they should be issued to followers in Africa as well?—I would issue them to soldiers, and everybody who was drawing pay.

22138. And you would give authority to the Financial Adviser to write off certain things?—Yes.

22139. Of course you would have to find how far he could write off things?—In the field, I think, that should be left a good deal to the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief. He would naturally do it in accordance with broad principles defined by the Secretary of State.

22140. This was done at the end of the campaign?—The War Office delegated certain power to recommend that money should be written off when the campaign was over, so that the whole case need not be referred home.

22141. And you think that also ought to be done in peace time; would not that be rather dangerous?—Within limits—where no precedent was involved, or no very large sum.

22142. Is there any power to write off now?—I do not know what the powers are which are delegate to financial advisers, I believe up to £50.

22143. But you would have a much bigger limit in time of war?—Much.

22144. As regards purchase of stores in time of war, you cannot limit that; that must rest with the senior officer on the spot, who thinks the stores are necessary?—You can only approve and control it.

22145. After it is done?—Yes, but even that is effective; when a purchasing officer finds his purchases and the prices he is paying are open to scrutiny and comment, it has a natural tendency to make him careful.

22146. With regard to the Minute on Commercial Intelligence, I understood you, in answer to a question Lord Strathcona put, to say that you would have military officers; would you create a separate Department?—I would make it a branch of the Intelligence Department or affiliate it with the Intelligence Department.

22147. Would you keep the officers on the strength of the regiments or strike them off and have a separate Department like the Army Service Corps?—It might be a separate Department, it would be a very small one.

22148. Of course it would not fit an officer in the slightest degree for military command—any amount of commercial intelligence?—No.

22149. Would it not be better perhaps to make it open to soldiers, but equally open to civilians—War Office clerks?—It would be open to either; but if qualified soldiers were available I think they might be preferable.

22150. They would very soon cease to be soldiers, would they not?—Yes, they might from a soldiering point of view.

22151. (*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*) Is it not the case that in the Department of Director of Contracts at present means are taken for ascertaining everything in regard to the prices in all parts of the world, and as to where commodities and supplies can be got on the best terms? Is it not the case that what you propose in this Minute on Commercial Intelligence is in vogue now?—I am afraid I am not very well acquainted with the system in vogue in the War Office in regard to this point, but I believe a good deal is done by individual departments also in obtaining intelligence.

22152. What you chiefly recommend is that military officers instead of civil officers be in that position?—Oh no; what I would recommend is that one office should

deal with the whole question of intelligence irrespective of whether it is civil or military—that there should be a central bureau for all information.

Major O. Armstrong,
D.S.O

22153. And there is no such office now?—I do not think a co-ordinated central bureau exists at present. 10 June 1903.

22154. Who was responsible for the contracts made in South Africa? Was there not one director to whom reference was made?—No, I was the only person to whom all contracts were referred. There was no director of contracts; each department as its needs arose called for tenders, and then submitted the contract either for approval, or entered into it, and submitted it for covering authority.

22155. With regard to the settlement of accounts, they had to refer to the office at home in many cases, had they not?—No, not for contracts in South Africa; the contractors were paid out there, and the amount debited to South African expenditure. A copy of these contracts may have been sent home, but they were actually paid for out there by the various Departments through the Paymaster.

22156. (*Sir Henry Norman.*) And finally disposed of out there?—Yes.

22157. There was a record sent home?—I believe a record was always sent home by each Department.

22158. To that Department or to the War Office?—To the War Office, I believe. I am not certain of the actual procedure as between Departments and the War Office, but I know the only person contracts came to in so far as scrutiny was concerned was myself for the information of the Chief.

22159. Would they go to the Accountant-General of the War Office to be compiled as part of the War expenditure?—I suppose they would go to him, but would have already appeared as expenditure in South Africa.

22160. (*Sir Frederick Duxley.*) By this Commercial Intelligence Department, which you say might be affiliated with the Military Intelligence Department, you do not mean to supersede the Director of Contracts?—No, I propose it should work with him.

22161. You simply obtain information from every part of the world touching military necessities?—Yes.

22162. And the Director of Contracts may then apply to the Intelligence Department on any subject he sees fit?—Yes.

22163. That is the course that would be pursued?—That is what is meant by it.

22164. (*Sir John Jackson.*) Had you a large staff under you in this Department at the Cape?—No, very small.

22165. With regard to the Customs, were the ordinary Customs rates charged by the Colonial Government to the Imperial Government?—No; they remitted the customs dues, but there were a large number of contracts entered into in the early days of the war more especially, where we bought goods from open stock and we claimed a refund of customs from the Cape upon these, and that is the question still outstanding.

22166. As to goods that went over sea, were the ordinary duties charged upon those goods?—No, no duties were charged if they were consigned direct to us.

22167. As to the railway rates, did the Imperial Government get any material rebate?—Yes, from the Cape we got a considerable rebate from the beginning, and Natal gave us a better rate half way through the campaign. The Cape again modified their rate towards the latter end of the campaign.

22168. Did you get greater rebates, do you think, than some of the large customers of the railways?—Very much greater; of course we had an all-over rate, we could not differentiate between classes of goods.

22169. But, dealing with it on the average, you are of opinion that the rates that were paid were materially less than the rates paid by the large customers of the railway?—Yes.

22170. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*) What branch of the Service do you belong to?—To the Indian Cavalry.

22171. You went to South Africa in the beginning of the war?—I went there in January, 1900.

22172. So that you were there for nearly months before you took up these duties?—Yes.

Major O.
Armstrong,
D.S.O.
10 June 1903.

22173. Should you say that by the want of a financial advising staff out there in the earlier part of the war, the first 18 months, there had been a considerable loss of public money?—Yes, I think there was a loss of public money by there not being a financial adviser out there in the early part of the war.

22174. Apart from the question of the Natal Railway and of the Standard Bank of South Africa, the two leading cases we have had before us, could you give us one or two instances to show where a financial staff could have saved money?—Generally in the supervision of contracts; prices became 10 to 15 per cent. lower as time went on, as officers learnt how to buy, and had information placed at their disposal. Then with regard to certain agreements which were entered into in the earlier days of the war, which had afterwards to be broken. These were entered into in a hurry, and on the supposition the war was going to last three months. As the war went on we had to get these agreements broken and make new ones. I do not think that would have occurred if a financial staff had been out there.

22175. (Sir John Jackson.) I suppose heavy compensations would be paid in some of these cases where the agreements were broken?—We paid no compensation.

22176. (Sir George Taubman-Goldie.) Taking the Generals of Divisions in the field, who do, of course, make local contracts, could not the Army Pay Department have been utilised, or might they not in the future be utilised, if they were properly trained?—I do not think you would ever get the training in the Army Pay Department, as at present constituted, to enable them both to carry on their own work, and at the same time get in touch with prices, rates, and the numerous details connected with the many buying departments.

22177. Sir Henry Norman's very reasonable objection to men ceasing to be soldiers does not apply to an Army Pay Department man, because he practically has ceased to be a soldier to some extent?—No.

22178. You do not think it would be possible to train the Army Pay Department so as to make them useful?—If you absolved them from carrying on the duties of paymasters, probably you could train them as well as anybody else. I do not think they could fulfil the duties of an Intelligence Officer and Paymaster at the same time.

22179. If an Indian Cavalry officer can learn finance, why cannot an Army Pay Department officer learn finance?—There is not the slightest reason, but you could not make him officiate as a paymaster and as an Intelligence officer.

22180. He could not combine the two duties, you think?—I do not think so; he has enough to do as it is.

22181. You know there is a strong feeling on the part of the Army Pay Department that the two should be synchronised?—Yes.

22182. But you do not think the thing feasible?—I think it could be done if you train officers for the special duties.

22183. Does it not seem to you to be a solution of the question in the minor branches that they might be trained young to combine these two duties?—Certainly.

22184. (Sir Henry Norman.) But you rather think they could not carry on the two duties together?—I do not think they could carry on the two duties together.

22185. The Regimental Paymaster would not be the man to be a financial adviser as to contracts?—I do not think so.

22186. (Chairman.) With regard to the question of prices which you mentioned, I suppose the prices at the beginning of the war would naturally be higher as there were greater risks to the contractor?—We bought very largely c.i.f. at the ports so that there was no risk to the contractor excepting ordinary over-sea insurance.

22187. And it was that class of article you were speaking of?—Yes; what very often happened was that supposing 10,000 bags of mealies were required, a merchant would come and say that he had 10,000 bags on such and such a ship due on such a day, and give a quotation, either free on truck or c.i.f. at the port.

22187.* I was thinking more of contracts like meat?—There, of course, there was both the organising staff and many other points to be considered, especially the duration of the war.

22188. There has been a good deal of criticism of the meat contract; we have had evidence about it, and that was one of the reasons given that at the beginning of the war not only was there the hurry that you spoke of, but there was also the considerable risk to the contractor which necessarily put up his prices?—I think another reason—I do not know whether it has been mentioned—was that the man did not know how long the war would last. He had to start a very large organisation to carry out his work, and, supposing the war had ended in three months, it would have been a very expensive organisation.

22189. And it was said that, from the Government point of view, they had no organisation by which they could have carried on the business?—That is correct; we had none.

22190. Was the third contract in your time?—Yes, the last contract.

22191. Then you got a reduction?—Yes, a very considerable reduction; they lost money by it, I believe.

22192. And the reasons which I have been stating affected the question?—Yes.

22193. (Sir Frederick Darley.) Did you form any opinion about the meat contract as to whether it was favourable or unfavourable?—Which contract do you refer to?

22194. Take the very first contract?—I think that was not a very favourable contract to us, but I do not see what else could have been done at the time.

22195. Was it not impossible for any other contract to be made at that time, except the one that was made?—I do not think anybody would have come forward with the same organisation for distribution that these people had.

22196. And taking the risk of delivery of the meat in the field?—That is so.

22197. Then there was no fault to be found with the contract?—No. The only thing that might have been done would have been to have inserted a revisionary clause providing that if the war lasted for a considerable number of months this contract would be open to revision.

22198. Perhaps the contractor would have asked a great deal more if that clause had been put in?—I do not think he would, because everybody thought at that time the war would be over soon, and I think he shared the belief.

22199. (Chairman.) Have you anything else you wish to say?—I think there is one thing I should like to say, and that is about the present vote system being very inelastic, making it very difficult to watch expenditure and exercise control. The Commander-in-Chief, when he does see the expenditure classified under Vote heads in the monthly return, finds it exceedingly difficult to get any idea of what the actual expenditure of a Department is, or how monies are being disbursed in relation to services performed. I think the Sub-heads want amplifying, and that it might be possible to make them a little more elastic, so as to separate expenditure and classify it to a greater degree than is now possible, for instance, take Transport, you have the whole wagon transport charges and rail transport charges, and probably certain other charges, such as landing or interport shipping, or cognate services all put into one Vote and shown in that monthly return under one Vote. To separate charges and arrive at the cost of any one service, and so judge whether you are getting value for expenditure incurred is under our present system an exceedingly difficult matter involving an enormous amount of labour.

22200. You think it should be amended?—I think the Vote Sub-heads want amplifying; whether the Votes could be recast is a matter I am not prepared to give an opinion on, but I think if it were possible in some way to recast the Votes, it would render accounting and financial control simpler and more feasible.

A P P E N D I C E S.

APPENDICES.

Number.	Document.	Page.
A	Memorandum sent to Officers who have held commands in South Africa. showing the points upon which the Royal Commission desire to hear Evidence.	575
B	Memorandum on the Colonial Forces employed in South Africa 1899-1902, by Lieut.-Colonel John Adye, C.B., R.A., late Assistant Adjutant-General for Colonial Forces, South Africa.	576
C	Précis of Evidence by Colonel A. W. Thorneycroft, C.B., lately commanding Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry.	580
D	Précis of Evidence by Colonel M. F. Rimington, C.B. - - - - -	583
E	Notes on Remount Operations by Colonel T. Deane, C.B., based on his experience as Director of the Army Remount Department in India; Chief Staff Officer, Imperial Yeomanry, Home; and Special Service Imperial Yeomanry, South Africa.	586
F	Précis of Evidence by General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B. - -	590
G	Copies of Reports made to the Secretary of State for War by General Sir F. W. E. F. Forestier-Walker, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., Commanding Troops South Africa, prior to the arrival in South Africa of General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	592
H	Précis of Evidence by Lieut.-General the Lord Methuen, G.C.B., C.M.G., K.C.V.O. - -	612
I	Précis of Evidence by Lieut.-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O. - - -	615
J	Selected Telegrams and Despatches relating to matters referred to in the Evidence of General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., and General Sir George White, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.	617
K	Ladysmith Siege correspondence between November 26th, 1899, and February 28th, 1900, as supplied by the War Office to the Royal Commission.	631
L	Memorandum by General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., on the expediency of entrusting our Military Officers with increased financial responsibility.	641
M	Statement of Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., in reply to charges made by General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., relative to his action when in command of a Force from 16th to 25th January, 1900.	643
N	Précis of Evidence by Major-General Barton, C.B., C.M.G. - - - - -	657
O	Statement by Major-General G. Barton, C.B., C.M.G., respecting his action while in charge of Forces in South Africa.	659
P	Précis of Evidence by Major-General Sir Charles Knox, K.C.B. - - - - -	662
Q	Précis of Evidence by Major-General Sir Leslie Rundle, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O. - -	664
R	Despatch from Lieut.-Colonel R. G. Kekewich, relative to Military Operations in the vicinity of Kimberley from September 13th, 1899 to February 15th, 1900.	668
	Index according to Witnesses to Volumes I. and II. of the Minutes of Evidence - -	673

APPENDIX A.

Appendix A.

MEMORANDUM

SENT TO OFFICERS, WHO HAVE HELD COMMANDS IN SOUTH AFRICA, SHOWING THE POINTS UPON WHICH THE ROYAL COMMISSION DESIRE TO HEAR EVIDENCE.

Evidence from officers who have held commands in South Africa during the War is desired by the Commission chiefly upon the following subjects, viz. :—

1. The adequacy, in point of strength, of the forces in the field at different dates to the work which they had to do.

2. The quality of the men of the Regular and Auxiliary forces in respect of—

Shooting capability ;

Marching ;

Horsemanship and Horsemastership ;

Intrenchment and cover ;

General physique, morale, and intelligence ; regard being had both to the quality of the men when they arrived in South Africa and to any improvement in the course of the campaign. Any deductions from the experience of the War with regard to future training of the men may also be suggested.

3. Deductions from the experience of the War in connection with the general question of the training and duties of regimental and staff officers.

4. Supplies of ammunition, equipment, food, and forage. Under this head the Commission desire evidence as to—

(a) The method and sufficiency of supply in the field.

(b) Quality of supplies.

(c) Any delay or failure on the part of contractors.

(d) The number and quality of horses.

5. Land transport, including the use of railways, ox and mule transport, traction trains.

6. The adequacy of the Medical and Engineer Services.

7. The effectiveness of the guns, rifles, and other armament used.

The Commission also desire to obtain evidence regarding the efficiency of the organisation of the Army, and the use of the different arms under the conditions of modern warfare, as illustrated by the experience of officers who have served in the South African War, and to receive any suggestions with regard to the future which this experience may have brought to their minds. But, in making reference for this purpose to the military operations witnesses should avoid any review of the decisions already made by superior authority upon the conduct of individual officers, and any controversial discussion arising with regard to strategy or tactics in particular events.

In any case where it is desired to make a statement regarding the personal conduct of a witness or of other officers, it will be necessary that the nature of such a statement should be communicated beforehand to the Secretary, and the consent of the Commission obtained.

APPENDIX B.

MEMORANDUM ON THE COLONIAL FORCES EMPLOYED IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1899-1902, BY LIEUT.-COLONEL
JOHN ADYE, C.B., R.A., LATE ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL FOR COLONIAL FORCES, SOUTH AFRICA.

See Questions 12,205-12,373.

The war in South Africa was the first one in which we have employed Colonial Forces on a large scale and from a number of Colonies.

The experiences gained in connection with them were many, and, in view of future similar occasions, are worth placing on record.

The following memorandum only deals with the larger questions of organisation and administration in the field.

The total number of Colonial Forces employed of all natures was about:

30,000 Oversea Colonials,
60,000 South African Colonials.

The word "Oversea" is used to distinguish corps coming from Colonies other than South African.

Owing to certain circumstances the numbers of the South African Corps can only be approximately estimated.

The Colonial Forces employed were of two sorts:—

- (a) Permanent Forces, existing before and continuing after the war.
- (b) Irregular Forces, raised specially for the war, and disbanded at or before its close.

(a) were Regular Colonial Forces, having an existing organisation; and, therefore, present few special features. They came in small numbers only from outside Colonies, but comprise the Permanent Volunteer Forces of Cape Colony and Natal.

(b) form the majority of the Colonial Forces employed, and present many points of interest, which are briefly dealt with under the following heads:—

They may further be classified—as regards South African Irregular Forces—as—

1. For general service in South Africa.
2. For service in certain Colonies of South Africa.
3. For local service in certain districts.
4. For defence of certain towns—Town Guards.

RECRUITING.

The oversea corps were, of course, recruited in their own Colonies, and, as they only came within the jurisdiction of the A.A.G. for Colonial Forces on landing in South Africa as formed bodies, their recruiting is not dealt with here.

Recruiting for South African Corps, both Permanent and Irregular, went on in Cape Colony, Natal, and Rhodesia, and, to a small extent, in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in the final stages of the war. The recruiting for the Volunteer Forces was comparatively small, merely to keep these Forces up to their establishment, and the bulk of the work was in connection with the Irregulars.

For them recruiting was carried out regimentally, and not for general service, as encouraging competition. It was in the hands of regimental officers and N.C.O.'s, but at important centres there were also District Recruiting Officers who generally superintended and kept returns.

The regimental recruiters were apt to look rather to quantity than quality, and sometimes enlisted useless men, who had to be got rid of. They also occasionally obtained men at the seaports from men-of-war and merchant vessels, and in many ways their procedure was apt to be irregular.

The proper system, in my opinion, is for regimental recruiters to beat up recruits only, and bring them to the District Recruiting Officers, who must be responsible for passing them into the Service. This ensures one standard and system for all, and prevents abuses.

These D.R.O.'s should all be Regular officers, and should show no favouritism to special corps, but enlist men for the corps they originally wish to enter, provided it is open for recruiting. They should work under the orders of the local military authorities, and render returns to the officer on the Headquarter Staff dealing with Colonial Forces, who will send them instructions from time to time through the local military authorities.

The Medical Officers who examine recruits should also belong to the Regular Forces, where possible; but the ordinary standards need not necessarily be observed by them, and were not observed in South Africa. A few general instructions for the use of military and civil practitioners should be drawn up and issued by competent authority.

Facilities for testing in shooting, and, if necessary, in riding generally existed in South Africa. This is most essential.

The dépôt officers who receive, equip, and dispatch recruits should also be Regulars, and must be careful to avoid unnecessary detention of recruits.

At each recruiting centre a careful register must be kept, showing full name, regiment, rank, date of attestation, and period of service of each recruit; also a copy of his attestation sheet, and a note of his next of kin, with address and the amount of pay—if any—he wishes transmitted to friends or relatives. These records should be kept at some central station, such as Cape Town or Pietermaritzburg.

The cost of recruiting was a matter of some difficulty, and is scarcely provided for in any existing regulations, which are not framed for such circumstances. If ordinary regulations are too strictly adhered to recruiting is much cramped; on the other hand, if too free a hand is allowed, waste and speculation result.

I would give every D.R.O. an imprest account, and give him a fairly free hand in dealing with it, at the same time issuing general instructions for his guidance. Recruiting officers of all sorts must be most carefully selected. In South Africa we were recruiting in the actual theatre of war, and that added to our difficulties.

TERMS OF SERVICE.

Men enlisted for the Permanent Colonial Forces entered on the terms laid down for these forces in their respective colonies, but nothing definite was laid down for Irregular Forces. These forces in South Africa generally enlisted men at the beginning of the war for an indefinite term, such as "for three months or for as long as my services be required," which was held to mean that were a man's services required beyond three months, he could be retained indefinitely. When the war had lasted about a year, the desirability of letting men go who wished to be discharged was recognised, and the South African Irregular Corps were consequently gradually taken out of the field and reconstituted. Short terms of three and four months were introduced, but finally one of six months was generally adopted, and it was held that men thus enlisted could be held to serve for six months if required, but not longer, unless they wished, and that, if their services could be dispensed with before the six months expired, they could be discharged.

It would undoubtedly have been better to lay down one term of enlistment and one set of conditions of service for all South African Irregular Corps, and this should be done in future.

The period of six months I regard as too short, as, by the time a man is attested, clothed, equipped, sent to the front, and has gained some knowledge and experience, it is time for him to be discharged. Thus all South African Irregular Corps were in a continual state of change, which was most unsatisfactory to the regiment, and gave a great deal of work to the staff and depots, besides being expensive.

All C.O.s, I know, agree with me on this point.

The number of recruits enlisted in South Africa for general service corps averaged nearly 20,000 a year, which meant a very great deal of hard work, and was necessitated by the short term of six months' service, which, of course, had the effect of completely reconstituting the whole of the South African Irregular Forces every six months.

On the other hand, enlisting men for an indefinite period, such as "the duration of the war," or "as long as their services are required," is not satisfactory, for many reasons, and, in the case of an unexpectedly protracted struggle, is hard on the men, who may have enlisted with an expectation of a few months' service.

I think a year is the shortest period for which such forces should be raised, and, if disbanded within that period, men should be treated generously in the way of bonus. Oversea corps were generally enlisted for one year, and this was generally interpreted as one year in South Africa. This meant that from the time of enlistment in their own colony to time of discharge there on return was frequently a period of some sixteen months, and this was hard on men who had only obtained one year's leave from their civilian employers. I think all corps sent from overseas should be enlisted for one year in the theatre of war, and this should be clearly explained on enlistment.

Men of South African Corps who re-engaged were generally given one month's furlough on full pay with free railway tickets, and men of overseas corps who remained when their contingent returned were in 1901 given a step in rank, as a rule; but this was not done in 1902.

But whatever is applied to one overseas colony should be applied to all, and, before men are called for or accepted, the Imperial Government should lay down distinctly the period of service, the terms of enlistment, the pay, and the establishment. These should be universally applied, and not departed from.

ESTABLISHMENT.

This was a constant source of trouble, owing to it not having been clearly laid down from the first for all Colonial Corps, and also to the irregular proceedings of commanding officers, who would frequently exceed the establishment of officers and N.C.O.s without authority.

An establishment for South African Irregular Corps was laid down at the beginning of the war, but was amended more than once later. The overseas corps, on the other hand, had different establishments, according to the colony they came from. While colonies paid for their own contingents, as was the case at first, there was something to be said for their fixing their own establishments, although even then I think uniformity should have been aimed at; but once the Imperial Government took over the pay, it should have laid down a definite establishment for all Colonial corps, no matter from what colony. This would have ensured uniformity, and would have prevented a contingent 1,000 strong arriving from one colony under a lieutenant-colonel with one medical man, and another of similar strength arriving from another colony as a brigade, with a brigadier and five medical men, as happened.

The establishment should invariably be fixed by squadrons or companies, with a certain proportionate regimental establishment, according to the number of squadrons or companies. An authorised establishment based on our experiences in South Africa could easily be drawn up, and should be adhered to in future when the Imperial Government pays the Colonial forces.

The friction and delay caused in regard to pay alone through want of adherence to a fixed establishment was very great.

APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS AND N.C.O.'s.

Appendix B.

This is a question of great importance for irregular troops.

Generally speaking, I think the C.O. and the Adjutant should be Regular officers, and the others Colonials. At the beginning of the war this was generally done in regard to South African Corps, but later, when certain Colonial officers had come to the front as good leaders, it was successfully departed from. But in such cases I think the Adjutant should be a Regular officer, and I think most Colonial C.O.'s will agree with me here, as a regular adjutant with a knowledge of military routine is very useful when irregulars and regulars are acting together.

Of course, all regular officers appointed to irregular corps must be picked men, and it is difficult in time of war to obtain such men, who are wanted with their own regiments. The selection of such men must be carefully made, as they may make or mar their irregular corps. The same difficulty of obtaining good men at such moments occurs with N.C.O.'s, and at least a few good N.C.O.'s from the Regular forces are required in each irregular corps.

The appointment and promotion of officers other than Regulars was left very much in the hands of the C.O.'s, not always with success; but every appointment or promotion had to be submitted to headquarters for the approval of the Commander-in-Chief, which was only withheld when something was known against the officer. C.O.'s, however, were too lax in forwarding their recommendations, and when they did so frequently omitted to give full particulars as to name, rank, cause of vacancy, date of appointment or promotion, etc. This often caused much delay.

The above remarks generally apply to South African Corps only. Oversea Corps had their original appointments made by the Government of their respective Colonies, but promotions and appointments of officers in South Africa were made by the C.O.'s, subject to the Commander-in-Chief's approval.

The appointment and promotion of N.C.O.'s were made by C.O.'s without reference to headquarters.

TRAINING.

But little training could be given to newly-raised corps or recruits for them, once these corps were in the field, as men were always urgently wanted there. Where possible, a little practice in riding and shooting, and some necessary elementary drill, was given while men were being clothed and equipped.

This method of sending untrained men straight into the field would be most dangerous against most enemies, and a training ground with proper instructors is essential at each recruiting centre. These instructors should be Regulars, but of course the amount of drill imparted to Regular soldiers should not be attempted.

It is best to form squadrons or companies at a time, and not to deal with smaller units, and, in the same way, when sending up recruits I would not send up individuals, but relieve whole squadrons or companies.

Most corps were composed of "squadrons." I prefer the word "companies," as these corps are rather Mounted Infantry than Cavalry.

EQUIPMENT.

The equipment was, as a rule, the same as for Regulars, but in some cases, especially early in the war, certain articles were purchased locally to avoid delay. Regiments were generally distinguished by badges, worn in the hat or on the shoulder.

Overseas corps generally arrived equipped.

The care of and accounting for equipment were not generally understood by Colonial Irregular Corps, but it would be idle to expect them to keep up proper equipment ledgers. A simple form of equipment account and indent forms might perhaps be devised for their use. A Quartermaster Sergeant or trained N.C.O. from the Regulars, was sometimes obtained to act as Quartermaster for Irregular Corps, and was always very useful.

Appendix B.

DISCIPLINE.

The discipline of Irregular troops hastily raised is always a matter of some difficulty.

As a rule the Oversea Irregular Forces were raised under the Army Act, but some of the South African Irregulars were raised under the local Volunteer Acts. The point is not one of very great importance, but it is as well to adopt one system.

But under whatever Act discipline is administered, certain difficulties arise when dealing with troops whose conditions of service and rates of pay are so unusual. The scale of fines, for instance, in use for the Regular Forces is unsuitable for men drawing five shillings a day, and whose pay has perhaps accumulated for months. Fining was the punishment usually inflicted by C.O.'s for minor offences, but the scale of fines inflicted was often quite unauthorised, and it would be hard to say in some instances what became of the money thus obtained, or in what way it was credited to the public. More serious offences were dealt with by courts-martial, whose procedure was correct and the same as that dealing with Regulars.

The discipline generally was good when away from the railway or from large towns, but indifferent when in their proximity. This is to some extent inevitable in the case of Irregular troops in time of war, and was aggravated by the fluctuating state of the regiments, in which, owing to the short periods of service, men were perpetually coming and going.

If Irregular forces are employed on a large scale, I think some rules for guidance of officers should be published as regards punishments.

The ordinary camp discipline was not always good in respect of horse lines, care of horses and equipment, roster of duties, etc. This was chiefly owing to want of experienced officers and of good N.C.O.'s.

Commanding officers were fond of discharging men whom they considered worthless, and often exercised this power without higher authority. From their point of view it is, of course, a great advantage to at once get rid of a useless or undesirable man without delay or further reference; but there are several objections to such a course. In the first place, no existing regulations give a C.O. such summary power, and men so discharged could claim to have been discharged illegally. In the second place, no uniformity of treatment can be maintained, one C.O. discharging for offences another would regard as trivial. Thirdly, men so discharged without reference to one central authority have only to go to the nearest recruiting place to enter some other regiment; but this, to some extent, may be checked if such discharges are authorised only from headquarters, and all recruiting stations notified.

PAY.

The rates of pay of Irregular Forces must necessarily be higher than those of Regulars. Those of South African Corps were based on those adopted about August, 1899, for the Rhodesian and Protectorate Regiments, raised by General Baden Powell. I think we could have obtained a sufficient number of good men at rather lower rates.

But whatever rates are fixed, it is essential that they apply to all Irregulars, and remain unchanged. Great confusion existed among some oversea corps, especially the first Bushmen Corps, because of the different rates of pay, and the different sources from which pay was drawn. Some of these corps were not aware what their correct rates were.

The first oversea contingents were paid by their respective colonies, and the rates were, therefore, fixed by those colonies; but even in that case it is most advisable that all colonies sending troops to a common theatre of war should pay alike.

Later contingents were paid by the Imperial Government, but I think a few drew pay partly from their own colony, partly from the Imperial Government, while one or two were also partly paid by public subscription raised in their own colony. These various sources of pay caused confusion, and gave rise in certain instances to an idea that corps so paid drew higher rates of pay than was actually the case.

It is essential that only one rate of pay be adopted, and that it be fully explained to men on enlistment, and that the attestation sheet signed by the man on joining contain that rate, for a private, clearly laid

down. The question of who pays is one for adjustment between the various Governments, and does not affect the soldier.

In the Regular army there are certain allowances in addition to pay, laid down in the regulations. These do not generally apply to Irregular forces, and cause confusion and friction.

I recommend that all rates of pay for Irregular forces be inclusive rates, and that no allowances be granted. Travelling on duty should be free, but lodging, detention, servants, forage, ration, fuel and light, and command and contingent allowances should not be granted.

As regards methods of account and payment, these naturally caused a good deal of trouble with Colonial Corps. Theoretically, the Company and Squadron Commanders should pay their men, and keep their accounts, but in practice this was found unworkable, as most of the officers had no experience of such work, and had no time to carry it out correctly. South African Irregular Corps were, therefore, given regimental paymasters, who took this burden off the shoulders of the combatant officers, and generally were stationed at bases where they were in touch with the Army Pay Department branches, and whence they visited the regiment from time to time to pay the men and get accounts signed.

Oversea Corps did not have paymasters, but they generally had some officer whom they could employ in this way. I recommend a paymaster as part of the establishment of all such corps above a certain strength. The selection of paymasters is a matter requiring a good deal of care, as a large amount of money passes through their hands.

Instructions for regimental paymasters, and for all officers should be drawn up and issued, and a simple form of pay sheet prepared. This would not only save a great deal of trouble and correspondence, but would also tend to economy, and prevent waste and fraud.

Men away from their regiment, left behind sick, or on detached duty, found great difficulty in drawing their pay. This was because their officers did not give them last pay certificates on which the A.P.D. could pay them. Any simple form of L.P.C. would do.

The whole question of payment of these Irregular Corps is one of some importance, and should be carefully gone into in peace, as thousands may be saved thereby and great discontent avoided.

DISBANDMENT AND DISCHARGE.

Some Irregular Corps were disbanded during the war, and all existing ones at its close. This is a matter in which we have but little experience, and on which no regulations exist, as discharges in the Regular Army are always carried out individually.

When a corps is disbanded, especially in the theatre of war, ample notice should be given and circulated throughout, as many men must be absent in hospital, prison, etc.

A date should be named beyond which pay will not be issued, except to the small staff employed in winding up the regimental accounts, records, etc., and this staff should only draw pay beyond the date of disbandment on the direct authority of Army headquarters.

Before the named date the regiment should be collected at some convenient spot, and disbanded there, the men's accounts being squared, equipment and stores handed in, etc. Each man should leave a permanent address if possible, and should be provided with plain clothes and a free pass to his home.

Sufficient records should be kept to enable medal rolls to be made out, if not already sent in.

These records should be deposited, together with all correspondence, etc., at some central military station.

The staff retained beyond the date of disbandment should be given a named period in which to complete their work.

In individual discharges men should always be sent to their regimental dépôt, and finally settled with there.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Colonial Forces employed in South Africa suffered, in my opinion, from the want of a sufficient special staff to deal with them, and of a special and carefully thought out organisation and system from the outset.

This was very necessary, seeing that corps were being continually raised in the theatre of war itself, while others were coming from a number of distant Colonies, and in these numerous new creations there were but few officers and non-commissioned officers of previous military experience. To enlist 20,000 men a year is alone a considerable achievement, and requires careful organisation.

When the troops come from several colonies they require some central supervision to ensure some degree of uniformity, and I think a small department dealing only with the organisation of Colonial Forces might be usefully created at the War Office on the occasion of a big war in which contingents on a large scale are furnished by a number of colonies.

Certain broad lines upon which Colonial Forces should be raised should be laid down beforehand, and details of establishment and pay, forms of attestation and discharge, etc., should be fixed and adhered to.

A small handbook for the use of Colonial, and especially of Irregular Forces might be usefully compiled.

An officer of the nature of an Inspector-General

would have been of great use for Colonial Forces in South Africa, and he could have periodically inspected recruiting centres and base and regimental depôts, and also have occasionally visited regiments as they came in from trek, and have set right many small matters that can be better dealt with by personal interviews than by correspondence.

Both the Mounted Infantry and the Imperial Yeomanry had such an Inspector-General, but the Colonial Forces—which aggregated as many men as both put together, and from their nature required such an officer quite as much—had no such official.

If some such measures as I have indicated were taken (and I have omitted a great number of details), the great reserves of strength we undoubtedly possess in our Colonies would be employed in future wars to much greater advantage and far greater efficiency and economy be obtained in regard to them.

JOHN ADYE,
Major R.A. and Brevet Lieut.-Colonial, late
Assistant Adjutant-General C.F., South
Africa.

Appendix C.

APPENDIX C.

PRECIS OF EVIDENCE by Colonel A. W. THORNEYCROFT, C.B., lately commanding Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry.

(For the enclosures referred to in Colonel Thorneycroft's précis, see Appendix Vol., page 343.)

(See Questions 12374-12607.)

Order for formation of Corps.

At 10 p.m. on the 16th October, 1899, when I was serving as D.A.A.G. at Pietermaritzburg, Natal, a telegram arrived from General Sir George White, from Ladysmith, asking me to raise an irregular battalion of 500 mounted rifles.

First steps (17 October).

The "Uitlander Committee" in Pietermaritzburg had for some days previously kept a register in which all men desirous of serving at the front might enrol their names. The register showed previous war service, and where the men had lately been employed, etc. In consultation with the Committee, I decided that selections from this list, which then contained some 300 names, should form the first contingent of recruits.

Difficulty about rate of pay.

A difficulty at once arose with regard to the pay which the men should receive. It has always been the custom in South Africa that privates of irregular corps should receive 5s. per day. The Secretary of State for War, however, wished to pay the men at the ordinary rate received by the British soldier, and this they would not accept. Some offered to serve for nothing in their enthusiasm to get to the front, but it was necessary to start the battalion on a sound and proper basis; so I communicated with Sir George White, who telegraphed to the Secretary of State for War. In the meantime, I made enquiries as to supply of equipment, and horses, drew up a scheme for establishment and organisation, etc., and kept in close touch with the men.

Provisional enlistment (20 October).

As no definite answer had been received about the pay by the 20th October, I decided—with the concurrence of the G.O.C. Lines of Communication—to provisionally enlist the men, as mounted troops were urgently required at the front. A camp was formed in the Agricultural Society's show grounds—which was admirably adapted to the purpose—and on the night of the 20th over 300 men were assembled there. By provisional enlistment I mean that the men were not under any military law, were not tied to serve, but came on my invitation in order that we might proceed with the tests in riding and shooting, and in the necessary preliminary drills, pending the decision about pay. They received rations, were accommodated in tents, and had two blankets each. With the assistance of a number of gentlemen who were applicants for Commissions, a committee was formed to test the riding capabilities of those wishing to join, and for this purpose 50 cobs were drawn from the Remount Department. Another similar committee was formed to test the men in shooting. Rifles and range were borrowed from the Natal Volunteers, and no man was passed unless proficient. The test in both cases was severe. As the men were proved efficient they were drafted into squads; and under the instruction of men of previous experience in Colonial warfare, were drilled in simple formations of Mounted Infantry drill.

This went on till October 27th, when authority arrived to pay the Privates 5s. a day, together with a scale of pay for Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers—marked "A" and attached. By this time there were 400 selected men available in camp.

Enlistment (27 October).

Enlistment was at once begun. Attestation form attached (marked "B").

The clause in the oath "and I further undertake to serve under the penalty of immediate dismissal for inefficiency or misconduct" is a most necessary one.

As the men were enlisted they were drafted to Companies, and in each Company four Sections were formed, each Section being divided into sub-sections of four men each. The men were allowed as much as possible to choose their Company, and comrades were invariably permitted to serve in the same sub-section of fours.

Required considerable care. It has been the custom in some Corps in South Africa in the past to select their own Officers. The system is a bad one, and I would not permit it. The "Uitlander Committee" wished to make the appointments, but such a course was impossible. I had the authority to select the Officers, and to submit their names to the Governor of Natal; and the plan worked well. My object was to secure about half from Officers of experience and tact then serving, or who had served, in the Regular Army, and the other half from colonial or civilians with previous war experience. Unfortunately there were very few Regular Officers available at the time. My Second in Command could not join till after I had got to the front; and the only Regular Officer I had was Captain E. M. Morris, Devonshire Regiment, as Adjutant. Under these circumstances I selected several gentlemen who had been in the Natal Police, etc., and who had been in the Zulu, Basuto, Matabele, and other South African wars, as Subalterns. They were acquainted with the history of many of the other applicants, having served with them; and I nominated those whom I thought fit for Subaltern's rank only; Captain's Commissions being reserved till I had opportunity of observing their various merits. By this means about half of the number of Officers required were obtained; the remaining vacancies being gradually filled up by selections from Officers of Yeomanry who had come out from England to seek employment, Officers of the Indian Staff Corps—who had brought out horses and syces and who then became available, Officers of the Regular Army who could be spared from their Regiments, a number of gentlemen from Rhodesia with whom I had communicated, and who were thoroughly experienced in South African warfare, and several gentlemen from Australia and other Colonies who came out directly war was declared, on the chance of employment. Subsequently, as vacancies occurred, many Commissions were given from the Ranks for distinguished service in the field. I go into these details as I consider one of the most vital points in raising an Irregular Corps is the selection of qualified Officers of tact and discretion, and who can command the respect and confidence of the men for whose lives they are responsible.

The only Non-Commissioned Officer of Regulars available was Squadron Sergeant-Major Chadburn, 11th Hussars, who was appointed Regimental Sergeant-Major. The remainder of the Non-Commissioned Officers were first appointed with acting rank only—permanent rank being given when they had proved their ability; if they failed, they resumed their place in the ranks and others were tried.

The Battalion was completed to its full strength by the 7th November, in Non-Commissioned Officers and men. For establishment, see enclosure marked "C."

In the meanwhile instruction in drill was rapidly proceeded with, only the most simple movements being taught; great care, however, was taken to teach the men to mount and dismount rapidly, and to bring the led horses up quickly from cover. After a week the Companies were drilled together, and practised in out-post duties and reconnaissance.

In conjunction with the drill, practice with ball ammunition was carried out at unknown ranges, with small objects as targets, and the horses were taught to stand fire by a considerable expenditure of blank ammunition.

Cobs and ponies were issued as fast as we were ready for them from the Remount Department at Pietermaritzburg; fortunately they were nearly all South African Colonial bred, and though some of them were small

they stood the hard work and heavy weights remarkably well. A very large number of them were still in the ranks after a year of arduous campaigning, and some survived throughout the whole war. Too much cannot be said in praise of the South African Colonial bred pony.

The ponies were at first in open sheds in the Agricultural Society's grounds, and afterwards picketed in camp outside Pietermaritzburg till the Battalion moved to the front.

Directly the men were enlisted, arrangements were made to draw such arms, equipment, and clothing as could be procured from the Ordnance Department at Pietermaritzburg. Those articles which were not in store were procured locally, or from the nearest available place.

A complete report upon the equipment and clothing was submitted to the Director-General of Ordnance at his request, and I attach a copy (marked "D").

The following remarks are in further explanation:— I was fortunate in securing the services of two thoroughly good business men as Quartermaster and Quartermaster-Sergeant, who kept a good account of all articles drawn from store and issued to the men; a matter of no small difficulty.

There were no rifles available for issue from the Ordnance, but 500 Martini-Enfields, Mark III, with long bayonets, were procured from the Natal Volunteer Armoury.

There were none available, but my relations in England sent out two 303 Maxim guns mounted on tripods, with pack saddles and ammunition complete. I afterwards borrowed from the Colt Gun Company three 303 guns (Colt), mounted on Dundonald carriages. (See report marked "D.")

Very few were procurable, but I fortunately had 18 good telescopes, as used for deer-stalking, and 24 pairs of Zeiss glasses sent out by my brother, and these proved invaluable. It is impossible for scouts to obtain reliable information without them, and all Regiments should have an ample supply both in times of peace as well as in war, as it is as necessary to train men to the use of telescopes and field-glasses as it is to train them in the use of the rifle. (See report marked "D.")

One per man to carry 50 rounds were also procured from the Natal Volunteer Armoury (special web material made in South America). They were serviceable, but had a bucket attachment for a carbine which was of little use for long rifle; but we could get no other bandoliers at the time.

Infantry pattern from the Ordnance Department. This pattern of pouch is useless for Mounted Infantry.

There were very few saddles and bridles available in store, so practically the whole number required to equip the Battalion had to be bought locally in Pietermaritzburg; these were necessarily of an inferior quality, made of bad leather, saddles with weak trees, etc., etc.; but none others were available, and mounted troops were urgently required, so we had to take the field with what we could get.

Part of the harness had to be made locally, and was inferior; the remainder was of excellent quality.

Issued from the Ordnance Department, and were serviceable (see report marked "D," which deals with all articles in use).

All clothing which was available in Government store was issued, but a number of articles had to be purchased locally. As these, especially the breeches, were of inferior quality, they were replaced as soon as possible. (For report on clothing see report "D.")

The following articles were issued to each man:

Ankle boots	-	-	-	-	-	2 pairs.
(One pair is sufficient if good.)						
Breeches	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
Braces	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
Bandolier	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bayonet and scabbard	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bridle	-	-	-	-	-	1
Blankets	-	-	-	-	-	2
Drawers	-	-	-	-	-	2 pairs.
Descriptive card	-	-	-	-	-	1
Emergency ration	-	-	-	-	-	1
Frocks, khaki	-	-	-	-	-	2
(One is sufficient unless spare one is carried on wagon.)						

Flannel belt	-	-	-	-	-	1
Field dressing	-	-	-	-	-	1
Forage cap	-	-	-	-	-	1
Helmet	-	-	-	-	-	1
(Pattern is bad.)						
Haversack	-	-	-	-	-	1
Housewife	-	-	-	-	-	1
Holdall, with knife, fork, spoon, and comb	-	-	-	-	-	1
Horse-rubber	-	-	-	-	-	1
Horse brush and curry comb	-	-	-	-	-	1
Hoof-picker	-	-	-	-	-	1
Jack spurs	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
Jersey	-	-	-	-	-	1
Knife, pocket	-	-	-	-	-	1
Laces, boot (spare)	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
Mess-tin and strap	-	-	-	-	-	1
Neck strap and reim	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nose-bag	-	-	-	-	-	1
Putties	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
(Leather gaiters would have been better.)						
Pouch for ammunition	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rifle, with pull-through and oil bottle	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rifle bucket	-	-	-	-	-	1
Shirts, flannel	-	-	-	-	-	2
Socks	-	-	-	-	-	2 pairs.
Shoes, canvas	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
Stable sponge	-	-	-	-	-	1
Saddle complete	-	-	-	-	-	1
Saddle blanket	-	-	-	-	-	1
Soap, pieces	-	-	-	-	-	1
Towels	-	-	-	-	-	2
Tin of grease	-	-	-	-	-	1
Trousers	-	-	-	-	-	1 pair.
(Not wanted.)						
Waistbelt and frog	-	-	-	-	-	1
Water-bottle	-	-	-	-	-	1
Waterproof	-	-	-	-	-	1
Warm coat (British)	-	-	-	-	-	1
Waterproof sheet	-	-	-	-	-	1

A very large majority of the men who joined had long Colonial experience; many of them had travelled extensively in the interior in search of big game, prospecting expeditions, etc., and were experienced rifle shots. Every opportunity was taken to improve their efficiency by practice in field firing, Loyd-Lindsay competitions, etc., always at unknown ranges, and at small targets not larger than the head and shoulders of a man. On the whole I consider that the shooting was satisfactory; but if I had had more time to train the men I should have made a speciality of snaphooting at short ranges.

The test which the men had to pass before enlistment threw out all men who were indifferent riders; and so the efficiency of the Battalion in riding was distinctly good.

The class of men enlisted was of a high character, the majority were accustomed to have horses of their own, and could afford Kaffirs to look after them; they were therefore unaccustomed to groom their own horses. Knowing this, I impressed on the men the necessity of personally looking after their own mounts, so that they might remain efficient in the field; at the same time pointing out that they were well mounted on a fair class of country-bred ponies, and that it was not likely that remounts of the same class would be forthcoming as the campaign proceeded, and the country-bred became more difficult to procure. The men took this to heart; and although they disliked the routine of "stables," they gradually saw the absolute necessity of careful stable management, which was strictly carried out under the supervision of the Company Officers. Notwithstanding the inferior class of saddles at first in use, there were very few sore backs, and every man knew that if his horse became inefficient by his neglect, he would not get another at once, but would be left out of the fighting for a time—and so it became a disgrace to be left without a horse. The forage supplied was good; and notwithstanding the hard work and the heavy weights which the ponies had to carry, they improved in condition; and many men prided themselves that they rode the same pony for a year or more in the campaign, and the necessity of careful stable management was fully understood and loyally carried out.

In the first stages of the war—that is, in the first few weeks—the men thought little of cover; those of them who had been under fire before had mostly experienced the indifferent shooting of Kaffir warfare, but the necessity of cover was soon brought home; and

Appendix C.

Qualities in respect of shooting.

Riding.

Horse-mastership.

Skill in entrenchment and taking cover.

Appendix C. where the natural features of the country were insufficient, they very rapidly grew expert in improvising defences. Those who had had the opportunity of big game shooting—and they formed a considerable body—brought their experience to bear in the use of ground, as in stalking, and it became a custom in the Battalion to think “how can we best inflict loss on the enemy with the least possible loss to ourselves?”

Entrenching tools were carried on the Scotch carts provided for ammunition, which were always in the first line of transport.

Scouting.

The great advantage which South African Colonials had over others in scouting is apparent to anyone. Accustomed for years to the veldt, they were able to observe what would to the ordinary person have been unrecognisable. Their individuality, unhampered by any training save that of necessity, had accustomed them to observe for themselves, and by the intelligent use of telescopes and field glasses with which I supplied my men they were able to obtain much valuable information. Then again many were expert in the knowledge of “spoor,” telling on examination the approximate number of men, horses, or wagons which had passed, the way they were going—and in some degree the speed—all valuable information. Again, many could speak either Kaffir or Dutch, or both, and so acquire information from Kaffirs in the field or at their kraals, or at farms as they passed.

These qualities, combined with a natural desire to gain credit for their Corps by obtaining *trustworthy* intelligence—sometimes acquired by stealth, at others by dash—made the men most valuable as scouts.

Although a large number came from Johannesburg, they were by no means “town bred”; nearly all of them had experience in many parts of Africa, and were merely drawn to Johannesburg in pursuit of business. Several of them had been specially employed as scouts in the Matabele war, and nearly all of the men could find their way about at night.

By being able to select my own Officers, I was able to obtain from British Regiments, Indian Staff Corps, and picked Colonials, officers thoroughly experienced in reconnoitring and sketching, and under their leadership much good work was accomplished.

General physique.

Exceptionally good. A careful medical examination was made before any recruit was passed. The men were somewhat heavy for the ponies, but that could not be helped. On the whole there was very little sickness.

Morale.

The discipline of the Battalion was of a high order, and I attribute this in no small degree to the fact that the men had thorough confidence in the officers and non-commissioned officers who led them. The question of officers is, as I have said before, one of supreme importance. By their example they gave a tone and bearing which was eagerly followed by the men, and so the whole Battalion became imbued with the true feeling of *esprit de corps*, moral superiority, and confidence in themselves so essential to the well-being of any corps as an efficient fighting unit. There were cases of spies of the enemy who made every endeavour to become members of the Battalion, but these men were discovered and removed.

Intelligence of officers and men.

I was very much struck by the individuality displayed by all ranks. A very large number of both Officers and Men had previous war experience, not only in South Africa, but in many other countries; so no tedious efforts at teaching drill were necessary. The standard of education was high, and all quickly fell into their places, bringing their intelligence to bear on all points, the one idea being to get to the front and there prove their worth. With such a spirit prevailing the Command of the Battalion was an easy matter.

POINTS TO BE NOTED IN THE RECRUITING, TRAINING, AND EQUIPMENT OF OFFICERS AND MEN OF A COLONIAL FORCE.

(1) The selection of Officers is the vital point. No political or other influence which may be brought to bear should in any way impair the judgment of the Officer who is responsible for the efficiency of the Corps.

(2) The necessity of a Regimental Paymaster is most apparent. This Officer should himself pay the men, keep the pay lists and accounts, and so relieve the combatant Officers of a duty which it is impossible for them to perform efficiently in war, and which in peace takes up a great deal of their time which would be better employed in the intelligent training of their men. I adopted this method with excellent results.

(3) It is essential that a thorough test in riding and shooting should be insisted upon before enlistment. In the Colonies most men can ride, but rifle shooting wants further encouragement. Ammunition should be provided at reduced rates to any organised rifle clubs, provided that it is expended in such practices as are conducive to efficiency in war, and not fired away at large targets at known ranges.

(4) A careful medical examination is, of course, a necessity.

(5) Complete equipment and clothing of the very best materials should be forthcoming; it is absurd to expect high efficiency with indifferent materials bought at haphazard in an emergency. (For suggestions on equipment and clothing, see report marked “D.”)

(6) The rifle should be a short one, about 42 inches in total length, sighted up to 2,500 yards, encased in wood with few projections so that it can be easily slung on the back, magazine to carry five rounds, protection for foresight, and double pull-off. The rifle to be made in three sizes of stocks to suit men with long or short arms.

Bayonet, present pattern, but a little longer.

(7) Whether a Regiment is to work independently, or in a Brigade of Colonials, a thoroughly efficient intelligence department is necessary, under a specially selected Officer with white and native scouts under him. Ample funds for the establishment of secret agents in the country to be operated in should be provided.

(8) For report on Horses, Mules, Oxen, Saddles, Veterinary Stores, Forage, etc., see enclosure marked “E.”

(9) The Regimental Medical Establishment was satisfactory. One Doctor, one Sergeant, and two Privates as orderlies, with four men per Company as stretcher bearers, and one large Regimental Ambulance; but there should be in addition a light ambulance to accompany patrols.

(10) In a Colonial Corps it is difficult to enlist or maintain an efficient number of signallers. On the outbreak of war there is no time to train them. I had a number of telegraphists who soon learnt to use the flag, but for the heliograph and lamp had to eventually obtain trained signallers from the Regular Army. The question of signallers is of great importance, and no system of outposts or reconnaissance can be efficiently carried out without them.

(11) Maps of the country to be operated in are an absolute necessity. During the Natal campaign they were almost unprocurable, and most unreliable. Had it not been for the knowledge which some of my Officers and men who had served in the Natal Police, etc., had of the country, I should have been placed in an extremely awkward position in carrying out reconnaissance.

(12) The establishment of a Regimental Mess for the Officers is of great importance. By the social intercourse there established a Commanding Officer is better able to judge of the character and capacity of those under him. Company Messes for Officers, although useful for outpost and detached duties, are not advisable in a Colonial Corps; should it be necessary to send a Company away, a proportion of the Mess kit can be sent with it. I established a Regimental Mess with very excellent results. The Regent's Allowance, as given to the Messes of Regular Regiments, should have been allowed, but I was unable to obtain it.

APPENDIX D.

Appendix D.

PRECIS OF EVIDENCE BY COLONEL M. F. RIMINGTON, C.B.

(See Questions 12608-12824.)

STEPS TAKEN TO RAISE AND EQUIP RIMINGTON'S GUIDES.

Whilst I was on secret service at Bloemfontein for nearly three months, before war commenced, I had many opportunities of finding out the English inhabitants of the Orange Free State who were well disposed to Great Britain.

War being imminent, in accordance with my instructions I left the Free State and at once applied for permission to raise and equip a corps of white guides and scouts.

This was granted about October 3rd, 1899, and was to be carried out *sub rosa* and the assistance of Captain Gale, R.A., Captain Rankin, 7th Hussars (Dr. Lindley and Officers, Adjutants, etc.), and later Lieut. Chester Master, Rifle Brigade, A.D.C. to Lord Milner, was obtained. Information to this effect was sent through to friends in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, and recruiting was started in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.

The headquarters were at Naauwport, about 40 miles south of the Orange River, and there every man was seen, inspected, and examined as to his ability by me personally.

QUALIFICATIONS DEMANDED FROM MEN.

- (1) As guide to some part of the Orange Free State and Transvaal.
 - (2) As to ability to speak Dutch or a native tongue.
 - (3) As to shooting and riding.
- (Tested in each.)

If satisfactory they were medically examined and sworn in, and signed on for the duration of the war.

They were immediately equipped and drilled every morning, and in several cases men from the Border Colonials were sent out the same evening as enlisted on scouting expeditions of 40 miles to the border.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SPIES.

To prevent any spies enlisting, no man was taken unless personally known to myself or answered for by two members of the corps, or unless he could furnish references from persons such as I knew were responsible; for instance, the Secretary of the Uitlanders Committee.

In one case a man, sent by the Intelligence officers at Cape Town, was objected to by several of the N.C.O.'s and men as a suspicious person, and at once sent back to Cape Town as a suspect. Several others were refused as suspected persons.

Every officer and man was on the watch for spies, and I can state positively that no spy was enlisted in my corps.

A very large number of applicants were refused, about one only in five being accepted. Quality and not quantity was desired. Thus a very hardy, good lot of men were enlisted, and afterwards, when we were fighting every day, the least evidence of want of pluck or nerve was followed by instant dismissal.

Insubordination of a serious nature was very severely punished or the delinquent dismissed. As there were many applicants, this caused no inconvenience. Age was no bar to selection, and several men of over 60 years of age proved magnificent scouts.

HORSES.

Permission was obtained for men to provide their own horses, and to be paid 5s. per diem for use of same, and thus many bought the best horses obtainable, in some cases men bought two. All horses were passed by me personally as suitable, and were valued by me for

Government, and registered in a horse book. Later, when stealing horses became common, proved receipts were demanded by me.

Two advantages accrued (as was foreseen by me) when asking for permission for this, from this system:— (1) The men got good colonial horses, in many cases race horses and racing ponies; and (2) they looked after their horses well, and so set an example to those men who did not provide their own horses.

Without regular officers of strict disposition this system would have been impossible; having them, it succeeded, though at the cost of much trouble.

- (1) Horse management was strictly attended to by the officers.
- (2) Grazing was always resorted to at every possible chance.
- (3) The men never allowed to sit on their horses at the halt.
- (4) Always made to off-saddle at every opportunity, even for five minutes.
- (5) The kit carried on the horse reduced to the minimum.
- (6) They were made to dismount and walk *down* (never up) all hills. Thus a good system was established, and our horses continued in good condition throughout the war, and many of them (one of my own included) lasted throughout the campaign, and are still fit and well.

In a campaign horse management is absolutely the first thing to be considered by mounted troops. Men who give sore backs should not be at once remounted or sent to a base, whether horses are available or not, but should be made to walk for at least 10 or 14 days, and be made to go on picquet on arrival at camp.

With all mounted troops extreme severity and absolute disregard for the men's health, feelings, or safety is necessary in this respect; because good horses are scarcer than men in a long campaign.

EQUIPMENT, TRANSPORT, ETC.,

The transport wagons, mules, harness, etc., were purchased by me at Naauwport, and the mules cost on an average £10 less than contract price, £35. I bought small mules, which were found to last and pull best, and I only took seasoned animals.

On white team (10 mules) worked to the end of the war to my own knowledge. I had picked Cape boy drivers, and a good Dutchman as conductor, and my wagons could do 40 miles in a day, without casualty, and never fail to get up to my bivouac at night, however long the march.

ARMS.

The men were armed with Martini-Enfield carbines (no magazine), and carried 100 to 120 rounds in bandoliers. I found the Martini-Enfield carbine shot well, was very light, and would carry and kill as far as any ordinary man could see to shoot, viz., at 1,800 and 2,000 yards.

I entirely dissent from the theory that a rifle should be preferred to a carbine for mounted troops. Amongst my corps were some nearly perfect rifle shots, and they invariably preferred and carried a carbine.

Carbines were carried slung over the shoulder.

A certain number of men carried their own pistols, or some (of the proportion) of revolvers, pistols, issued to them.

Appendix D

SPYGLASSES.

About 10 per cent of binoculars and telescopes were provided by the Ordnance, but nearly 120 were obtained about six months after the war commenced by a public appeal in England through the press, and were absolutely invaluable. Glasses at once double or treble a scout's value, and are indispensable.

Officers were forbidden to unduly expose themselves in the firing line, it being pointed out that there was no reason that they should thus pay a bad compliment to the courage of the men, who were presumably as regardless of bullets as they were, and that the chief object was :—(1) To kill the enemy without being killed or wounded themselves; and (2) to gain information unknown to the enemy.

All scouting parties sent out by me left at night, and got into some place where they could see and not be seen before dawn.

The whole available officers and men turned out practically every day, and certainly five days per week throughout the war, two or three hours before dawn, when we were in touch with the enemy, and scouted up as near to them as possible before dawn, remained in observation till the evening picquets were withdrawn, most days engaging the enemy's scouts and exchanging shots.

Later in the day the bulk of our men were withdrawn as quietly as possible, leaving parties in observation till after dusk.

If our parties once got into position before dawn, and some remained till after dusk, the Boers did not attempt to get up to their positions, and they could be got into again every day before dawn without loss.

Every man was encouraged to take every opportunity of observing the enemy, and to collect and report information, especially from native sources, with regard to the enemy.

Though for scouting and fighting against Boer mounted infantry my Guides were all that I could wish for, and though, later, I found no difficulty in galloping at and storming, carbine in hand, any temporary Boer position with them, I am positively certain that they, being untrained in shock tactics, and having no personal weapon, would have had no chance whatever against well trained, well mounted, and well led Regular Cavalry, half their number.

I say this after being engaged, when in command of these men, on approximately 120 days. Later I commanded the Inniskilling Dragoons, and found that, though for individual shooting and scouting they could not compare with those born and accustomed to the veldt, and able to get information from every native, that well-mounted, well-trained, Regular Cavalry in action were worth double their number of M.I. (whether Boers or British).

I wish particularly to draw attention to this, as since I came back to England I have heard many individuals express opinions which show that they had no conception that such was the case, and it appears to me that there would be a very rude awakening if M.I. attempted to hold their own against Regular European Cavalry trained, say, for instance, on the German system.

One point, very generally lost sight of, is that the small bullet does not kill or stop horses or men in the great majority of "hits."

The other point being that dismounted men (whose horses are near) are apt to take up a long front without reserves, and so, when a flank attack most likely takes place on them, they are extremely vulnerable, as they have no defensive power.

Later in the war, whilst in command of a mobile force, I had the 3rd New South Wales Mounted Rifles under my command, some 800 to 900 in number. These men were practically ready-made cavalry, and by cavalry I mean :—

1st. Good horse managers.

2nd. Good riders.

3rd. Men able to ride at the enemy and use a personal weapon.

And I formed the opinion that Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa can supply enormous numbers of good cavalry if only they are encouraged

in peace to drill as cavalry, and on all possible opportunities to gallop at the enemy and to use a personal weapon.

Acting on these lines, I on several occasions directed the 3rd N.S.W.M.R. to charge their enemy mounted with fixed bayonets. The Boers would not stand up to this, and like all recourse to *l'arme blanche*, it increased the morale of my men.

For mounted troops in the Colonies I advocate cavalry drill in squadron columns, etc., a short rifle, or, better, a carbine, and a sword, whose handle is made like a bayonet handle, so as to fix on to the carbine, this being especially useful for defence against a rush at night.

EQUIPMENT.

My equipment was purchased locally or drawn from Ordnance stores. I was specially fortunate in obtaining Colonial pattern saddles.

These can be made to fit any horse by means of stuffing the panel with hay, wool, or hair, one of which we could always obtain.

The general Service pattern saddle is not a suitable saddle for the well-bred riding class of horse, because :—

1st. Nearly every horse's back is differently shaped, and therefore requires a differently shaped sideboard (if the saddle is to give equal pressure throughout), e.g., some horses have hollow backs, and need a greater bend in the sideboard, others have a more or less straight back, and require a straight sideboard.

Then many horses are very narrow, and require the sideboards set nearer together and at a different angle.

To meet these differences there are three sizes in the arches for all horses. If a stripped saddle is put on a horse's back and the sideboard is found to press hard on one point, no blanket or numnah will do much to alter it. In practice on service blankets are almost useless for this purpose.

2nd. General Service pattern saddles are too short in the seat, and make men ride too much on their fork, and not sitting on the bones of the pelvis with the knees well forward; so they tire the men, who consequently tire their horses.

The opinion formed was that a really well-made Colonial pattern saddle in four sizes, with plain knee-flap cut well forward and a long seat, with hair-stuffed and leather-covered panels, and a leather cinch girth, would be the very greatest economy if generally adopted for riding horses.

WATERCARTS.

I altogether discouraged the use of watercarts, as useless and cumbersome, and disseminating enteric.

My men were remarkably free from enteric, but I invariably tried to keep as far as possible away from towns, and up stream, if possible; the men, being Colonials, did not drink much water except in the form of tea or coffee.

COLONIAL OFFICERS.

I found nearly all Colonial officers, whether S.A., Canadian, or Australian, very quick, brave, able to act on their own responsibility, and prepared to run any show, however big. They are specially good with horses, mules, cattle, and transport.

As to interior economy and discipline, they are generally untrained, and under great difficulties with regard to men who come from their own towns or villages, and who are often their equals in social standing.

A certain amount of training in England with Regulars is a great advantage to them, and gives them much greater control over and authority with their subordinates.

They appreciate and respect Imperial officers who are rough and ready, and good horsemen and scouts.

I think really good N.C.O.s from England would help Colonial troops in their drill, training, and orderly-room work to a very great degree.

Generally speaking, the line to be adopted in training Colonial mounted troops would appear to be—

- (1) Teach all to shoot.
- (2) Take all the best riders in squadrons, and teach them the use of a personal weapon, and make them into a troop of swordsmen for shock tactics as cavalry.
- (3) Gradually work more up to the highest standard of cavalry, and thus "leaven the whole lump."

NOTES ON HORSEMANSHIP.

I found throughout the war, with all sorts of troops and all ranks, that care of horses comes naturally to very few men except those brought up from boyhood with horses.

As a rule, all other soldiers only do what they are compelled to do, and at best regard the care of their horses as a very weary and irksome necessity.

This points to the fact that in the future we must, as far as possible, pick only men brought up to and accustomed to horses as recruits for the mounted branches, and this is especially necessary with a three years' service system.

Three years with this proviso is enough to train a cavalry soldier, especially if, as often occurs, he goes back to work with horses in the Reserve.

CARRYING OUT FIELD IMPRISONMENT.

This should not be entrusted to a prisoner's own corps, where, when on service, he can get food from his friends, and is often let down easily. The penalty is thus unequal in corps.

The Provost Marshal should have charge of these prisoners, and he can and must make field imprisonment No. 1 severe enough to frighten offenders as much as the lash for which it has been substituted.

OPERATIONS.

Appendix D.

Under my command Rimington's Guides took part in the following engagements and operations:—

With Lord Methuen—

Belmont	-	-	-	-	-	Clasp.
Graspan.						
Modder River						Clasp.
Magersfontein.						

With General French—

Colesberg (about three weeks' constant fighting).						
Relief of Kimberley	-	-	-	-	-	Clasp.
Paardeburg	-	-	-	-	-	Clasp.
Poplar Grove.						
Driefontein						Clasp.
Bloemfontein.						

With General Broadwood—

Sanna's Post (in rear guard).

With General E. Hutton—

Brandfort.
Vet River.
Sand River.
Kroonstad.

With General Ian Hamilton—

Lindley.						
Heilbron.						
Doornkop.						
Johannesburg						Clasp.
Pretoria.						
Diamond Hill.						Clasp.
Heidelberg.						

With General Sir A. Hunter—

Bethlehem.						
Wittebergen	-	-	-	-	-	Clasp.

With General Bruce Hamilton—

Operations in Northern Free State till January, 1901.

Appendix E.

APPENDIX E.

NOTES ON REMOUNT OPERATIONS BY COLONEL T. DEANE, C.B., BASED ON HIS EXPERIENCE AS DIRECTOR OF THE ARMY REMOUNT DEPARTMENT IN INDIA; CHIEF STAFF OFFICER IMPERIAL YEOMANRY, HOME; AND SPECIAL SERVICE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY, SOUTH AFRICA.

(Handed in at Question 13087).

Perhaps the experience which I have gained as Director of the Army Remount Department in India may be useful to the Commission, if I explain a few facts in regard to the remount operations, which have occurred to me in reading the various reports on remount affairs during the past war.

It is manifest that in a campaign like the past one, the Director of the Remount Department must have been responsible, to a considerable extent, for the successful operations of war. Lord Roberts telegraphed from South Africa that he could do nothing in that country without a mobile army, and mobility depended on the supply of horses. This supply had to be arranged for by the Director. In India his responsibility is clearly fixed. One of his chief duties is that of preparing mobilization tables, which are printed in what is known in India as the Field Service Departmental Code, "Remounts" and its confidential supplement. In these manuals are shown the requirements of the various branches of the Mounted Services in peace and war with the number of horses required to make good those which are eliminated at the commencement of a campaign on account of age and other causes. Those are the first requirements made good. The next is to bring the units of the Field Army up to the war strength, and after that is done, to provide for the probable amount of casualties during war. After the Field Army is brought up to its proper strength from units which are depleted for that purpose, it becomes the duty of the Director to arrange for horses to make good the depletion referred to, and field casualties. All these tables are carefully worked out in peace time, so that it may be told at a glance how many horses are required for a regiment, battery, brigade, division, army corps, or any other force which may have to take the field. No calculations have been made in the tables referred to, which would have met, or anything like met the casualties during the past war. During the Crimean campaign the casualties amounted to 80 per cent., and during the past war it has been noted that they have amounted to 120 per cent. The calculations of the Indian Remount Department have hitherto been much less than this. However, provision for casualties should always be made with reference to the conduct of operations from month to month, the proportion being increased as the casualties occur. I do not know whether such tables as these have been prepared in the War Office or not, but manifestly, as a guide they are most necessary for the proper administration of remount affairs; and if they have not been prepared, I venture to suggest that they should be taken in hand. The next requirement of the Remount Department to be arranged by the Director is clear printed instructions in regard to the duties of a purchasing officer. These find a place in the Remount Manuals which are prepared in India for the guidance of all purchasing officers and depot superintendents. They are most elaborate, and if strictly adhered to, it is almost impossible for officers to make mistakes. I have found that the best purchasing officers are those who most closely attend to these instructions. They are based on many years' experience, and would apply to the purchase of horses of almost any class. Complaint has been made during the past remount operations, this war, that purchasing officers had no experience, and that therefore they were unable to satisfactorily perform their duties. I do not know what the instructions were regarding rules in the Home Remount Department, but if there should not be any such rules as those alluded to I look upon it as one of the most essential requirements of any future remount system. Every Englishman, and most Irishmen considers himself a better judge of horses

than his neighbour, but I have often found that those who profess to know most really know the least. I am therefore a firm believer in clear instructions, in the use of the tape, the weighing machine, and the instructions referred to, in preference to what is generally supposed to be the value of a good eye for horses.

One of the most important duties of the Director is that of having, in his mobilization manuals, clear information of the various sources of supply from which horses are likely to be obtained. These are printed in the manuals I have alluded to for Indian use. I take, for example, the case of South Africa, where a table is published showing the names of those from whom horses could be obtained, the district in which they are securable, the brands of the horses, and the numbers likely to be obtained within a week's notice, or within a month. Classes are shown as horses fit for light cavalry, mounted infantry, and also mules and ponies; with probable price. Such information would, I have no doubt, have been of some use during the past campaign if resorted to at the proper period. Similarly, information is given as to the sources of supply in Australia and New Zealand, in Persia, and in the various districts throughout India. Other information was obtained in regard to various foreign sources, and is on record in the Director's office, but has not been published in the manuals referred to, because it was unlikely that in war time these distant sources would have been resorted to. I allude to such places as North and South America, Hungary, Syria, and Arabia. Information is available also in regard to the mule supply in these localities, in Spain, Italy, Cyprus and elsewhere. Manifestly, on the occurrence of war references to these tables are of high value. The Indian system is that of constantly referring to the Intelligence Department for any such information as may be required, or if it be not there obtainable, to seek it from the Governments concerned direct. They have always been found ready, through their Consular or diplomatic officers, to supply the fullest information required.

The personnel of the Remount Department is a more difficult one to obtain than is generally supposed. Purchasing officers, depot officers, and conducting officers should all have some experience of their work. It is well known that during the past campaign all officers preferred employment at the front to work in the Remount Department, or in any Department; and therefore even the best officers who might have been available for remount work were not under the circumstances obtainable. It is not easy to make any suggestion in regard to how the remount personnel of the future should be supplied. That will depend upon whether the Department is enlarged or not. The nucleus of a good staff is the great thing to commence with, but the present staff of the Remount Department at home is very small, and quite inadequate to supply what is required. It is understood, however, that it has been proposed to spend a sum of £200,000 in enlarging it, but I believe only about £7,000 has been made available for the purpose. The supply of the personnel will greatly depend also upon the provision of some war reserve horses. There is, I understand, no such reserve at home, and it is doubtful whether any such will be provided. This seems a mistake, as, for India, where the war strength of units is stronger than in England, a reserve of 1,000 Australian horses is allowed in addition to the up-keep of about the current year's supply for acclimatisation. The reserve consists of seasoned horses trained and almost ready to join the ranks at once. One of the great defects of the supply during the past war was that horses were purchased in most directions straight off the grass, and comparatively

tew, hard, and ready for work. Those which had undergone training, such as were obtained from the omnibus companies in London, did the best work, and I think that had it been possible to obtain a larger supply of horses in hard condition, the results would have been better. No doubt if the large contractors in England had been more freely resorted to, horses of this class might have been obtained in larger numbers; not young, perhaps, which was unnecessary for a year or two's work, but of a mature age, between six and ten, would have certainly been more valuable than the raw material. If in the future, Yeomanry and mounted infantry, are to be trained in the way they should be, it would appear that a reserve of horses might be suitably kept up, and utilised during peace time for their training.

I venture to refer to the necessity of the Director always having an adequate staff for administration purposes, and apart from the executive staff. Without this it is impossible for him to properly conduct his duties. I observe in one of the official reports of the past operations, that up to May, 1900, he was only allowed the services of one officer. What he was subsequently allowed I do not know, but I should have been sorry to have attempted to conduct all the vast operations he had to control, without the assistance of five or six officers of very good business capacity. That, and the provision of suitable accommodation for them, appears one of the first requirements. I refer to this matter as it has been prominently noticed in the proceedings of a recent Court of Enquiry. If a suitable staff were provided, it would be a comparatively easy matter to divide the work into the various branches, and to organise it accordingly.

With regard to South Africa, I have some diffidence in making any remarks on remount affairs connected therewith as I was not at any time concerned in remount matters; though the subject, from my antecedents, was of intense interest to me. I hope, therefore, I may be pardoned for noticing one or two points which appeared to me strange. The authority of the Director at home seemed not to extend to the administration of remount affairs in South Africa to the extent which it might have suitably done; that is to say, he did not appear to be sufficiently in official communication with officers there who were purchasing horses, and who could best have let him know the state of affairs, both in regard to casualties, demands, &c. In one instance that I know of, for example, an officer was purchasing horses in Australia without any reference to him. Constant daily communications should have passed between the officers in South Africa and the Director, in addition to which he might have been suitably placed in direct communication with the officers in chief command in that country, those in command of the lines of communication, &c. I was also struck by the apparent absence of any controlling remount authority in South Africa. There was at the head of affairs a very able, energetic officer with the rank of Assistant Adjutant General for remounts. Considering, however, the importance of remount matters in that country, what was necessary appeared to me to be the appointment of an officer not under the rank of Major-General, with central controlling authority, and in constant touch with the Director at home. It is very difficult indeed, even were such an appointment to have been made, to have given such an officer absolute authority to say that horses would not be sent from the chief depots on, or near the sea-board until they were fit for work, but I think that this would have been his first duty. It is unnecessary, perhaps, to refer to reports on record which show how short a time a horse lasted, in consequence of having been hurriedly sent to the front. There is ample on record to show that this was a serious mistake. The delay involved in getting horses ready would really, in the end, have been no delay at all, for they would have been more fit for the work which they had to do. It was apparent also that near the seaports of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban, there should have been a far greater reserve. It is easy to be wise after the event, but certainly during the first six months of the war it might have been apparent that, distributed amongst those four places, it would have been well to have had at least 100,000 horses to call upon. It must be remembered that many of these horses were not only unacclimatised, but untrained. Speaking of Australians I can confidently say that during my ten years' experience as Director in India, I have invariably found that the horses which were supposed to be the best trained and most ready for work as imported by the shippers, were the worst and most difficult to train. The percentage of really broken

horses obtained from this source was very small indeed. Unbroken Horses.

The depôts beyond the base were of two kinds: Advanced, or Issuing Depôts, and Resuscitating Depôts. As a matter of fact, all those beyond the sea-board might have been termed Resuscitating Depôts, as few of the horses issued from them were really fit for immediate work. Nevertheless, the wants of the Army had to be met, and they had therefore to be issued and the best made of the necessary state of affairs. Depôts.

Another complication observable in the supply is that, according to the English Field Service Tables, or Yellow Book as it is termed by Colonel Birbeck, the Director of Transport is supposed to be responsible for these depôts and indeed, that he shall control both remount and veterinary services. As a matter of fact it has been shown that he controls neither the one nor the other, and very rightly too. The work of the Remount Department should be controlled by an officer of authority, in somewhat the manner suggested, and it would be suitable, probably, if he were allowed to, also to control the Veterinary Depôts, as has been so well suggested by Colonel Birbeck. Director of Transport.

With regard to establishments, as separate from the Establish- officer personnel, the English war service tables show what they should be for Base and Advance Depôts. It is notable that the men sent out to form these Depôts were, in the Remount Service, as they were indeed for the Yeomanry, taken for work at the front. Only skeletons therefore remained, and these had to be made good by the supply of native labour when it could be obtained. Subsequently cadres of Depôts were sent out, and formed the nucleus of what was required for the various Depôts. Nominally the Army Service Corps is supposed to supply the establishments required for the Remount Depôts, but often the men were not forthcoming in sufficient numbers. The Depôts were therefore under very great disadvantage in all matters connected with their management and supply of horses. In future it would appear advisable to supply the cadres of Depôts to the extent necessary, at all events in Non-com- missioned Officers, Conductors, &c., and to recruit the remainder in foreign countries from local labour. Other- wise there will always be a temptation to withdraw from Remount Depôts men of the combatant class for the front. It was observable that the Remount Department was called upon to train nearly all the horses which issued to the mounted units, and, as shown, comparatively few of these were received trained. The work of training alone was therefore very heavy, and this is a duty which I think should not in future devolve upon the Remount Department, but depôts should be formed for the purpose on the advance lines, and men should be supplied therefore to train the horses for the mounted units, and take them away as ready. As a matter of fact, large numbers of men had to remain dismounted and unemployed until horses were ready for them, and it would have been much better to have employed them in training, at selected places adjacent to the Remount Depôts. Cadres necessary at first. Training Remounts.

The work of the Remount Department in connection with the supply of mules was vast, quite irrespective of the supply of remounts. The tables show that up to the 31st January, 1902, over 94,000 mules were supplied by the Remount Department, and they were of a very admirable class. It is worthy of consideration whether, when Remount duties in horses alone have to be conducted on such a large scale as during the past campaign, it would not be desirable to place the supply of mule transport in the hands of the Army Service Corps. This is the system in India, where the Transport Department supplies its own transport, the Remount Department being only concerned in the supply of horses, and a comparatively few mules for the mounted batteries. Had the Remount Department been relieved of the supply of mules during the past campaign, doubtless it would have had more time to arrange for the large supply of horses required. Supply of Mules, Army Service Corps.

The arrangements for the transport of horses by rail struck me as being of a very defective character, in comparison with the arrangements for the transport of horses in India. No doubt the best had to be made of things as they were, and every truck or wagon had to be utilised for the transport of men and munitions to the front; but the way that the horses were conveyed by rail caused very much delay, which perhaps might have been avoided. The wagons were so unsuited for the conveyance of horses that the remounts had to be unloaded at the various halting stations on the lines of railway, as shown in the official reports. The business Detraining. Rail Trans- port.

Appendix E. of entraining and detraining unbroken horses took up much time, and very little was done in the way of feeding or watering the horses whilst in the wagons. This was due to the trucks being unsuited for the conveyance of horses. They were as a rule placed almost anyhow in the trucks, generally ten in each. In India covered wagons are, at a very small cost, made susceptible of carrying horses, and they are placed therein head to head, with two bars in the centre, and a passage for the attendants, and for forage, feeding troughs and water. By this means it is possible to transport remounts for long distances without detraining; and provided the horses are carefully fed and watered *en route*, there is no difficulty in keeping them on board the train for many days. One of the first requirements, therefore, of transport in the future, is to see that the wagons and trucks are thus converted. This has been already recognised as a necessity, as I see that Colonel Girouard has given orders for the conversion of wagons in South Africa in this manner, as has been recommended by the Remount Department. This was one of the matters on which a Director on the spot, with authority, might doubtless have made arrangements, as time and money would have been thereby saved during the first six months or year of the campaign. In comparison with this deficient rail transport, the transport of horses on board ship was wonderfully well conducted, and an examination of the tables will show that the percentages of loss were, after all, but slight. When they were high it was as a rule due to inefficient Conducting Officers, and to their want of supervision of the horses on board ship.

The supply of remounts for the campaign made by the Remount Department up to the 31st of January 1902, amounted to 216,863 horses, and it is noticeable that the recent Committee of Enquiry have reported that for two Army Corps the probable requirements in horses would be 25,000, of which 9,600 were likely to be wanted to replace casualties for the first six months. It has also been shown that a reserve of 2,000 horses was recommended for peace time. If this reserve be ever sanctioned, it will be about the minimum which should be kept up at home; but even if there be no reserve, it is apparent that the provision of 25,000 horses or more must always take a great deal of work and organisation, and it is with reference to this possible future supply at home that I venture to add some additional remarks.

There seems little use in referring to the conflicting opinions in regard to the merits of the various classes of horses, but this much may be said, that it is plainly the duty of the Director to collate all the opinions he can, in regard to the merits and defects of the various classes, to form his own opinion on what he has thereby learnt, and then to make a supply as best he can without outside interference. In fact, complete trust in him is necessary, for there is no subject on which more varieties of opinion exist than the merits of horses of different kinds, where they should be obtained, and how much should be paid for them. It is one of my chief difficulties in India that outside irresponsible advisers of Government on this subject were many, and that changes were constantly being suggested in the method of obtaining horses for the various branches of the mounted service in that country. I do not think on the whole that the Indian system of supply, as regards imported horses, can be improved upon, and I am glad to find how highly that system has been spoken of by Lord Downe, in his recent report upon the purchasing operations in the Colonies. That system is one, in brief, of giving contracts to reliable dealers who have proved themselves worthy of selection, and I think that, had this system been adopted from the commencement of the past war, the Remount Department might have saved itself a great deal of trouble, not only in Australia, but from other foreign sources. The system of obtaining horses *c.i.f.*, that is, cost, insurance, freight inclusive, to be landed at the port required, and there taken over if found fit, is a good one. This is apparent by the reports on the system of obtaining horses in this manner from Australian dealers like Messrs. Kreuze and Madden, Glascock, and others. Horses might have been obtained in this manner from almost every source, provided the organisation was good and that a certain amount of advances had been paid on each shipment previous to embarkation. This system of advances is well known in India, but there the advances are only paid as the ship arrives in the port of disembarkation. From Persia, and other sources, however, advances are sometimes made previous to the horses' arrival, and I see no reason why this system should not be adopted, with the reliable contractors in future in England. If any one point is prominently brought out in the recent

reports of remount operations, it is that of the futility of attempting to deal with owners, or small dealers, direct, almost anywhere; and of the advantage of employing the great contractors who have the whole business in their hands. There is no doubt that had the largest contractors in England and Ireland been thus employed to a greater extent, under the advance system, many more horses could have been obtained, and probably of a better class, and more suited for immediate work. This was the system, for example, adopted in Hungary, where, it was found, practically the whole supply was in the hands of one individual, without dealing with whom, purchasing became almost futile. There were of course many other sources of supply left untapped; for example, Chicago is one where eight million horses are supposed to be available for purchase of a very good quality. To have attempted to obtain horses from thence without dealing with the large contractors would have been useless. It may be said, however, that there is clearly insufficient information recorded concerning the various sources of supply in the Department which is to be responsible for that supply in times of emergency, and it will well repay the State to take in hand the preparation of such manuals as I have already alluded to, containing the information in regard to the number of horses available, the names of the principal contractors, the time within which horses can be obtained, and the probable price. This information should of course be almost annually revised, and the very clearest rules should be prepared beforehand in regard to the method under which horses should be obtained. These methods should be drawn out and printed, so that all concerned might know the system under which horses would be purchased by the British Government, in the event of any emergency. One system should be adopted throughout, and I have always found that it saved very great trouble to be able to hand to numerous enquirers a printed statement showing the conditions under which horses would be purchased, not only from the foreign, but from the home (Indian) sources of supply. In considering this matter it will be well to bear in mind that it is advisable not to place any orders for horses in the hands of one large contractor when there are others who are reliable in the same locality. Thus, if an advance of some thousands of pounds has to be given to one individual for a single shipment under the system referred to, it would be well to extend a similar order to other contractors who may be recommended as trustworthy and reliable, by those who are best able to judge of their capabilities of supply. In foreign sources, Consuls or diplomatic authorities are invariably best able to advise on such matters, and if their advice be sought, much needless travelling and expense will be saved by sending officers about to make enquiries on subjects which are already fully recorded in existing departments.

It is observable that the reports on the South African purchases show that 126,372 horses and 30,699 mules were there purchased. I do not know from whom these were obtained, but I venture to give my own experience of arranging for the purchase of such animals from South Africa, which resulted in the officers sent having to resort to a large contractor out there, who virtually obtained for them what was required, and who, when he found the conditions under which horses were bought, arranged subsequently to import them himself, as a private speculation, at his own risk, to India.

If the clearest description of the horses required, and the price to be paid, be supplied to contractors such as I have referred to, and if they be made advances, they have only themselves to blame if any large percentage of their horses be rejected on arrival at the port of disembarkation; but such was the want of horses in South Africa that, had the contractors been encouraged to import in this way, the horses must have been very bad indeed if the rejections could not have been sold somewhere. In this connection it must be observed that it is necessary, in adopting the *c.i.f.* and advance system recommended, to give liberal prices for the horses required. So far from too much having been paid for the horses during the past war, in my opinion I consider that, generally speaking, it would have, in the end, proved more satisfactory to have given more liberal prices. I observe that the horses imported from Australia, for example, were purchased at from £31 to £33 each, landed at the port of disembarkation. I was asked to give an opinion of some of these whilst at Durban, and enquired first as to what they had cost. The reply given was that the price was not known, which struck me as curious, and I said that it would be impossible to venture an opinion upon them until I knew what had been paid for them. It will be observed in some of the reports

Advances in Money.

Contract system.

Irresponsible Advice.

Director's Decision Required.

Merits of Various Classes of Horses.

Reserve for Peace.

War Supply of Horses.

Sea Transport.

Conversion of Wagons.

Indian System.

Directing v. Own

Hungary

Chicago

Collaboration forms required

Annual Revision required

System Purchased by Government

Monopoly deprive

Foreign Consuls

Local channels through South

Clearance of unwanted

Price.

of the horses in South Africa, that, to commence with, Lord Roberts was of opinion that Australians were required, and would do well. He doubtless had in mind the excellent horses supplied under the Indian system at £50 per head, and that they should be acclimatised. It is shown in the reports alluded to that the Colonial horses which came from India did excellently. This was no doubt due to their having been acclimatised for a year or more in India, and to their high price. On the other hand it is observable that the ordinary Australian, imported direct from the Colonies for service, did badly. It is without doubt a fact that an Australian horse, or indeed a horse from any foreign source of supply, coming to a country like South Africa, where the climate is reversed, will do badly without rest. A month's rest is not sufficient, and this has been proved, but the majority of remounts supplied during the war went direct from grass on board ship, and from thence on trek into the field.

In support of this opinion it may be observed that the Argentine horses were almost universally badly reported upon. The exception was that of the 10th Hussars, which corps reported on them favourably, but the reason for this was evidently that the horses they received were given a period of acclimatisation in South Africa before they were issued.

The total expenditure of the Remount Department during the past war is understood to have been about £13,000,000, and doubtless some of this money might have been saved in transport charges. Under the contract system advocated rates can often be arranged more cheaply by the shippers themselves than by any Government agency. This fact is recorded in one of the official reports on the purchases made in Australia, which shows that shippers can often obtain freights at half the Government rates. It is noticeable also that in one of the reports alluded to, a statement has been made that 50 per cent. of the horses imported were unfit for mounted work in South Africa, or any country, and that those which were imported to Durban would be unfit for work for nine months. This shows the necessity for

a proper system of rest being given to the horses that have been landed, and the necessity for care being exercised in regard to the individuals from whom remounts are purchased. The supply in Australia and elsewhere is vast, but the large contractors who are accustomed to supply are often far more fitted to obtain suitable remounts than the inexperienced officers who have had comparatively little opportunity of purchasing in the localities where they have been sent.

The Indian Remount Manuals contain clear instructions in regard to every article of equipment required for a base or advance remount dépôt, and the method under which the horses ought to be issued. It is observable in recent reports that most of the horses in South Africa were sent to the front without any rolls showing whence they had been received, date of landing, or when they should be issued. Very clear instructions on this subject, if drawn up, cannot fail to be of use to officers who may have had little experience of dépôt management. The remount dépôts in South Africa, most of which I saw, were nearly all conducted on the Indian system in almost every detail. A great many men from India were obtained for their management, such as cavalry native officers, non-commissioned officers, syces, farriers, &c. These proved most useful, and it is very noticeable how well the veterinary dépôts were also managed, under a similar system. No better arrangements could be made in future than to draw up tables showing how far India can be called upon to assist in native establishments for both remount and veterinary dépôts. All such arrangements as these should manifestly be drawn up in time of peace, so that on the occurrence of war the Director may know exactly what is to be done, and from whence his remounts and establishments are to be obtained. Leaving such details to the last, on the occurrence of war, is most strongly to be deprecated. On almost every subject here referred to it is possible to have printed instructions ready, which should require comparatively few modifications, as, provided the principles laid down be correct, the details can subsequently be altered.

Appendix E.
Inex-
perienced
Officers.

Equipment.

Rolls, System
of Issue.

Tables show-
ing Indian
Establish-
ments
required.

APPENDIX F.

PRECIS OF THE EVIDENCE BY GENERAL SIR F. W. E. F. FORESTIER-WALKER, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.

(See Questions 13,636-13,838.)

1. I arrived at Cape Town and assumed command of the troops in South Africa on September 6th, 1899.

At that time the combatant forces in Natal consisted of two regiments of cavalry, three batteries Royal Field Artillery, one mountain battery, and four battalions with four companies mounted infantry; being one battalion and one mounted infantry company in excess of the peace garrison which had existed since May, 1897.

In Cape Colony the combatant forces consisted of two and a half battalions, three mounted infantry companies, and two companies Royal Garrison Artillery; being one battalion and one mounted infantry company less than the peace garrison. The difference from the peace strength in the two colonies was accounted for by the transfer from the Cape to Natal of the 1st Liverpool Regiment. Two battalions were at the time on the water to reinforce the South African Garrison, one each for the Cape and Natal. That for the Cape, I was informed, was not to provide a mounted infantry company, so that on its arrival the garrison would still be deficient of its peace strength by that unit.

Two companies of Engineers above the normal strength were in Cape Colony, and one in Natal. At Kimberley there were three officers, but no troops. Two corps of mounted infantry had been raised in Mashonaland and Bechuanaland—strength, 450 each. The horses for these had been purchased, but the authorised number of recruits was not complete.

All the troops in South Africa had been provided with complete regimental transport, but there were no field auxiliary services such as bearer companies, field hospitals, or ammunition columns.

For some time past the authorities at home had been urged to purchase horses and mules in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, large numbers of which were available; but, probably owing to the fear of rendering the political situation more acute, leave could not be obtained to buy more animals than were needed for the forces then in the country.

As to the actual state of affairs and the imminence of war practically nothing was known beyond the reports which appeared in the daily papers, nor was it known, should hostilities break out, what part the Staff and Garrison of Cape Colony would take, nor where the expeditionary force would land. Intelligence officers, however, had reported on various sites which had been selected as bases and advanced depôts, and, provided that the troops, a scheme of operations and a staff of officers were forthcoming, it would not have been difficult to arrange for the needs of an expeditionary force.

I had been informed of the constitution of the force which it was proposed to send from India to Natal, and shortly after my arrival I received the intelligence that four battalions from the Mediterranean were about to be despatched to South Africa—two for Natal and two for the Cape. I gathered from the general indications given that, in case of war, the troops would advance through Natal to the Transvaal.

2. The existing scheme of defence in Natal had been worked out under the General Officer Commanding in Natal (Sir W. Symons) and his predecessor on the spot. It was at best merely a plan for utilising to the best advantage the small force in the Colony of Natal. That force might have operated against a raid from the Transvaal or Orange River Colony, but against an invasion by the forces of one or both Republics it was out of the question to expect it to act in the field. As soon as the Indian contingent was sent to Natal the conditions were changed. The command of the forces in that Colony was then separated from the Cape command, and was given to General Sir G. White.

The troops in Cape Colony all, with the exception of one battalion and one mounted infantry company, belonged to the coaling station, and could only be removed from the coast at the risk of leaving Simons Bay

and Table Bay undefended. A scheme had been drawn up for sending detachments to occupy the bridge over the Vaal at Fourteen Streams, the Modder River bridge, and the bridges over the Orange River at Orange River station—Norvals Pont and Bethulie. To carry out such a scheme with the normal Cape garrison would only have been to invite disaster. Moreover, the High Commissioner was anxious to avoid placing any posts so near to the Orange Free State frontier, so long as the attitude of that State was in doubt, as to lead the burghers to suppose it was intended to invade their territory. It had, therefore, been determined, as soon as a crisis arose, to do everything possible to keep open the Western line, more especially as it was beyond doubt that Mafeking would be isolated as soon as war broke out, and would have to be relieved. It was therefore arranged to send to Kimberley half a battalion, six mountain guns, and a detachment of Royal Engineers. If possible, Fourteen Streams and Modder River bridges were to be occupied. Half a battalion, one company of mounted infantry, two guns, and a detachment of Royal Engineers, were to occupy Orange River Bridge, and half a battalion with Royal Engineers, De Aar. The railway junctions in the centre and east of the Colony at Naauwpoort and Stormberg were to be occupied each by half a battalion, two guns, one mounted infantry company, and a detachment Royal Engineers. If it was decided to advance through the Orange Free State, De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg would become advanced depôts, and would act as defended points for covering the concentration of the invading force in rear.

These arrangements would dispose of the entire available force in Cape Colony, except half a battalion. As reinforcements arrived it was proposed to strengthen De Aar and to concentrate at Orange River a movable force with the object of moving towards Kimberley, or of invading the Free State from its western frontier, and operating against the rear of any commandoes which might have crossed the Orange River.

It was not possible at this stage to place any reliance on the Volunteer forces of Cape Colony, as the Cape Ministry were strongly opposed to allowing them to be used in a war with the Transvaal.

With the forces at my disposal in Cape Colony, weak as they were, and provided with obsolete guns, it was impossible to expect more than that they should hold on to certain definite points till the arrival of reinforcements from England. The attitude actually taken up was only justified by the belief that the Boers would not take the initiative by invading Cape Colony.

3. On the 18th and 19th September the troops detailed for the defence of Kimberley and Orange River Bridge were despatched from Cape Town, and on the 25th September the De Aar detachment left.

Colonel Baden-Powell's force had in the meantime been placed under my orders, and every effort was made to comply with the demands he made. He asked for modern guns. The stores at Cape Town did not then contain a single modern weapon for such a purpose. Application was made to the Admiral at Simons Town, who supplied a list of spare guns in store; none of these were of any use for the object required, and eventually two obsolete 7-pounder R.M.L. guns were discovered by the Ordnance Department and despatched northwards.

The defences of Kimberley were thrown up in accordance with the scheme prepared by Colonel J. K. Trotter, A.A.G. Orange River and De Aar were also put into a state of defence. As soon as the officers in command reported those places to be secure, supplies and stores were poured into them as fast as possible. Kimberley had already been provided with supplies for two months for its garrison.

Meantime animals were being purchased in every part of the colony, and a certain number was obtained from

the Republics. But towards the end of September it was too late to make use of the sources of supply beyond our border, and arrangements had to be made to import animals from America, Australia, and Argentina.

Authority was sought from the Secretary of State to raise corps of scouts in the Cape and Natal, but sanction was not obtained till by means of the High Commissioner's representation on October 2nd I was informed that the enrolling of 2,000 men would be approved.

The first information I received that it was intended to land the Army Corps in Cape Colony and that I, with my staff, was to have command of the Lines of Communication, was from a telegram sent me by General Buller, September 29th. The managers of the Cape Government Railway were at once summoned to a consultation, and it was arranged so to distribute the rolling stock that a division might be landed at each port, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London, the corps, troops and cavalry coming to Cape Town. Officers were sent to Port Elizabeth and East London to arrange for stores, rest camps, etc., and supplies were poured into those places. The railway lines were organised and an officer placed in charge of each line between the base and advanced depôt. As special service officers became available the many appointments necessary for the supervision of the lines of communication were organised and filled. Naauwpoort and Stormberg had been garrisoned on October 1st and were put into a state of defence.

The arrangements I proposed were cabled to General Buller on his arrival at Madeira and were approved by him.

To facilitate the collection at and despatch of troops from the base at Cape Town large areas were hired for infantry and mounted troops, sidings were constructed and huts erected. Ground was obtained for extending the Ordnance Depôts, and an arm of the dockyard was taken up entirely for berthing transports and

for storing their cargoes. Similar arrangements on a smaller scale were made at Port Elizabeth and East London.

A base hospital was established at Wynberg. The accommodation at the Remount Farm at Stellenbosch was greatly increased and sidings for loading up mules, horses, and wagons, were constructed. It was arranged that all units requiring regimental transport should proceed to Stellenbosch and take over the transport there. On the eastern line a Remount and Ordnance depôt was formed at Queenstown, and on the Central line a similar depôt was established near Port Elizabeth.

Armoured trains were constructed for Cape Town, Kimberley, and Mafeking, and ambulance trains were prepared at Cape Town.

4. I have nothing to add to the evidence on Supply and Transport already given to the Royal Commission. The requirements were in general notified from England and they were complied with in full.

5. The exigencies of the political situation, no doubt, stand in the way of military preparations at the stage preceding the outbreak of war. But it is impossible to exaggerate the advantage to be gained by the judicious expenditure of a sum of money before the actual commencement of operations, when it is poured out like water. In the early stages of the crisis the time of an undermanned staff was taken up, and the telegraph wires were occupied with matters mostly connected with expenditure of a very trivial nature. If the reference of such matters to higher authority could be avoided, time would be saved, and the General Officer Commanding in command on the spot, who is best able to appreciate the requirements of the moment, would be able on his own responsibility to take such steps as were necessary.

FREDERICK FORESTIER-WALKER,

29th January, 1903.

General.

Appendix G.

APPENDIX G.

Copies of the Reports made to the Secretary of State for War by General Sir FORESTIER-WALKER, G.C.M.G. K.C.B., Commanding Troops South Africa, prior to the arrival in South Africa of General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

(See Question 13743).

C.R. No. A—3065—9.

Cape Town,
September 12th, 1899.

SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence by cablegram on the increase of troops in South Africa, I have the honour to make the following report.

2. I have been shown by his Excellency the Governor a copy of a cable communication from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, recommending that, on the arrival of the 1st Manchester Regiment, Laing's Nek should be occupied by the troops now at Ladysmith. On receipt of this copy I at once telegraphed to the General Officer Commanding Natal to ask if he considered the operation safe, impressing upon him at the same time the importance of avoiding a reverse, however trifling, at the outset of hostilities. I received on the 11th, a reply to the effect that, with the more than doubtful attitude of the Orange Free State he did not think it advisable to occupy the Nek, at any rate until the Indian Contingent was within a week of reinforcing Ladysmith. I entirely concur in this recommendation, and I beg to point out that the force occupying the Nek would almost certainly be cut off from Ladysmith, and that to re-establish connection with it, serious fighting would probably be necessary over the difficult ground between those places, where we should find the Boers at their best.

3. I may add that the difficulty in dealing with this, as well as with the question of the preliminary arrangements of organisation and preparation for the forces to be sent out, is great owing to my ignorance of the line to be adopted in case of an advance into the Transvaal. No doubt at the present stage it is impossible to say definitely what measures will be taken, but I desire to impress upon you the urgent necessity of giving me early information concerning points of disembarkation, lines of advance, and advanced depots, in order that the necessary administrative arrangements may be taken for the reception and forwarding of the troops and for the collection of transport and supplies. I also desire to point out that, in order to deal with these matters, a large increase is needed of Army Service Corps officers, both for transport and supply, Ordnance Corps officers, Pay Department officers, and Remount officers (to pass animals purchased under contract), together with a suitable proportion of non-commissioned officers and men of all these departments.

4. As regards this Colony, I am already taking steps to form a rest camp at the remount farm near Stellenbosch, 32 miles from Cape Town, where there is ample room for encamping troops, and where the Royal Engineers are now engaged in making a railway siding. This arrangement involves only a small expenditure, and considerable saving will result from using land for camping purposes for which no payment will be required.

5. Regarding the action of the troops in Cape Colony, I am awaiting a report from Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich,

commanding 1st Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, who has been sent to Kimberley, to consider what measures are necessary to supplement those taken by the Colonial Government. I consider it of great importance to secure the railway line as far as, and including Fourteen Streams Bridge, and with this object I consider that it will be necessary to occupy the positions referred to in my predecessor's letter of June 14th last. I enclose on a separate sheet the exact composition and destination of each detachment. From the information I have been able to gather from the border districts, it is very desirable that these positions should be occupied as soon as political considerations allow, in order to prevent the passage of disloyal Boers from the Colony to the Orange Free State, and of arms and ammunition from the Free State into the Colony. After the detachments, as detailed, have secured the points to which they are sent, it may be necessary to push them right up to the frontier along the Orange River, should such a course appear safe.

6. I desire particularly to draw attention to the composition of these detachments, and to point out that, though provided with regimental transport, they cannot be regarded as a mobile or manœuvring force. The only mounted troops in a country peculiarly suited for Cavalry are three Mounted Infantry companies, of which one only can be regarded as well trained. The artillery is improvised from 2·5-in. and obsolete 9-pounder R.M.L. guns belonging to the Cape defences; it has a limited supply of ammunition, and is not horsed, so cannot manœuvre. I particularly recommend this point to your attention, and I consider it most important that the force in this Colony should be well armed and specially mobile. If the advance into the Transvaal should be made by Natal, the Orange Free State remaining nominally neutral, it will, I conceive, be necessary to supplement the very limited supply power of the Natal Railway, by using the line to Fourteen Streams, and this line, which is already essential for maintenance of communication with Kimberley and Mafeking, would become of greatly-increased importance as a line of supply to the forces in the Transvaal, as well as a means of containing a certain portion of the Boer forces by threatening their South-West frontier.

7. Therefore it is very important, I consider, that the troops sent to the frontier stations, which under present circumstances, can only be regarded as local garrisons, should as soon as possible be reinforced, and should be formed into mobile units provided with mounted troops and efficient field artillery.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) FRED FORESTIER-WALKER,
Lieut.-General,
Commanding Troops, South Africa.

The Under-Secretary of State,
War Office, London, S.W.

12--9--99.

PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION FOR BORDER DEFENCE OF EXISTING GARRISON IN CAPE COLONY.

Station.	Commanding Officer.	Royal Artillery.	Royal Engineers.	Infantry.	Mounted Infantry.	Machine Guns.	Army Service Corps.	Royal Army Medical Corps.
Stormberg	Lieutenant-Colonel Evans - Gordon, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	1 officer, 24 men, 2 guns, 9-pr.	1 section, 29th company; 1 officer, 25 men.	Headquarters and 4 companies, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd Royal Berkshire.	2 from King William's Town.	Captain Colquhoun, 1 lance - corporal, 1 baker, 1 butcher.	Major Saw and King William's Town Hospital staff.
Naauwpoort	Major McCracken, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	1 officer, 24 men, 2 guns, 9-pr.	Headquarters, and 1 section, 29th company; 1 officer, 39 men.	4 companies, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	2 from Graham's Town.	1 warrant officer, 1 baker, 1 butcher (affiliated to Stormberg).	Major Greenway and Graham's Town Hospital staff.
De Aar	-	-	2 sections, 7th company; 1 section, 29th company.	-	-	-	(Affiliated to Kimberley <i>pro tem</i> .)	-
Orange Bridge.	Lieutenant-Colonel Kincaid, Royal Engineers.	1 officer, 40 men, 2 guns, 9-pr.	Headquarters and 1 section, 7th company.	4 companies, 1st North Lancashire.	1st North Lancashire.	2 from Cape Town, manned by Royal Artillery.	(Affiliated to Kimberley <i>pro tem</i> .)	Captain Shanahan, 1 sergeant, 2 men.
* Modder Bridge.	-	-	Detachment from Fourteen Streams.	-	-	-	-	-
Kimberley	Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich, 1st North Lancashire.	3 officers, 50 men, 4 guns, 2.5 in.	Detachment from Fourteen Streams.	Headquarters and 2 companies, 1st North Lancashire.	-	1 1st North Lancashire.	Captain Gorle, 1 warrant officer, 3 non-commissioned officers and men.	1 sergeant, 1 man.
Fourteen Streams	Major Murray, 1st North Lancashire.	1 officer, 40 men, 2 guns, 2.5 in.	1 section, 7th company.	2 companies, 1st North Lancashire.	-	2 from Cape Town, manned by Royal Artillery.	(Affiliated to Kimberley <i>pro tem</i> .)	Lieut. O'Gorman, ambulance, 1 sergeant, 2 men.
		Total:—6 guns, 9-pr.; 6 guns, 2.5 in.; 7 officers, 178 men.						Total:—4 on Royal Artillery charge; 5 on Infantry charge.

* To be watched by detachment from Kimberley; Officer Commanding Kimberley will arrange for Defence.

Appendix G

September 19th, 1899.

12 Officers,
537 N.C.O.'s
and Men.

18 Officers,
582 N.C.O.'s
and Men,
144 horses.

In confirmation of my cipher cablegram of yesterday, I have the honour to report that a detachment of four companies North Lancashire Regiment, detachment R.A. with six 2.5in. R.M.L. guns, section R.E., and detachments A.S.C. and R.A.M.C. left for Kimberley last night.

To-night a force of four companies North Lancashire Regiment, one Mounted Infantry company, two guns R.A., section R.E., and details leave for Orange River Bridge under the command of Lieut.-Col. Kincaid, R.E.

2. These troops are being dispatched at the request of H.E. the High Commissioner, who informs me that the Colonial Government will be responsible at present for the safety of the communications between Kimberley and

Mafeking. The force of police, however, which is at their disposal is small, and they cannot be expected to resist a serious raid.

3. I propose within the next few days to move to the positions already fixed at the railway junctions the remainder of the troops of the Cape District, leaving in Cape Town four companies of the 1st Royal Munster Regiment, and about 150 of the Royal Garrison Artillery.

4. I am informed by the Admiral, Commander-in-Chief (in conversation), that, in case of emergency, he is prepared to land a force of 600 bluejackets with a proportion of field guns.

5. I enclose a revised form of distribution of the troops on the frontier.

C.R. A.—2994—10.

PROPOSED Distribution for Border Defence of existing Garrison of Cape Colony, 20th September 1899.

STATION.	Commanding Officer.	Royal Artillery.	Royal Engineers.	Infantry.	Mounted Infantry.	Machine Guns .303-in.	Army Service Corps.	Royal Army Medical Corps.
Stornberg	Lieut.-Colonel Evans-Gordon, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr.*	One officer, 25 men, one section 29th Company.	Head Quarters and four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd Royal Berkshire.	Two from King William's Town.*	Captain Colquhoun, one lance corporal, one baker, one butcher.	Major Saw and King William's Town Hospital Staff, one sergeant, three men.
Naauwpoort	Major McCracken, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr.*	Head Quarters 29th Company, one section 29th company, one officer, 39 men.	Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	Two from Grahams-town.*	One warrant officer, one baker, one butcher; affiliated to Stormberg.	Major Greenaway and Grahamstown Hospital Staff, one sergeant, two men.
De Aar	—	—	One section 7th Company, one section 29th Company.	Four companies 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; four companies 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers.	—	—	Affiliated to Kimberley <i>pro tem.</i>	+
Orange River Bridge	Lieut.-Colonel Kincaid, Royal Engineers.	One officer, 40 men, two guns, 9-pr.*	Head Quarters and one section 7th Company.	Four companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire.	1st Loyal North Lancashire.	Two from Cape Town.*	Affiliated to Kimberley <i>pro tem.</i>	Captain Shanahan, one sergeant, three men, one ambulance.
Modder River Bridge	Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich, 1st Loyal North Lancashire.	Four officers, 90 men, six guns, 2.5-in.	One section 7th Company.	Head Quarters and four companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire.	—	One 1st Loyal North Lancashire,* two from Cape Town.	Captain Gorle, one warrant officer, five non-commissioned officers and men, one butcher, one baker.	Lieutenant O'Gorman, seven sergeants, two men, one ambulance.
Fourteen Streams	(Protected by Cape Police.)							
		Total.						
		Six guns, 9-pr.						
		Six guns, 2.5-in.						

* Eight manned by Royal Artillery, one manned by 1st Loyal North Lancashire.

† Exact details will be decided on establishment of Ordnance Depot, which will be located here.

Appendix G.

September 26th, 1899.

In continuation of my letter of 20th instant, No. A.—2994—10, I have the honour to inform you that four companies of the 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Light Infantry and two sections R.E., the whole under Major Hunt, 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry, left this place for De Aar Junction last night. As soon as the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers are provided with transport, I propose to despatch four companies to the same place, where ordnance and supply depôts will be established.

2. When the Mounted Infantry company of the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers is formed, I propose to send it to Orange River, and to transfer the Mounted Infantry Company of the 1st North Lancashire Regiment from there to Kimberley. The Officer Commanding at this latter station is making urgent appeals to me for some mounted men, the police having been withdrawn for the protection of the frontier northwards, and as a temporary measure I am sending to him one officer and twenty men from Orange River, but no more can be spared till another company is formed.

3. As soon as the four companies of the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers become available to move to De Aar, I anticipate that it will be necessary to reinforce Orange River bridge with the half battalion of the 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry from De Aar, as it is of the first importance that this crossing should be protected.

4. The movement of the Royal Berkshire Regiment to Naauwpoort and Stormberg has been postponed in deference to the wishes of H.E. the High Commissioner, and I await his sanction to complete the frontier dispositions.

5. I have reported by cable the advance of the 18th Hussars, two batteries, the 1st Leicester Regiment and the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers from Ladysmith to Glencoe Junction for the protection of the Dundee coalfields and the transfer of the 5th Lancers and 1st King's Royal Rifles from Maritzburg to Ladysmith. No. 10 Mountain Battery, having concluded its practice, also remains near Ladysmith.

6. Arrangements have been made for establishing a rest camp at the remount farm, Stellenbosch, and the companies of the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers which I

propose to send to the front proceed there this week to be mobilised, and to receive their transport and Mounted Infantry ponies. As soon as this move takes place, the entire camp at Wynberg will be evacuated, and will become available as a base hospital, after the necessary alterations have been made.

7. The preparation of an animal account, so far as the Central Remount Office is concerned, has been completed, and the horses and mules have all been brought on charge and accounted for to date.

8. One thousand mules are now in course of shipment from Cape Colony to Natal.

9. The issue of condemned great coats to drivers and leaders as well as of cheap boots, puggarees, and numbered arm badges has been sanctioned.

10. So far as the Lines of Communication are concerned, the general system of organisation for "B" Staff Officers and A.S.C. has been drawn up and will shortly be issued to all concerned.

11. The formation of stations at Kimberley and Orange River Station, as well as of an advanced depôt at De Aar has been begun, and orders have been given to complete the reserve of rations and forage to three months (two months Woolwich supplies and one month local), and at all places contracts for the supply of fresh provisions are being concluded.

12. Arrangements are being made for base stores for units going to the front, and for the accommodation of the details to be left behind.

13. Negotiations are being carried on for the exclusive use of storage for supplies and stores landed ex-transport at Cape Town.

14. Arrangements are being made to complete Colonel Baden-Powell's force to four months reserve of rations in consequence of the difficulties of communication during the wet season.

15. The exact state of the animals purchased and of casualties is shown on a return enclosed in a separate letter.

October 4th, 1899.

I have the honour to report, in continuation of my letter of the 26th ultimo, that on the 30th ultimo the detachments detailed in the table accompanying my report of the 19th ultimo for the occupation of Naauwpoort and Stormberg Junctions left Grahamstown, King Williamstown, and Cape Town, and I have since heard of their arrival at those stations.

2. Yesterday six companies of the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers left for Stellenbosch, where two companies will remain to perform the duties of the rest camp, and four companies and one company M.I., as soon as formed, will proceed to De Aar, where some progress is being made with the formation of a depot.

3. At Kimberley the formation of a town guard has been sanctioned, and already 900 men have been enrolled. His Excellency the High Commissioner has sanctioned the purchase of 200 horses to form two companies of Mounted Infantry from the Volunteers, and the formation of these companies is being proceeded with. The redoubts designed in the defence scheme have been nearly completed, and the Volunteers have been embodied. The Premier Mine has been garrisoned and provisioned for independent defence.

4. To meet the urgent demands of Mafeking two 7-pounder guns belonging to the Cape Police have been sent from Kimberley to Mafeking, where there are already two similar guns. Lieutenant-Colonel Hore's force remains quartered in Mafeking, and so long as the place continues to be threatened by the Boers collected at Lichtenburg, it will be impossible for it to leave the large collection of supplies stored there, without adequate protection.

5. Two armoured trains are now on the line about Mafeking—one is being sent from here to Kimberley to-day, and two more are being prepared for use between Orange River Station, De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg. As the arming and manning of these trains will considerably weaken the garrison of the places, they will only be used in cases of emergency.

6. The engine drivers and railway employees of the Orange Free State, who are mostly British, have announced their intention of retiring into British territory as soon as the regular working of the railways ceases, and I have undertaken to employ these men in our service. I propose to attach them to the 8th Company R.E., and to utilise them on railway work. I have already obtained some of the Free State Railway Staff, who have come out of the country, and I expect that large numbers of them are now leaving their employment.

7. General Sir G. White and staff arrived yesterday morning, and proceeded by mail train in the evening to East London, whence the R.M.S. "Scot" will convey them to Durban. The following special service officers were disembarked here:—

Lieutenant-Colonel Ewart.

Major Haking.

Major Fairholme.

also

Colonel Richardson, C.B.

Lieutenant-Colonel Landon, A.S.C.

Lieutenant Horsboro, A.S.C.

Quartermaster Woods, A.S.C.

1 Warrant Officer, A.S.C.

1 Staff Sergeant, A.S.C.

I propose to utilise the special service officers for the organisation of the ports of disembarkation at Port Elizabeth and East London, and the lines of communication to De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London.

8. In answer to urgent telegrams from Colonel Baden-Powell, his reserve of supplies has been increased to four months' rations for men.

9. A large store has been obtained in the South Jetty

of the Cape Town Docks, and a berth has been reserved for transports in close proximity to it.

10. At the remount dépôt at Stellenbosch there are now 177 horses and 772 mules. 1,000 mules have been despatched to Natal.

819 horses and 1,200 mules are still due on contract.

11. Terms of contract have been drawn up for the hire of ox wagons. The most substantial firm, Julius Weil and Co., do not care to guarantee more than 500 or 600 wagons complete.

October 11th, 1899.

With reference to my letter of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report as follows :-

2. On the 4th instant the s.s. "Gaul" arrived at this port, and in accordance with your telegraphic instructions received the same day, I disembarked from her the 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, and despatched the battalion to the rest camp at Stellenbosch, to be supplied there with transport and mobilisation equipment on South African scale.

3. The following were also disembarked at Cape Town :

No. 9 Company, Army Service Corps,

No. 15 Company, Army Service Corps,

and the following officers : Captain E. T. Ward, Captain Pigott, D.S.O., Lieutenants Duffus, Grose, and Lord, Lieutenants and Quartermasters Law, English, and MacFarlane, and Major Birch, R.A.M. Corps.

4. The Special Service Officers disembarked ex "Tallion Castle" have been disposed of as follows :—Lieut.-Colonel Ewart as Commandant at East London, Major Fairholme as Commandant at Port Elizabeth, Major Haking as Commandant of the advanced dépôt at De Aar.

These officers have all proceeded to their stations.

As I am so weak in Army Service Corps officers and men, I am not able to send staffs to Port Elizabeth and East London to perform B. duties.

5. On the night of the 9th instant the mobilised wing of the 1st Battalion Munster Regiment, left Stellenbosch for Orange River Station, and last night the Mounted Infantry company of this battalion followed.

6. On account of the report received yesterday morning from His Excellency the Governor that a rupture with the S.A. Republic may be expected to-day, immediate instructions were issued yesterday for the 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers to be entrained at Stellenbosch, and to proceed to De Aar. Accordingly, the

battalion was despatched last night. The transport will be entrained at Stellenbosch within the next day or two, and will follow the battalion, which will complete its mobilisation at De Aar. The Mounted Infantry Company will be entrained to-night.

7. I am pushing up stores and supplies to De Aar as fast as possible, and a daily train is being arranged for this service. I am not yet in a position to open dépôts at Naauwpoort or Stormberg owing to the risk of attack, but arrangements for the provision of sidings and erection of sheds are being proceeded with, and as soon as I am satisfied of the security of those places, I shall commence to stock them.

8. A position is being sought south of Stormberg for a remount dépôt. At De Aar a remount dépôt has already been opened.

9. Five armoured trains are being prepared, of which two are now working at Mafeking and one at Kimberley. A fourth will be despatched to-morrow to Stormberg, and the last will be sent to De Aar in about a week.

10. I returned yesterday evening from inspecting the posts at De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg. The position of De Aar renders it little liable to attack, and with an increased garrison it should be safe to equip it as a dépôt as rapidly as possible. Naauwpoort is a good natural position, but its vicinity to Colesberg, and the surrounding disaffection do not justify any increase to the stores at present there, as such addition would only offer temptation.

Stormberg is a fairly good position, but there again the farmers round are most disloyal, and any irruption into the Colony from the Free State might have a disturbing effect locally, so that, until I am in a position to increase the garrison, I consider it would be unwise to risk more than the erection of store sheds.

11. I enclose a table giving the distribution of the troops in Cape Colony, the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and Rhodesia.

Appendix G.

DISTRIBUTION for Border Defence of existing Garrison of Cape Colony, 11th October 1899.

Station.	Commanding Officer.	Royal Artillery.	Royal Engineers.	Infantry.	Mounted Infantry.	Machine Guns, 303.	Army Service Corps.	Royal Army Medical Corps.
Stormberg Junction	Lieut.-Colonel Evans-Gordon.	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr.	One officer, 25 men, 29th Company.	Four companies, 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd Royal Berkshire.	Two from King William's Town.	Detachment Army Service Corps.	Detachment, Royal Army Medical Corps.
Naauwpoort	Major McCracken	One officer, 24 men, and two guns, 9-pr.	One officer, 39 men 29th Company (Headquarters).	Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	Two from Grahamstown.	Detachment	Detachment.
De Aar	Lieut.-Colonel Money. Station S. O. Major Haking.	—	One section 7th Company, one officer, 25 men 29th Company	1st Northumberland Fusiliers four companies, 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	1st Northumberland Fusiliers (received cobs 11th October).	—	—	—
Orange River Bridge	Lieut.-Colonel Kincaid.	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr.	Headquarters, 7th Company.	Four companies 1st Royal North Lancashire.	1st Loyal North Lancashire, 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers (received cobs, 9th October).	Two from Cape Town (manned by Royal Artillery).	Affiliated with Kimberley.	Detachment.
Kimberley, arranging for defence.—Modder River Bridge.	Lieut.-Colonel Keewick.	Five officers, 90 men, six guns 2.5 Diamond Fields, six guns 2.5 R.M.L.	Section 7th Company Artillery Volunteers.	Headquarters, 1st Loyal North Lancashire, Kimberley Regiment 592. Bechuanaland Rifles 609. Town Guard 1,300.	One officer, 20 men 1st Loyal North Lancashire.	One 1st Loyal North Lancashire, six from private sources.	Detachment.	Detachment.
Maifeking	Colonel Powell. Baden-	Four guns, 7-pr., 1.1-pr. Nordenfelt.	—	Maifeking Volunteers	Protectorate Regiment.	Two.	—	—

	Colonel Plumer				Rhodesian ment.	Regi- Two.				
Tuli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East London	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Port Elizabeth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stellenbosch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cape Town	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wynberg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grahamstown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
King William's Town	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fourteen Streams	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Simon's Town	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

October 18th, 1899.

Sir,

I have the honour to report the following events which have occurred since the date of my letter of 11th instant.

2. On the 14th instant, the half battalion of the 2nd Bn. K.O. Yorkshire L.I. from Mauritius was disembarked from the "Powerful," the quarantine regulations having been relaxed by direction of His Excellency the Governor, and was despatched that evening to De Aar.
3. The same day a squadron of the 9th Lancers arrived in the "Nairung," and was despatched that night for Orange River Bridge.
4. Two 15-pr. B.L. Guns, lent by the Prince Alfred's Own Cape Artillery, were sent with this train to reinforce Orange River Bridge.
5. On the 15th a second squadron of the 9th Lancers arrived in the "Nowshera," and was despatched the same evening for Orange River Bridge.
6. On the 15th, at the request of Officer Commanding Orange River Bridge, the 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers were entrained at De Aar, and proceeded to Orange River Station.
7. To-day the "Nevassa," with the third squadron of 9th Lancers arrived, and the mounted portion proceed this evening for Orange River Station. The half, dismounted on account of the loss of horses on the "Wardha," proceeded to Stellenbosch to be remounted.
8. On the 11th, according to the terms of the President of the South African Republic's ultimatum, a state of war was commenced at 5 p.m.
9. On the 12th the wire between Mafeking and Vryburg was cut, and the armoured train which was sent from Mafeking to meet at Vryburg a similar train escorting two 7-pounder R.M.L. guns for Mafeking, was run off the line and captured at Kraaipan. The crew of the train, the two 7-pounders, and probably one or two machine guns were taken by the Boers. The Officer in command, Lieutenant Nesbitt of the Protectorate Regiment, was wounded in the head.
10. On the 14th the wire between Modder River and Kimberley was cut at 11 p.m. The wires between Kimberley and Vryburg were also cut. The railway line between Modder River and Kimberley was broken. From subsequent communication with Kimberley it was ascertained that the armoured train from that place engaged the Boers at Spytfontein on the 15th without suffering any loss, though fired on by artillery, and it is believed that some Boers were hit.
11. On the 15th the Boers occupied Spytfontein, and fortified the neighbouring kopjes.
12. On the 16th, the Boers occupied Windsorton and burned the station and stores; Kimberley water supply was probably intercepted.
13. On the 17th, the Boers occupied Belmont Station at 1 p.m.
14. Communication continues to be maintained with Kimberley by means of runners and horsemen, and it is also hoped to establish a similar connection with Mafeking. Both places are believed to be secure, especially Kimberley, where no serious attack seems imminent. From accounts received through Pretoria it is gathered that the Boers have attacked Mafeking without success.
15. Commandoes are reported to be near Norvals Pont and Aliwal North. It is very important for future operations that our posts at Naauwpoort and Stormberg should be strong enough to resist any attack, and I have therefore asked for the assistance of a Naval contingent at the latter place.
16. The Officer Commanding Orange River Station yesterday destroyed Hope Town road bridge, at the request of the magistrate, as he said it was feared Boer Artillery would cross there. The inhabitants are said to approve of this step.
17. Planking is being laid down on the Orange River bridge, so as to make it passable by artillery and cavalry. When this is completed, and when the troops at that station are reinforced by the three batteries expected this week, I shall have a force of all arms there ready to assist Kimberley and to threaten the retreat of any force which may attempt to invade the Colony by Bethulie or Norvals Pont bridge.
18. Three months' supplies have been put into all the stations occupied, and at De Aar a large supply and store dépôt has been formed.
19. Instructions have been given to Officers Commanding Posts not to allow armoured trains to proceed far without support.
20. The arrangement for establishing disembarkation depôts at Port Elizabeth and East London are proceeding, and I have to-day in an interview with the Railway Department made the necessary arrangements for the simultaneous movement by rail of troops and stores from the three ports of disembarkation to the advanced depôts at De Aar, Naauwpoort, and Stormberg.
21. The distribution of troops is enclosed.

DISTRIBUTION for Border Defence of existing Garrison of Cape Colony, 18th October 1899.

Station.	Commanding Officer.	Cavalry.	Royal Artillery.	Royal Engineers.	Infantry.	Mounted Infantry.	Machine Guns, 303-in.	Army Service Corps.	Royal Army Medical Corps.
Stormberg Junction	Lieut.-Colonel Evans-Gordon.	—	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr. R.M.L.	One officer, 25 men 29th Company.	Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd Royal Berkshire.	Two from King William's Town.	Detachment	Detachment.
Naauwpoort	Major McCracken	—	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr. R.M.L.	One officer, 39 men 29th Company (Headquarters).	Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	Two from Grahamstown.	Detachment	Detachment.
De Aar	Major Haking, Commandant and Station Staff Officer.	—	—	One section 7th Company, Headquarters, 8th Company, one officer, 25 men 29th Company.	2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	1st Northumberland Fusiliers.	—	—	—
Orange River Bridge	Lieut.-Colonel Money, C.B.	9th Lancers, 2½ squadrons.	One officer, 24 men, two guns, 9-pr. R.M.L., two guns, 15-pr. B.L. (from P.A.O. Cape Artillery).	Headquarters, 7th Company.	Four companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire, 1st Northumberland Fusiliers; four companies Royal Munster Fusiliers.	1st Loyal North Lancashire, 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers (received cobs 9th October).	Two from Cape Town (manned by Royal Artillery).	Affiliated with Kimberley.	Detachment.
Mafeking	Colonel Baden-Powell	—	Two guns, 7-pr., one 1-pr. Nordenfält.	—	Mafeking Volunteers	Protectorate Regiment.	Four.	—	—
Kimberley (arranging for defence Modder River Bridge).	Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich.	—	Five officers, 90 men, six guns, 2.5-in. R.M.L., Diamond Fields Artillery Volunteers, six guns, 2.5-in. R.M.L.	Section 7th Company.	Headquarters, and four companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire, Kimberley Regiment, Bechuanaland Rifles 609, Town Guard 1,300.	One officer, 20 men 1st Loyal North Lancashire.	One 1st Loyal North Lancashire, six from privatesources.	Detachment	Detachment.
Tuli	Colonel Plumer	—	—	—	—	Rhodesian Regiment.	Two.	—	—

Appendix G.

Distribution for Border Defence of existing Garrison of Cape Colony, 18th October 1899—continued.

Station.	Commanding Officer.	Cavalry.	Royal Artillery.	Royal Engineers.	Infantry.	Mounted Infantry.	Machine Guns, '303.	Army Service Corps.	Royal Army Medical Corps.
Queenstown	—	—	—	—	Rifle Volunteers.	—	—	—	—
East London	(Provisionally) Lieut.-Colonel Ewart.	—	—	—	Kaffrarian Rifles.	—	—	—	—
Port Elizabeth	(Provisionally) Major Fairholme, C.M.G.	—	—	—	Prince Alfred's Volunteer Guard.	—	—	—	—
Stollenbosch	Lieut.-Colonel Evans	—	—	—	Two companies Royal Munster Fusiliers.	Remount Depot	—	15th Company.	—
Cape Town	—	Depôt, 9th Lancers.	Detachment 14 Wn., Detachment 23 Wn. P.A.O. Cape Artillery. 4 Guns 12-pr. B.L. Cape Garrison Artillery.	Depôt, 8th Company. (Railway Company.)	Detachment 1st Royal North Lancashire, Detachment 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers, Detachment 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, Detachment 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, Cape Town Highlanders, D.E.O. Volunteer Rifles.	—	—	9th Company and detachment.	Detachment.
Wynberg	Captain Atkinson	—	—	—	Detachment 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers.	—	—	41st Company	Detachment.
Grahamstown	Second Lieutenant Lucas.	—	—	—	Detachment 2nd Royal Berkshire, 1st City Volunteers.	—	—	—	—
King William's Town.	Second Lieutenant Bassett.	—	—	—	Detachment 2nd Royal Berkshire.	—	—	—	—
Fourteen Streams	—	—	—	—	Cape Police	—	—	—	—
Simon's Town	Captain Lightowlers, R.A.	—	Detachment	Detachment.	—	—	—	—	—

October 26th, 1899.

I have the honour to report the following events which have occurred since the date of my letter of 18th instant.

1. During the past week the remainder of the 9th Lancers have been conveyed to Orange River, the last squadron being mounted partly on the horses saved from the "Wardha," and partly on ponies from Stellenbosch Remount Depot. I trust that remounts may soon arrive from Australia to replace the latter.

2. A force of 17 Officers and 328 marines and bluejackets, with two 12-pounder Q.F. guns, has been sent to Stormberg and has arrived there safely. This post may now be regarded as reasonably secure.

3. Two armoured trains are now working south of the Orange River, one between De Aar and Orange River Bridge and one in the vicinity of Stormberg.

4. The lines East London-Stormberg, and Port Elizabeth-Nauwpoort, are being reconnoitred with a view of the concentration of some of the Volunteers recently called out at the most vulnerable points.

5. The Volunteer Force now under arms consists of—

- (a) The Prince Alfred's Own Cape Artillery, one battery with six 15-pounder B.L. guns, of which two have been lent to Orange River Bridge.

The Cape Garrison Artillery.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles.

The Cape Highlanders.

The Cape Medical Staff.

This force is all concentrated at Cape Town, and is performing garrison duty there.

- (b) The Prince Alfred's Guard at Port Elizabeth.

- (c) The Kaffrarian Rifles at East London.

- (d) The 1st City Volunteers at Grahamstown.

- (e) The Queen's Town Rifle Volunteers at Queens-town.

- (f) The Frontier Mounted Rifles at Barkley, Cathcart, Molteno, and Indwe.

6. This force, except the part at Cape Town, will be used to guard exposed points on the lines of communication from Port Elizabeth and East London to their advanced depôts, till it can be relieved by regular troops.

7. No men in Government employ have been called out, unless the head of the department furnishes a certificate that he is able to dispense with their services.

8. The Border Regiment arrived in the "Sumatra" on the 22nd, and was dispatched at once to De Aar, where it was to relieve the 2nd Battalion King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), which was ordered to proceed to Orange River Bridge. On arrival at De Aar, however, instructions were received directing that it should be placed at the disposal of the General Officer Commanding

Natal, and accordingly the Battalion will be entrained for East London to-night, where the "Sumatra" has been sent to meet it. Appendix G.

9. I had intended to concentrate both the 2nd Battalion King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry) and the Rifle Brigade at Orange River Station, but owing to the emergency in Natal this move has been cancelled.

10. On the 24th the "Gaika" arrived with the Ammunition Column. The section for Cape Colony was disembarked, and proceeded by rail to Stellenbosch the same day to pick up transport. The remainder of the column, in accordance with the wish of the General Officer Commanding Natal, proceeded direct for Durban this morning.

11. All officers for Natal arriving per R.M.S. "Mexican" transhipped here to the "Gaika."

12. The "Zayathla," with the 67th and half 75th batteries Royal Field Artillery arrived yesterday and proceeded the same evening for Orange River station.

13. I have continued to fill up De Aar Depot, but no great quantity of supplies has yet been sent to the other two places, and as I learn that the Orange Free State is under the impression that no advance by these lines is contemplated, I am loth to do anything to call attention to them.

14. The bridges at Bethulie and Norval's Pont remain untouched, and no movements of importance are reported on this side.

15. Mafeking was reported all well on the 21st, and Kimberley on the 25th.

16. The Boers have proclaimed a Republic in the Vryburg district, and in parts of Griqualand West.

17. Seizures have been made in several places of goods consigned to the South Africa Republic, Orange Free State, or to private individuals in those Republics, and I have been in communication with His Excellency the High Commissioner as to our right with reference to contraband of war.

The Attorney General of Cape Colony has given it as his opinion that goods consigned before a state of war was proclaimed, as well as goods consigned to private individuals, are liable to stoppage but not seizure.

A ruling on this point is necessary, and I may at the same time mention that the date of the proclamation of a state of war was some days after actual hostilities had been commenced by the South African Republic.

18. The number of Reservists called out is 212, of whom 185 have joined. Of those absent six at least are in Mafeking and Kimberley, the notices of four have been returned, and several are still expected from distant stations.

Five Cavalry Reservists, 11 R.A., and 74 Infantry men have been sent to join units at Orange River Station, 2 R.A., 10 R.E., and 19 Infantry to Stormberg, 16 R.E. and 21 Infantry to Nauwpoort, and 10 R.E. to De Aar.

A distribution of the troops is enclosed.

Appendix G.

DISTRIBUTION State, 26th October 1899.

Station.	Units.	Depôts	REMARKS.
Stormberg Junction	Naval Brigade - - - Detachment Royal Artillery - Detachment Royal Engineers - 4 companies 2nd Royal Berk- shire. Mounted Infantry Company 2nd Royal Berkshire. Details Departmental Corps.	— — —	2 guns, 12-pr. Q.F. 2 guns, 9 pr. R.M.L. 2 guns, '303.
Nasauwpoort - -	Detachment Royal Artillery - Detachment Royal Engineers - 4 companies 2nd Royal Berk- shire. Mounted Infantry Company 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. Corps of Guides.	— —	2 guns, 9-pr. R.M.L. 2 guns, '303.
De Aar - - -	8th Company Royal Engineers Detachment 7th Company Royal Engineers. Detachment 29th Company Royal Engineers. 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. 41st Company Army Service Corps. Details Departmental Corps. Remount Establishment.	— —	3 officers, 22 non-commis- sioned officers and men, "B" Company Volunteer M.S.C. from Cape Town.
Orange River Bridge	3 squadrons 9th Lancers - Detachment Royal Artillery. Detachment 7th Company Royal Engineers. 4 companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire. 4 companies 1st Royal Mun- ster Fusiliers. 1st Northumberland Fusiliers. Mounted Infantry Company 1st Northumberland Fusi- liers. Mounted Infantry Company 1st Loyal North Lancashire. Mounted Infantry Company 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers.	— — —	2 guns, '303, from Cape Town, manned by Royal Artillery. 2 guns, 9-pr. R.M.L. 2 guns, 15-pr. B.L. from P.A.O. Cape Artillery.
Mafeking - -	Mafeking Volunteers - - Protectorate Regiment - - British South Africa Police - Cape Police.	— —	4 guns, '303, 4 guns, 7-pr. One 1-pr. Nordenfeldt.
Kimberley - -	Detachment Royal Artillery - 1 section 7th Company Royal Engineers. 4 companies 1st Loyal North Lancashire. Detachment Mounted Infantry Company 1st Loyal North Lancashire. Diamond Fields Artillery Volunteers. Kimberley Regiment - - Bechuanaland Rifles. Town Guard. Details Departmental Corps.	— — —	1 gun, '303. 6 guns, '303, from private sources. 12 guns, 2½ R.M.L.
Tuli - - -	Rhodesian Regiment - -	—	2 guns '303.
Queenstown -	Rifle Volunteers - - - 5th Company Army Service Corps.	—	
East London - -	Kaffrarian Rifles - - -	—	

Distribution State, 26th October 1899—*continued*.

Appendix C.

Station.	Units.	Depôts.	REMARKS.
Port Elizabeth -	Prince Alfred's Volunteer Guard.	—	
Stellenbosch -	Mounted Infantry Company 1st Border Regiment. Detachment 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers. 15th Company Army Service Corps. Details Departmental Corps.	Remount.	
Cape Town -	Detachment Royal Garrison Artillery. Detachment 1st Northumberland Fusiliers. Detachment 1st Loyal North Lancashire. Detachment 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers. 9th Company Army Service Corps. Details Departmental Corps - Cape Garrison Artillery Volunteers. P.A.O. Cape Artillery Volunteers. Cape Town Highlander Volunteers. D.E.O. Volunteer Rifles. "B" Company Volunteer Medical Staff Corps.	9th Lancers. 8th Company Royal Engineers.* 1st Northumberland Fusiliers. 1st Loyal North Lancashire. 1st Border Regiment - 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers.	*Employed at various places on line. 4 guns, 15-pr. B.L.
Wynberg -	Detachment 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers. Details Departmental Corps.		
Grahamstown -	1st City Volunteers -	Half-Battalion 2nd Royal Berkshire.	At Naauppoort.
King William's Town	—	Half-Battalion 2nd Royal Berkshire.	At Stormberg.
Fourteen Streams -	(Cape Police.)		
Simon's Town -	Detachment Royal Artillery Detachment Royal Engineers. Detachment Cape Garrison Artillery.	—	
Cathcart -	Frontier Mounted Rifles.		

November 2nd, 1899.

I have the honour to report as follows:—

1. In accordance with paragraph 5 of my last week's letter, the Border Regiment was despatched from De Aar to East London, and embarked there in the "Sumatra" on the 28th ultimo.

2. The two 6·3-in. howitzers on siege carriages, referred to in Secretary of State's cablegram of the 25th ultimo, were obtained on loan from the Colonial Government, and shipped at East London for Natal, together with 900 rounds of ammunition, on the 28th ultimo.

3. On the 24th ult. a telegram was received from Colonel Kekewich announcing that with a force of two companies 1st Battalion L.N. Lancashire Regiment, two 2·5-in. guns, and the Mounted Corps recently raised in Kimberley, he had advanced against a Boer commando at Windsorton, and had driven it from the position occupied with considerable loss, the Commandant, Botha, being killed. The Garrison of Kimberley is reported to be greatly elated at this successful encounter. The details of our losses have already been communicated to the Secretary of State by cablegram.

4. The 15-pounder ammunition for the column under Brevet Major Young, 2,190 rounds, was, in accordance with telegram from the War Office, shipped for Natal, together with 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition 303-in. on the 29th October

5. On the 27th ult. the "Braemar Castle" arrived with the Army Service Corps Companies for the Army Corps, and Lines of Communication. These companies were at once forwarded to the landing places of the divisions of the Army Corps, to arrange positions for organising the transport of the brigades to which they belong.

6. On the 31st ult. General Sir R. Buller, v.c., g.c.b., k.c.m.g., landed and assumed command in chief of the troops in South Africa.

7. The last report from Kimberley is dated 29th ultimo. The forces there had then 70 days' bread and meat and 42 days' forage. Every attempt has been made to collect all supplies in the neighbourhood.

There were 20 days' supply of water in the reservoir, but water was being pumped in from the Premier Mine, and it was considered that this supply would be sufficient.

8. Arrangements have been made for patrolling the railway line by employees of the railway company, and these are supported by military posts at Hex River Bridge, Fraserburg Road, and Beaufort West on the Western System, Cookhouse and Witmoos on the Central, and Molteno and Sterkstroom on the Eastern.

9. Information has been received to-day that Colesburg has been occupied by a Boer commando from the Orange Free State, and that the telegraph office has been seized by them and two sappers captured.

Cathcart	De Aar	East London	Grahamstown	Frontier Mounted Rifles	11	218	229	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	At Bailey, Molteno, Indwe.	Cathcart
				Staff	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.	22	796	818	5	-	-	137*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
				Detachment Royal Engineers.	4	129	133	4	-	-	28*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Detachment Army Ordnance Corps.	1	10	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				18th Battery Royal Field Artillery	9	173	182	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Brigade Division Staff																
				Army Service Corps Supply	2	21	23	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				41st Company Army Service Corps.	2	54	56	-	-	-	745	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
				Royal Army Medical Corps	6	25	31	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				75th Battery Royal Field Artillery.	2	78	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				TOTAL	49	1,287	1,336	11	330	912	-	35	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
				Staff	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Detachment Army Service Corps	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Detachment Army Ordnance Corps.	2	59	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Detachment Highland Light Infantry.	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Kafrarian Rifles	12	373	385	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				TOTAL	19	434	453	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Detachment Berkshire Regiment	1	15	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				1st City Volunteers	10	234	244	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				TOTAL	11	249	260	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Carried forward																

Distribution for Border Defence of existing Garrison, Cape Colony—continued.

Station.	Units.	Officers, Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.			Animals.				Vehicles.		Guns.								Natives, &c.			Remarks
		Officers.	Warrant, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.	Total all Ranks.	Horses, Officers.	Horses, Public.	Mules.	Oxen.	Wagons.	Carts.	15-pr. B.L.	12-pr. B.L.	9-pr. R.M.L.	7-pr. R.M.L.	3-pr. Q.F.	2-5-in R.M.L.	Field.	Machine .303.	Drivers.	Leaders.	Conductors.	
Frazerburg	Brought forward	3	95	98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kimberley	D.E.O. Volunteer Rifles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Detachment Royal Artillery	5	90	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1st Section Royal Engineers	1	50	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	4 companies Loyal North Lancashire.	11	440	451	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Details Army Service Corps, &c.	2	9	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Diamond Field Artillery	3	99	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Kimberley Regiment	25	489	514	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Town Guard	-	-	2,000†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Mounted Corps‡	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	47	1,177	3,224	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	7	-	-	-	-
King William's Town.	Detachment Royal Berkshire	1	45	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mafeking	Bechuanaland Rifles	3	59	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Protectorate Regiments	14	413	427	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Town Guards and British South Africa Police.	42	1,367	1,409	-	575	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	59	1,839	1,898	-	575	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* 6 from private sources.
† About 2,000.
‡ Strength no known.

* 6 from private sources.

† About 2,000.
‡ Strength no known.

[illegible]

Distribution for Border Defence of existing Garrison, Cape Colony—continued.

Station.	Units.	Officers, Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.			Animals.				Vehicles.		Guns.								Natives, &c.			Remarks.
		Officers.	Warrant, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.	Total all Ranks.	Horses, Officers.	Horses, Public.	Mules.	Oxen.	Wagons.	Carts.	15-pr. B.L.	12-pr. B.L.	9-pr. R.M.L.	7-pr. R.M.L.	3-pr. Q.F.	2-5-in. R.M.L.	Field.	Machine .303.	Drivers.	Leaders.	Conductors.	
Simonstown	Brought forward	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Detachment Royal Field Artillery	1	34	35	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	
	Staff	-	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Royal Engineers	-	7	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Cape Garrison Artillery, &c.	5	91	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	TOTAL	6	137	143	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	
Stellenbosch	2nd Spec. Ammunition Column	3	76	79	-	78	110	-	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Detachment Royal Munster Fusiliers.	5	188	193	3	-	67	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43*	-	1	
	15 Coy. Army Service Corps	2	36	38	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24*	-	1	
	Remount Establishment	2	34	36	4	433	302	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	357*	-	11	
	Details Departmental Corps	2	9	11	1	-	-	-	28	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40*	-	2	
	Army Service Corps	29	478	507	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	TOTAL	43	821	864	8	511	479	-	43	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	464	-	15	

*Drivers and Leaders.

	18	338	356	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6 Civilians.
Stormberg -																					
Naval Brigade - - -	18	338	356	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Detachment Royal Artillery -	1	26	27	-	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	8	5	1	-	-
Royal Engineer Staff, 29 Coy. and Armoured Train.	3	60	63	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-
Four companies 2nd Royal Berkshire.	12	562	574	5	229	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	16	16	1	-	-
Royal Army Medical Corps -	1	16	17	1	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-	-
Army Service Corps - - -	1	10	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL - - -	36	1,012	1,048	10	324	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	32	23	3	-	-
Tuli - - -																					
Rhodesian Regiment - - -	13	338	351	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wynberg -																					
Detachment Royal Munster Fusiliers, &c.	1	68	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Detachment Royal Army Medical Corps.	6	90	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Army Medical Service Corps -	-	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL - - -	7	173	180	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total in Cape Colony - - -	543	13,616	16,159	84	3,215	,255	-	152	88	-	-	4	-	12	28	21	1,285	145	50	-	-

PRÉCIS OF EVIDENCE BY LIEUT.-GENERAL THE LORD METHUEN, G.C.B., C.M.G., K.C.V.O.

(See Questions 14,135-14,469.)

"Inadequacy of force."

From the information in the possession of Sir Redvers Buller I gathered from him that, so far as he could judge, I had no reason for anticipating a determined resistance from the enemy in any very large numbers between Orange River and Kimberley, though, probably, they would elect to fight on the Modder.

My movements were to be made with as great celerity as possible, because Kimberley seemed to be in straits according to Mr. Rhodes, and because there was the danger of reinforcements coming from Natal to the enemy directly they heard of my advance. I had to relieve Kimberley, throw in a large supply of provisions, clear out the non-combatants, and return to Orange River.

To fulfil these conditions it would not have been an easy matter to march through the country with a large force, because of the limited amount of mule transport, I had no ox transport, and the small supply of water in the country I had to traverse. For instance, after the exhausting day of the Graspan fight there was only one well with a limited supply of water and a pond of muddy water for my entire force of men, horses, and mules.

As matters turned out, the enemy made a determined resistance from the first, and as their force consisted entirely of mounted men they could on the defence change their position with the utmost rapidity, changing thereby a flank into a frontal attack; notably so at Graspan.

In such an open country, and against a force so composed, I consider my mounted force of one Cavalry regiment and 120 mounted Colonials inadequate. A battery of Horse Artillery would have proved of great value.

The horses were soon quite worn out, for they were in poor condition when they left Orange River, being dependent entirely on their insufficient ration; there was no grazing at Orange River.

The above remarks refer to the time between leaving Orange River and encamping at Modder River.

As regards the Magersfontein reverse, without wishing to rake up more than I can help, the disputed question as to whether, or no, my force should have marched round the enemy's left flank, I consider that such a movement, entailing, as it did, quitting my line of communications, leaving the strong ridge of which Magersfontein formed the key in the enemy's hands, would have been unjustifiably hazardous. My reason for saying so was because my force was not sufficiently mobile, nor was my mounted force, augmented by one Cavalry regiment, adequate. The question of transport would have been a matter of difficulty, supposing my force had been adequate for the task set it.

After Lord Roberts gave me the Kimberley command, until he reached Pretoria, my force was adequate.

"Shooting."

"Regulars."

The shooting of the Regular troops was conducted under exceptional difficulties on account of the clearness of the atmosphere, and because the enemy offered no good target.

But my opinion, gained from my experience during the Tirah and South African campaigns, is that the shooting of our Infantry is not worthy of the accuracy and long range powers possessed by the present rifle.

No money can be so well spent by the nation on the Army as it can be on musketry practice.

I do not lay the blame on the soldier for his want of precision in aiming, or his lack of knowledge in judging distance correctly. I blame ourselves because we have set far too much stress on the "figure of merit" in the different battalions in the Army, which, in the opinion of many, would be far better abolished. We require to devote far more time, money, and intelligent interest on musketry practice, specially at movable targets. We should see that the soldier, whilst shooting, takes care he does not offer a target to the enemy. Good shooting, accurate judging of

distance, and intelligent use of ground are the very essence of success in modern warfare, and well worth the purchase at a heavy price.

The shooting of the Militia. When I say that in many cases the men had not even gone through their musketry practice, and were recruits in a musketry sense, I do not think I need go any further.

The shooting of the Imperial Yeomanry. I do not suppose any men would be more surprised than the Yeomen were I to say their marksmanship was satisfactory.

Anyone who has any knowledge of Volunteers and Yeomen will know how very seldom you find the combination of a man who is a good horseman and also a proficient with a rifle.

We have now to make the Yeomen know that his riding powers are of little value unless he is at any rate a fair shot.

The shooting of the Colonials from the Cape, Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania varied very much, but in some corps was decidedly good. Making good use of ground came natural to them. Although the Colonials from Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania joined me later on in the campaign, it is as well to include them in my evidence. As soon as the weak men were weeded out, and the troops were in condition, there was no question as to the men marching well. I cannot ever recollect the men not being ready to do more than I asked them to perform. I gladly include the Militia and the "Volunteer companies" in this statement. As long as the men are well fed and taken care of by their officers, one need not fear stragglers. I except as a rule the men of Section D from the above remarks, as they fell out, and we left a good many behind us at different places.

I do not venture an opinion on the Cavalry soldier. As regards the Yeomanry of the first contingent, I think on the whole their horsemanship was quite satisfactory.

As regards the Colonial corps, the rider and horse were one.

The Artillery were the best horsemasters in my force.

The Cavalry next.

The Yeomen and Colonials seemed at first to have an idea I had an unlimited supply of horses always ready for them at a moment's notice. After I made them march on foot for some little time they seemed to realise the value of riding, and in time became fair horsemasters.

We have in peace time to make the Colonial and Yeoman understand what a horse can do if properly tended, for at present they have very little idea of saving a horse or nursing a tender back.

The Boers taught us the advantage of narrow, deep trenches, the line being scarcely visible. We were at first too apt to show our line of defence.

Our men had not much idea of selecting sites for entrenchments, or using configuration of ground to conceal themselves; the officers were not strong on this point. This is the fault of our peace training, and the want of suitable ground for practising entrenching.

The Boers and Colonials made use of ground instinctively, probably from living in country away from towns, and many of them accustomed to stalking game.

As I have already said, we have plenty to learn in this respect.

In the Guards very fine.

In the Regulars very fair.

In the Militia fair in some battalions, indifferent in others. My remarks are limited up to the time the troops reached Pretoria.

Militia.

Imperial Yeomanry.

Colonials.

Marching.

Horsemen and ship.

Horsemasters, Artillery, Cavalry.

Yeoman and Colonials.

"Intrenchment and cover."

Cover.

Physical.

Guards, Line.

Militia.

In the Yeomanry of the first contingent the physique and stamina varied greatly, which fact I assume accounts for the large number who went home early in the war. A large percentage of those who found their way into hospital were either not strong enough or energetic enough to risk a second venture on the veldt. There was a very marked improvement in this respect in the second contingent of Yeomanry, for they did their best to avoid going into hospital, and then rejoined without delay. It is only fair to those men in the 1st Yeomanry who stayed out the whole of their time, many at very great self-sacrifice, and saw the really hard work dating from the time we left Krugersdorp in July, 1900, to make this remark, and also because in the event of the Yeomanry being called upon to serve in any future campaign it is as well to bear in mind this abnormally large wastage in war.

With the exception of the objects of the above remarks, I can conceive no troops possessed of higher morale than the men whom I had the honour to command throughout the campaign, and I hope I may not be out of order if I include the second contingent of Yeomanry, the "Volunteer companies," and the Volunteers in the other branches, and the Rhodesian Police in these remarks, all of whom served under me in the latter part of the war.

The Cavalry soldier. What struck me in comparing him with the Yeoman or Colonial was the lack of individual initiative. To give an example of what I mean: I was marching through the Marico district, living from hand to mouth. I noticed some nosebags of the Cavalry whilst on the march empty, although the Yeomen and Colonials had their's all full of mealies. The two latter required no telling; the Cavalry soldier, on the contrary, had probably received no definite instructions, he had not been trained to look out for himself, and used his own intelligence. He is dependent on his officer or non-commissioned officer, and if he finds himself alone he gets into difficulties.

The shrewdest men I have ever had to deal with are the Colonials; anything they do not know is not worth knowing. They were quite the Boer's equal in everything but courage, in which quality they excelled him greatly.

The Yeomanry gained in military knowledge to a surprising extent during the campaign. They bought their experience rather expensively at first, but I could place implicit reliance in them after a short time. This good result was due to their individual intelligence, their independence, and the confidence they, with justice, placed on the leading of many of their officers.

The Royal Engineer fitted himself into any job, seemed theoretically and practically well educated for work on service, and it made no difference whether the officer was by his side or not.

I question whether there is very much room for improvement in the gunner as a fighting machine. Most of my time in action was spent with a battery, and I give the officers the utmost credit for the fine fighting soldier they have formed out of the same material supplied to the Infantry. The gunner thinks of nothing but his horses and gun, and there is little more he can be taught about either.

The Regimental Officer.

A very great improvement has been shown of late years in the knowledge possessed and the interest taken in his profession by the regimental officer.

No doubt there is much more to be done. If they have shortcomings let us be fair, and not lay all the blame on them, but admit frankly the shortcomings belong to our system, and sometimes are our own. You cannot make bricks without straw, and can anything have been more disheartening to a zealous officer than to find himself in command of a company reduced from various causes to a unit not worth commanding? Added to this, he often enough finds himself restricted to ground quite inadequate or unadapted for tactical instruction.

The best young officers I have ever met were serving in native regiments in India, and why? Because they had commands in which they could take interest, plenty of ground for practice, and occupying positions of responsibility. It is this system which establishes the keenness of Continental armies, and if we wish

to stimulate emulation in our regimental officers assuredly the remedy lies in ourselves.

I hold no brief for them, but they have been my best friends, and the more intelligent work I have given them, the more I have forced them to be independent, and not to rest on their seniors for support, the better and keener soldiers they were for it.

Whether the double company system would not be a wise innovation, considering our small companies, I have for many years thought worth consideration, and also whether you might not endeavour to strengthen the territorial system by placing, so far as possible, officers in the regiments, Militia and Regulars, belonging to their own counties.

It has been stated that officers cannot draw up a report. My experience on service does not bear out that statement. From the time I left Orange River to the time I left Modder River to take up my command at Kimberley the reports and the sketches were as clear and comprehensive as they could well be under the conditions of modern warfare, i.e., the difficulties entailed by smokeless powder and long range fire. Later on in the war the short reports sent me from the front were seldom misleading.

What is required is not a well-finished sketch and a verbose report, but a rapid sketch, the situation described in as few words as possible, in a clear hand.

I have already spoken about the training of the Infantry.

Musketry training all the year round, intelligent seeking of cover, a sufficiently large unit to give an officer interest in his command, and ample space on which to work. Given these conditions, let every opportunity be offered to the best officer to see his way to promotion as a reward for his zeal and ability.

The Artillery officer, quite apart from his thorough military education at Woolwich, shows the good result of having an independent command. As a major he has a self-contained unit in the battery, and the three subalterns the same in their three sections, hence a very efficient body of officers.

The great disadvantage a General labours under in our Army is going on service with a staff strange to him, though in the Army Corps system this will be rectified. The Staff.

It is essential, if a General is to be well served and to have his brain free to think out the general scheme, that he should be able with confidence to leave all details in the hands of his staff. For this reason it is essential the Staff officers should have passed through the Staff College, or else have had a thorough practical experience of Staff work on active service or in time of peace. To place any regimental officer, however capable, without the above qualifications in a position of trust on the Staff is unfair to himself, and likely to prove of danger to the country. More can be made of the fine training given at the Staff College than at present. The officers who go there should be manly, practical men, and more care exercised in shutting out the College to men who know everything, but can do nothing. There is a feeling now that if once the P.S.C. is gained this is a certain pass for employment, whereas it should be no such thing. Only the best men should be selected, and more men should be encouraged to go there, so that there should be a larger choice to select from. Unquestionably, during the campaign many regimental officers with inadequate training filled Staff billets, which would have been far better filled had we possessed a larger reserve of passed Staff College officers than we have at present.

Then again it should be understood that the place of Professor at the Staff College should be a stepping-stone to high Staff appointments; they should be men admittedly leaders in the field, as well as men of sound theoretical knowledge; men whose value is known throughout the Army. Far more care should be taken that an officer goes back to regimental duty from Staff employment; "once on the Staff, always on the Staff" means injury to the man and the Service.

I speak with some knowledge of the Staff College, because I was allowed as a full colonel to attend the second year's course as a Volunteer.

A.B. No remarks, except that they were very ample and of very good quality.

C. I knew of none.

D. The quality of the horses has been reported on by the Commission on "Remount," and I do not think I can say more.

Appendix H.

4. Supplies of ammunition. Equipment, Food, and Forage.

Appendix H. I do not see I can give any information of value, as it is a big question. If the Commission would name any special points I might be able to answer them.

5. Land Transport.

I was quite satisfied with the Medical Staff Corps. The new and sweeping changes were recognised as necessary, and should give the Army an efficient Medical Staff Corps. The civilian surgeons, fresh from the hospitals, and up to all modern requirements, were of great value. I should judge that their services should be utilised in any future campaigns.

6. Adequacy of Medical and Engineer Services.

The orderlies were not always good, but we are inclined to forget a large number were makeshifts from the Regulars and Militia.

I have seen more than my share of sisters and nurses, and the Army owe them a very deep debt of gratitude.

The Engineer service was too weak during the latter part of the campaign, being supplemented by natives, but was always very efficient.

I know the Artillery officers will repudiate my statement, but I cannot think our field gun equalled the Creuzot in range, nor do I think we found the range as quickly or accurately as the enemy.

The Pom-pom was of value, very light, it could easily accompany a mounted force. It did not, perhaps, do great execution, but it frightened the enemy.

The Lyddite shell did not come up to its reputation, but I always took one howitzer with me in the hills, as it terrified the enemy more than any other arm.

We had no reason to complain of the accuracy or range of our rifle, though the mechanism and general finish of the Mauser are superior.

The Maxim never had a good chance, for the only occasion when it would have been of value, i.e., at Tweefontein, I had none.

METHUEN, Lieut.-General.

29th January, 1903.

APPENDIX I.

Appendix I.

PRECIS OF EVIDENCE BY LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR A. HUNTER, K.C.B., D.S.O.

(See Questions 14470-14687.)

Edinburgh, 29th January, 1903.

Sir,—Your letter of 1st January warns me to be ready to give evidence about February 13th, and calls for a précis of evidence I am prepared to give.

Before I proceed to answer categorically the points on which you seek information, let me preface my remarks with a short personal explanation, so that Lord Elgin, and those labouring with him, may understand when and why I went to South Africa:—

As early as June 4th, 1899, when I held a first-class district command at Quetta, Baluchistan, India, I was told by telegram that I was designated to be "Chief of the Staff" to General Sir Redvers Buller, who was to be Commander-in-Chief in South Africa in the event of war.

I sailed from Bombay with part of the Indian Brigade on the 21st September, 1899, and landed at Durban 5th October, 1899. General Sir Redvers Buller was expected at Capetown about 29th October, 1899, to assume supreme command in South Africa. General Sir George White was expected at Durban on 6th October, 1899, the day after I landed. Sir Redvers' orders were for me to attach myself to Sir George White as a temporary measure, acquaint myself with the condition, distribution, supply, transport, etc., of the forces in Natal (Sir George White's command) and leave Sir George White in time to join him (Sir Redvers) at Capetown on his arrival.

I proceeded to Pietermaritzburg 6th October, early and there met Major-General Sir Penn Symons. I stayed at Government House with his Excellency Hon. Sir Walter Hely Hutcheson, and learnt from him and Penn Symons the actual state of affairs and the preparedness of the local troops of the Colony for war. Sir George White arrived at Pietermaritzburg 7th October; I acted as his Chief of Staff (and never joined Sir Redvers) till after the relief of Ladysmith, when on 7th March, 1900, I was appointed to the command of Tenth Division. On 5th April, 1900, I was ordered with Tenth Division to Cape Colony, and on 19th April received from Lord Roberts, at Bloemfontein, orders to proceed to Kimberley (Tenth Division ordered to Cape Town, myself to Bloemfontein), and organise the column for the relief of Mafeking. On 3rd May, 1900, I started the relief column for Mafeking from Barkley West, and crossed the Vaal River at Windserton with the only three battalions of infantry of my division yet arrived, and my artillery, to draw as many as I could on to the top of me, and let Colonel Mahon, commanding the Mafeking column, get as clear a start as possible.

I fought at Rooidam 5th May, 1900, got to Fourteen Streams 7th May, 1900, completed the railway deviation bridge and entered the Transvaal 15th May, 1900; Mafeking was relieved 17th May, 1900. I repaired the railway to Maribogo Pan, capturing Taunings and Vryburg, occupied that line, re-occupied Mafeking. I take it it is no concern of the Commission to know that original ideas were changed as to my moves. Occupied Lichenburg 3rd June, 1900; Lord Roberts occupied Pretoria 5th June, 1900.

The Commission are, by the terms of Reference, limited in their inquiry to the last quoted date.

In quoting dates, I believe, but would not swear, I quote correctly.

TERMS OF REFERENCE.

Military Preparations for the War in South Africa.

Before outbreak I was in India. I had nothing to do with the preparation; a scheme was issued on 28th August, 1899, by Quartermaster-General in India, under orders of Commander-in-Chief, for an Indian contingent; I was given a copy, which I have.

Transport by Sea.—No connection with it. I have remarks to offer—

Taking the points in your confidential memorandum, I will now answer them in brief. I have already told you how I was employed during the time covered by the inquiry.

1. I sent in my official diary, a very complete one; Sir George White took it with all Ladysmith records; my private diary is now my only *aide memoire*. I kept a fairly complete record of my views and those given by others as to the adequacy in point of strength of the forces in the field, etc. It would be simpler to state them than to write them. I wish to be as careful as possible, and to avoid saying whatever I may, as those who differed from me are some of them dead. I will answer whatever I am asked, and hope my motive for not writing in full here will be understood.

2. *Shooting Capability.*—Shooting is greatly a matter of eyesight and practice; town-bred men naturally see worse than country-bred men, specially than hill-men.

Practice is essential; no stranger in a game country is as good as when his eye is practised to light and background. Making allowance for these things, the capability of the British soldier to shoot well is first-rate.

Marching qualities excellent.

Horsemanship good.

Horsemastership.—It depends on where the theatre of war is; in Europe I should opine our horsemastership would stand the test well. South Africa offers conditions unknown, except in parts of Canada and Australia.

Intrenchment and Cover.—Our men are clever with pick and shovel, and we soon learn what cover means with the lead flying about.

General Physique.—We shall never have an army fairly representative of the physique of the Empire till we have conscription, or pay soldiers as good artisans and something over.

Morale.—A1.

Intelligence.—Considering how long the School Board has operated, the average intelligence should be better, so far as education goes. So far as **animal cunning**, woodcraft, eyesight, and hearing, etc., go, we suffer from the defects inherent in a town-bred civilised race, but no more, if as much, as other similar races. Naturally, the faculties and fighting wits of everybody improved with prolonged experience on active service.

Suggestions for Future Training of the Men.—(a.) I advocate training men during peace over large tracts of varied country under experienced officers, who are neither too fat nor too old to "live" with them. I mean by "living," to keep with them. (b.) I suggest making manoeuvres much more practical; have sudden mobilisations and expeditions over sea, i.e., to Ireland, Isle of Man, Orkney. (c.) Non-commissioned officers might be specially trained, i.e., a Staff College for non-commissioned officers. (d.) I would pay men (pay every soldier a living wage and the rest extra) according to their value—extra for scouting, marksmanship, hill-climbing, signalling, manual dexterity, vitality, swimming, sobriety, first-class school certificates, and languages.

3. *Training and Duties of Regimental and Staff Officers.*—The only officers in the Army who receive a fair military education are Engineers and Artillerymen—even they are no better trained than they ought to be, if as well. I regard it as a personal affront, being an infantry officer, that any boy who passes through Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, is my acknow-

Appendix I. ledged superior, yet "such things be." The officers in the Army are:—

- (a.) Too few.
- (b.) Badly educated to start with.
- (c.) Badly paid.
- (d.) System of classification and promotion required.

(a.) If this country undertakes a war, take, e.g., the condition of a territorial regiment, of, say, first and second line battalions, third and fourth Militia; the line battalions both go on service, the third and fourth volunteer to a man. The line battalion is perhaps already short, by unavoidable absence, death, sickness, etc., of some few of its establishment; others flock off as embarking and disembarking officers, signalling officers, various staff billets, brigade majors, railway staff officers, press censors, gallopers, civil administrators, *ad lib.*, magistrates, transport, no end of jobs, and there is no surplus stock to draw on. The cadre of officer ought to be duplicated—in peace time use them as the proper instructors and fuglemen of the auxiliaries, and in war, when the principle of expansion is in vogue, you have something and somebody to expand with. Now you try to expand, and you deplete everybody to starvation point.

(b.) *Badly Educated to start with.*—Anybody of average intelligence can learn when they are young. I have advocated for years that the way to get officers for the Army is the same as we recruit for the Navy, *catch when young*. Teach everybody to be a fair linguist, draughtsman, field engineer—give him more than a smattering of field surveying, let each be as good on the barrack square as the sergeant-major; teach every officer to ride fairly well, and have done for ever with the disgraceful exhibitions of riding, such as are seen in all Royal processions, specially of late years. Every officer should be a marksman and a man at arms, and should be capable of imparting his knowledge to the Militia and Volunteers, if required. Take boys 12 to 14 and teach them till they are 18 or 19. By then he knows something, and is fit to be trusted with other men's lives, and to sit as another man's judge. Now he often is not.

In the auxiliaries he generally is not—no need to cite examples.

(c.) *The British Military Officer is highly underpaid.*—In no rank that I have ever yet filled has my Army pay sufficed for the requirements of the position I held, except in Egypt, when an alien Government paid me. Except in the Indian Staff Corps and in Indian Service generally, which is most pernicious and poisonous to the general welfare of the British Army, the same remark obtains everywhere.

(d.) Anybody who knows will agree with me when I instance the case of the publication of a Gazette after a campaign; hundreds of men conceive themselves to be wronged because (a) they are not mentioned in despatches; (b) being in, and they are not promoted or decorated.

Because a county player is not chosen to play in the match North v. South, or England v. Australia, as a

cricketer, he does not regard himself as disgraced. Yet, because A is mentioned and B is not, B and B's relatives resent it. The fact is, officers should be divided into two classes: those fitted for preferment to the higher grades, those fitted for the lower grades; the dividing line should be field rank (substantive), and no consideration should be tolerated, except personal merit, for admission into the advanced grade. Neither "Duke's son, cook's son, nor son of a millionaire" should go beyond the rank of captain unless he be recognised as fit to be trusted with the fate of other men. I hope to live to see this—hitherto I have not. In no point is the war in South Africa so emphatically pronounced as in the paucity of officers available for the multiplicity of billets to be filled.

4. I have never had any trouble. A good deal depended on the extent to which you made war pay for war.

- (a) I followed the normal practice. I drew transport originally, maintained it from local supplies, and sent to recognised bases to fill up supplies as required.
- (b) Excellent (very).
- (c) I dealt with none.
- (d) They varied according to their country and origin, period in South Africa before use, and worth when purchased. Hungarians were worst, country-bred best. The London 'bus horse made perfect remounts for Field Artillery teams.

5. I have no special remarks to offer. I used all kinds, and have a very fair knowledge of traction and wide knowledge of the others. Mule transport beats all in South Africa.

6. I think the *Medical Service* has been captiously criticised. I found it always as good as, in war time, you have a right to expect.

The same of *Engineer Services*. They neither of them ever failed to do for me all I thought was necessary and essential.

7. As regards *guns*, it is a wide subject, both Navy and Army.

I have remarks to offer.

As regards *rifles*, as a single firer, ours was as good as any. As a magazine loader and firer, not quite so good as the Mauser.

I conceive, as regards the remainder of suggested answers required, that the questions are somewhat vaguely couched, and as I have never, till 18 months ago, served in the United Kingdom as a field officer, I should like permission to answer direct questions.

ARCHIBALD HUNTER,
Lieut-General Commanding
Scottish District.

The Secretary to the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, St. Stephen's House, Victoria Embankment, Westminster, London, S.W.

APPENDIX J.

Appendix J.

SELECTED TELEGRAMS AND DESPATCHES RELATING TO MATTERS REFERRED TO IN THE EVIDENCE OF GENERAL THE RT. HON. SIR REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., AND GENERAL SIR GEORGE WHITE, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.

(See Questions 14688-15651.)

Note.—These documents are selected as being material to elucidate the evidence out of a considerable number which have been submitted to the Royal Commission by the War Office. Two, dated 12th and 13th December, were written despatches. The rest were telegrams.

From the General Officer Commanding, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 11.)

Ladysmith Camp, 12th October, 1899, 11.55 p.m.

The enemy, with 18 guns, have invaded Natal from Orange Free State, via Tintwa Pass, nearly due west from Ladysmith. It is probable that they are encamped to-night 10 miles west of Acton Homes. At 3 a.m. to-morrow (13th instant) I move out to meet them with 5th Lancers, the Liverpool Regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, the Manchester Regiment, the Devonshire Regiment, and one other battalion which comes from Glencoe by rail to-night, together with three Field batteries and one Mountain battery; also with about 250 Natal Carbineers, and a Colonial battery. I believe myself stronger than enemy. Spirits of troops excellent. No occasion for public alarm.

From the Commander-in-Chief to the General Officer Commanding, Cape.

(Telegram.) War Office, 16th October, 1899.

If Navy land guns, do not forget railway bridge over Orange River, near Hopetown. Important to hold this, as enemy may destroy other railway bridges over river.

From the Commander-in-Chief to the General Officer Commanding, Natal.

(Telegram.) War Office, 17th October, 1899.

Have you complied with order to put 60 days' supplies in Glencoe?

From the General Officer Commanding, Cape, to Lord Wolseley.

(Telegram.)
(No. 184, cipher.)

Cape Town, 17th October, 1899, 8.40 p.m.

I am holding Orange River railway bridge, where I now have two battalions, two squadrons of Cavalry, three companies Mounted Infantry, and four guns. I propose to further reinforce this position with brigade (division) of Artillery when they arrive so as to establish connection with Kimberley and demonstrate against any Boer forces operating via Bethulie or Norval's Pont Bridge. Officer Commanding troops at Orange River has reported last night that he has destroyed road bridge at Hopetown Bridge: I regret he found this was necessary, and I have asked for his reasons. I have not asked formally for naval assistance, but am in communication with Admiral as to what amount of help he can render.

From the General Officer Commanding, Cape, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 185, cipher.)

Cape Town, 17th October, 1899, 8.40 p.m.

I have not asked formally for naval assistance beyond asking Admiral his opinion as to their employment. Consider that 300 men and two 12-prs. would be most useful to assist in defence of advance depot at Molteno until the arrival of reinforcements expected; the most important question of the moment is to make these advance depots so secure that we can commence to stock them at once. When troops arrive the line of railway will be blocked; rolling stock is I fear not sufficient for simultaneous movement of troops from Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town.

From General Sir George White to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 30.)

Ladysmith Camp, 18th October, 1899, 12.10 p.m.

Telegram from Natal Governor last night states that he has evidence, which he considers trustworthy, to the effect that the enemy's plan is to hold me here in Glencoe while striking down through Zululand against Pietermaritzburg and Durban. This news is not unlikely to prove correct, as certain indications here seem to point in that direction. Although detaching troops for the purpose weakens my position here immensely, I cannot disappoint the Governor's appeal for adequate provision for his capital nor the possible issue involved. I have therefore sent him 19th Hussars, five squadrons Imperial Light Horse, and seven companies Liverpool Regiment, as well as one Field battery and half 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps, the other half being at present at Pietermaritzburg. Estcourt has also been reinforced with one squadron Imperial Light Horse and one company Liverpool Regiment, together with armoured train. General Symons maintains his position near Dundee; he has a large supply of food, forage, &c., for over 60 days, as well as ample ammunition, medical, surgical, and other stores; he has perfect confidence in his power to hold his post against attack. The force here occupies commanding positions which are being strongly fortified and covers Ladysmith.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding, Natal.

(Telegram.)
(No. 473, cipher.)

War Office, 25th October, 1899, 9 p.m.

Have you trustworthy information confirming Governor's apprehension of Boer attack on Durban or Pietermaritzburg? Are these places threatened by Joubert's force? Do you anticipate that they will be attacked by large numbers from the north, and that attacking column will have heavy guns? Are you well supplied with information as to movements of northern forces?

(Received through Colonial Office.)
From the Governor, Natal.

(Telegram.)
(No. 2.)

Pietermaritzburg, 26th October, 1899, 1.40 p.m.

Following received from White:—

"I most earnestly request that pressure may not be put on me to reduce force here. The report of threat of attack on Pietermaritzburg, through Greytown, may be misleading. All the enemy's efforts so far have been directed against army. If I am strong here, and can strike out, country is unconquered. If I am shut in here the Colony is at mercy of enemy, and will have to be reconquered from the sea. While I have sufficient forces to strike out they dare not do more than raid; if I am reduced in force, I cannot count on striking out. Enemy's guns range further than ours, and our men cannot be expected to face heavy loss, day after day, fighting superior numbers in strong positions. I consider Rifle Brigade and Border Regiment could best be used here in the interests of the Colony, but will not press for them. The effect of dissemination of forces at Dundee, even on victorious troops, is a lesson. A small force cannot save you if the troops here are shut in, though it might help me to deal a decisive blow."

I have replied as follows:—

"Object of my telegram of yesterday was to ascertain your intentions, not to put pressure on you. You need

Appendix J.

have no anxiety on that head. Your reasoning appears to be common sense, and I concur in your decision. Now that I know your intentions, I shall make my own arrangements here in consultation with Officer Commanding Lines of Communication. Shall you require 'Powerful's' 12-pr., or may I count on them for Durban or Pietermaritzburg if needed?"

I am consulting with Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, and we both think that unless Commander-in-Chief sees strong objection, Rifle Brigade should be landed in Natal.

From the General Officer Commanding, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Ladysmith, 26th October, 1899.

There is no certain information to hand that an attack on places mentioned is meditated by the Boers. These places so far are not threatened by Joubert's force. So long as I am strong enough to keep the field here, I do not anticipate they will be attacked. While I hold Ladysmith the heavy guns of the enemy cannot be moved south of it, as they are transported by railway. It is very difficult to secure information from really trustworthy sources about the movements of the hostile forces. General Yule's column has marched in. After allowing them a couple of days' rest I shall move against any enemy that offers me a fair chance. Concentration of all possible forces at this place is the true policy. I have now a fine force, and will use it. If I am beaten or shut up, one or two battalions will not save either Durban or Pietermaritzburg, and they might enable me to strike decisive blow.

From the General Officer Commanding, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Ladysmith, 27th October, 1899.

Ladysmith is being approached by a very strong force. At 4 p.m. yesterday (Thursday, 26th) they were 15 miles distant, on Helpmakaar road; I have sent out to watch them. Orange Free State troops moved yesterday as if to join hands, concentrating on Newcastle road.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding, Natal.

(Telegram.) War Office, 27th October, 1899.

Please understand that we expect you to act strictly in accordance with military requirements of the situation. Governor is within his rights in directing your attention to political consequences of your arrangements, but responsibility for the decision rests entirely with you. You may find steps necessary which may run counter to public opinion here and in the Colony, but we shall unhesitatingly support you in adhering to arrangements which seem to you militarily sound.

From the Commander-in-Chief to General Sir George White.

(Telegram.) War Office, 28th October, 1899.

Please report movements more fully. We do not know exact position at Glencoe. I do not wish in anyway to hamper your discretion, but generally I am anxious about safety of Colenso bridge.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 287.)

Cape Town, 31st October, 1899, 11.40 a.m.

Have arrived and assumed command.

From Lord Wolseley to General Sir Redvers Buller, Cape Town.

(Telegram.) War Office, 31st October, 1899.

Issue to General White, who is now one of your Generals, whatever orders you may think best.

White's telegrams lead me to fancy that he means to hold on and allow himself to be besieged in Ladysmith. Is he wise to do this, which will place all Natal at enemy's mercy? I warned him before you left of what seemed to me the importance of Colenso, where I wish he was now, with the river rising from the rains. But you are the best judge, and we all trust your judgment.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to General Sir George White.

(Telegram.)

(No. 3, cipher)

Cape Town, 1st November, 1899.

Your telegram of 30th October. Regarding exchange

of prisoners, as the prisoners we took have already left Natal, I think it would cause a bad impression here to send them back at once. Cannot you temporise for a while? In addition to your telegram to me one has come to Governor from Governor, Natal, in which he says you are sending Dublin Fusiliers to Colenso as only course open to save the Colony. Please telegraph me accurate description of your view of the situation. I doubt if Boers will ever attack you if entrenched. Hitherto you have gone out to attack them. Can you not entrench and await events, if not at Ladysmith then behind Tugela at Colenso?

No reinforcements can reach you for at least 14 days. Why not try and play the game now played by the Boers?

The only thing I can do is to send some of the fleet to Durban to protect our base; let me know if you wish that done. Please telegraph to me as explicitly as possible.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller

(Telegram.)

War Office, 1st November, 1899, 7.55 p.m.

Secret. We are not in a position here to form adequate judgment on recent military operations. Please remember that you are absolutely responsible for distribution of all subordinate commands, and that no consideration must be allowed to stand in the way of putting the most efficient men in places of greatest difficulty.

Personal and private. The above telegram represents the views of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Commander-in-Chief.

(Telegram.)

(No. 5, cipher.)

Cape Town, 1st November, 1899, 4.15 p.m.

Your telegram of 31st October. I suggested to White that Colenso and the line of Tugela River offers a promising position, but he has selected Ladysmith, which he says is strongly entrenched and whence he could not now withdraw. I suspect that in this he is right. His supplies are there. If he sends them back in advance he might be isolated without them, and *vice versa* he might lose them, also his men must want rest badly. As to Durban, I have arranged with the Admiral to protect it; but Pietermaritzburg is at present indefensible. On the west Kimberley is howling to be relieved, the bridge over the Modder River being destroyed; I have told High Commissioner that in my estimation to attempt its relief would be mere throwing into it men that I want badly elsewhere, to eat its supplies, already said to be little enough.

At Norval's Pont Bridge, Bethulie, and Aliwal North Bridge the Dutch appear to be increasing their forces, and raids into this Colony are predicted. Such is the situation which I find on arrival. My opinion is that, in these difficult circumstances, I ought to strike straight at Bloemfontein. I shall be sorry if Kimberley and Ladysmith go, but I cannot help them better, though it will be a month before I can reach it at the earliest, probably more, and the situation is likely to become very acute before that. Mule harness is what we want most; every set of value. It should be sent, as fast as it is made, in every ship. It should be on the top of the cargo, and we should be informed of each ship in which it is sent. I observe that the Admiralty have already commenced putting into one ship troops for two different ports. Do not allow this. It is better to send the ship half full, and in the end will be cheaper.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 6, cipher.)

Cape Town, 2nd November, 1899, 1 p.m.

Referring to my No. 5, cipher, of 1st November, to Commander-in-Chief, the situation has not improved. From Hunter, whom I caused to report independently of White, I learn that the position at Ladysmith is not too secure, while in Cape Colony the enemy have crossed Colesberg and Bethulie bridges, some 1,600 strong, and a commando 10,000 strong is said to be *en route* for south from Johannesburg, but this information is not yet confirmed. Railway communication between Orange River Station and De Aar Junction was interrupted yesterday, but is now restored. I learn that the first month's reserve

supply, which, when I left England, was promised to be here on 28th October, had not on this date even left England. The train with Artillery from the "Zyathla," on Tuesday was shot at near Piquitberg, and wilfully derailed at Fraserberg road, and the railway authorities think that in Dutch districts the line must be protected by troops.

I consider that I must reinforce Natal, and hang on to Orange River Bridge, giving myself time to organise the troops expected to arrive from England. I am therefore withdrawing the Waterfall River garrison at Stormberg and Naauwpoort. Gatacre's division as it arrives I shall send to Natal, and Methuen's and Clery's must try to keep main line open and to relieve Kimberley. I do not wish to be pessimistic, but it seems to me that I shall have to wait till March* to commence active offensive operations. Meantime the Government should, if possible, prevent importation of food stuffs into Transvaal via Delagoa Bay, and should largely strengthen the fleet here.

In regard to the refugees, the above military policy will probably increase the existing difficulties, and large quantities of supplies should be immediately sent out.

* In a further telegram, dated 6th November, Sir Redvers Buller says for "March" read "January."

From the General Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

Pietermaritzburg, 2nd November, 1899, 11.50 p.m.

Your telegram, 1st, November. Telegram No. 104, 29th October, referred to Ladysmith only, I think, and calculated supplies available from every source for force there only. The actual state of supplies, both provisions and forage, for whole force now in Natal is as follows:—At Maritzburg 6 days, at Estcourt 1 day, at Colenso two days, at Eshowe half a day, Ladysmith 50 days; for the actual strength now stationed at the various stations I have at Maritzburg 65 days, Estcourt 100 days, Colenso 50 days, Eshowe 100 days, and Ladysmith 60 days. In both cases the figures given for Ladysmith are taken from their last return, but are not to be relied on, and can be taken as about 10 days under what they have actually.

From the Quarter-Master-General to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 2A, cipher.) War Office, 3rd November, 1899.

Your No. R 15, 1st November, asks that supplies may be consigned to Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London; but your No. 6, cipher, of 2nd November indicates that you only intend to use at present Cape Town and Durban. Supplies will therefore be consigned Cape Town for orders, unless you wish otherwise, in which case wire your wishes.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 3, cipher.) War Office, 3rd November, 1899.

Your telegram 2nd November, No. 6, cipher. Are you of opinion that General Gatacre's division, which you now propose to send to Natal, should be replaced in Cape Colony by another division?

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 4, cipher.) War Office, 3rd November, 1899.

Your telegram 2nd November. No. 6, cipher. In reference to the concluding sentence, please confer with the civil authorities as to feeding refugees. Ought not this to be undertaken by them? In regard to transport of supplies we could help.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 9, cipher.)

Cape Town, 3rd November, 1899, 12.55 p.m.

Yesterday telegraphic connection with Ladysmith was interrupted, and White's force is isolated. He is well supplied with everything except ammunition for his naval 12-prc., which are the only guns he has that can compete with the hostile artillery. I regard the situation

as one of extreme gravity. Pietermaritzburg and Colenso Bridge are held by one battalion each. We are protecting Durban from the fleet. I shall despatch the first reinforcements which I receive to Durban, but I cannot conceal from myself that if the enemy previously occupy even with small force the country south of Mooi River the relief of White by troops just landed will, unless he can hold out 6 weeks at least from now, be an almost impossible operation.

I regard as essentially necessary the immediate establishment of a strict blockade of Delagoa Bay and the removal of the ends of the cable there into an English office on board ship. I have completed the withdrawal of the garrison and stores from Naauwpoort to De Aar Junction, to which place I have sent General Wood, Commanding Royal Engineer, in temporary command, and I have completed the withdrawal of the garrison and stores from Stormberg to Queenstown, at which place I have asked the High Commissioner to concentrate a force of volunteers, I am also urging the arming of Englishmen in some of the western districts; all these will, of course, have to be paid.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding South Africa.

(Telegram.) War Office, 3rd November, 1899.

Your telegram No. 9, cipher. I concur, and if you can enlist a large number of serviceable men you are authorised to do so, in both colonies. Keep us informed as to your requirements for arms for this purpose.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 10, cipher.)

Cape Town, 4th November, 1899, 4.45 p.m.

Your No. 3, cipher, of 3rd November. The following are my intentions:—I propose to send to Natal to command, Clery and headquarters, 2nd Division; with him will go the first 3 brigade headquarters that arrive, excepting Guards. The 3 brigades will be composed of the first Line battalions that arrive. Headquarters, 1st Division, will land at Cape Town, and Lord Methuen will command the advance on Kimberley with Guards brigade and one other; headquarters, 3rd Division, will, as circumstances require, land at Cape Town, or East London, and will be completed with a new brigade under Fetherstonehaugh formed of the 3 extra regiments, and one from the Lines of Communication or the Colonial regiment.

I propose to take charge of the advance on Ladysmith; if providentially we are successful there and at Kimberley, I think collapse of opposition possible. These proposals are subject to the High Commissioner's view of state of Cape Colony, and to what may happen in meantime anywhere else.

The preparation of an extra division seems desirable, but I do not yet see need for its despatch from England.

I shall speak with more confidence when I have seen French, who is, I hope, en route here from Ladysmith.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 32.) War Office, 4th November, 1899, 5 p.m.

Your No. 6,* cipher telegram, 2nd November. As to supplies, see my telegram, No. 481, 26th October, and No. 517, 31st October. 28th October was date mentioned to you for completion of first month in England not for delivery of supplies in South Africa, they had all been shipped by the 30th October, see my telegram No. 17 code, 2nd November. Second month was ordered 30th September, and completion in England promised about 18th November, about four days of it have been shipped, and all the groceries are promised by 9th November shipment is made as stuff comes in. Third month's supply for double the number of first and second months were ordered 19th October, completion expected in England by 7th December, every endeavour being made to expedite despatch. You were communicated with yesterday as to destination in reply to your No. R 15, 1st November.

Appendix J. *From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding South Africa.*

(Telegram.)
(No. 5, cipher.) War Office, 4th November, 1899.

Referring to telegram to Secretary of State for Colonies from High Commissioner, 27th October, No. 4. If the force of 2,000 is raised as mounted troops, they can be paid the same rates as have been given to the Imperial Light Horse, but whether such force is necessary rests with you to decide. If you do consider it necessary to raise the force, but as Infantry, you should say what rate should in your opinion be given.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 03, code.) Cape Town, 5th November, 1899,
11.35 a.m.

In my No. 10 cipher of 4th November, three indicates force to be sent on to Natal. At least 40 days' complete rations for that force and one brigade division, Royal Artillery, one howitzer battery, one Cavalry regiment, and 400 Mounted Infantry in addition should be sent immediately direct to Natal in special ships. The delays caused, if supplies for the two bases are loaded indiscriminately in same ships, are now dangerous and, owing to the two commands having been separated, I have no information regarding them, Ward being at Ladysmith.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 12, cipher.) Cape Town, 5th November, 1899,
4.25 p.m.

South of Norval's Pont Bridge and Bethulie Bridge are some 3,000 of the enemy. Imperial troops hold Orange river station and De Aar Junction, and half battalion of the Berkshire Regiment and Volunteers hold Queens-town. I am raising Volunteers for protection of eastern and western line. Cradock and Graaf Reinet districts are simmering; Cape Town is only garrisoned by 500 Volunteers; if Boers advance south-west, local authorities expect those districts to rebel.

There is fear also of trouble about Victoria West. In these circumstances with no available troops in the Colony I am raising whatever Volunteers I can get, in other words, I am secretly arming the English near disaffected districts. I shall report the rates of pay when they are fixed.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 13, cipher.) Cape Town, 5th November, 1899,
8.30 p.m.

In Natal the General of Base and Communications has taken the field with all available troops, which consist of 2 battalions and levies, totalling 2,200 men, but he is short of mounted men and artillerymen. He is, I believe, now at Estcourt, having withdrawn from Colenso—I do not know why. It is reported that the line from Estcourt to Colenso is open and that the Tugela River Bridge is intact.

Governor, Natal, sends rumours which Governor here sends to England. Any news that I can trust I will telegraph at once.

From the General Officer Commanding Lines of Communication, Natal, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 10, No. L. 408.) Estcourt, 10th November, 1899,
10.30 a.m.

The following has been received from General White:—
Second Lieutenant Hooper, 5th Lancers, arrived safely on the 6th November. The enemy have all round us long-range guns, but I cannot ascertain the strength with which they hold their different positions. We calculate that they spread over a circle of more than 20 miles. Our position is also very extended, about 11 miles, to secure the retention of our Artillery position, which if lost would render Ladysmith untenable. This

curtails our force for offensive operations, but does not incur grave risk to Ladysmith.

Long-range bombardment by heavy guns continues daily, causing a few casualties, but doing no serious harm. A message was received this morning from General of Base and Communications in cipher, dated 5th November. To-day the Boers have sent in, under a flag of truce, a number of civil refugees from the Transvaal. A flag of truce from Ladysmith met them outside our pickets. When parties separated Boer guns fired on our flag of truce before it reached our pickets. Major Gale, R.E., who was sending a message, was wounded to-day.

I am very anxious for news, particularly as to whether the Boers are pushing south in any numbers, and whether the message sent by pigeon post reached Durban safely. The entrenchments are growing stronger daily. Provisions ample.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)
(No. 12, cipher.) War Office, 10th November, 1899.

Your telegram of 4th November, No. 10, cipher. A division is now being prepared; but without knowing for certain whether it will be wanted, we cannot venture to take up shipping. This can be left open as long as you please; but the provision of ships, and more particularly horse transports, takes time. Are you now in a position to say by what date you will want troops?

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 27, cipher.) Cape Town, 11th November, 1899,
7.10 p.m.

Your No. 12, cipher. The advance of the enemy seems to have been so thoroughly checked by the defence of Ladysmith that I have now some ground for hoping that the successful relief of Ladysmith and Kimberley may terminate opposition. But on the other hand, Dutch here, who can be relied upon, predict guerilla warfare as a certainty. I ought, therefore, I think, as soon as possible, to have another division. At present my great want is mounted forces, of which I am raising as many as possible. Further, should like to have as soon as possible, for service with them, a few good Special Service Officers not above the rank of Captain, Infantry Officers being preferred.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 28, cipher.) Cape Town, 12th November, 1899,
9.45 p.m.

Two messages, dated 10th and 11th November, have been received from White. All round Ladysmith the enemy are strongly entrenched; several attacks have been made by them and all have been repulsed, but it is clear that the position is daily becoming more difficult. The Boers have 22 large guns in position which have a longer range than White's field guns. The bombardment still continues, but there are no serious casualties. Clerly left for Natal to-day; as soon as I send him Artillery he ought to be able to advance, but no ships containing Artillery have yet arrived.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

(Telegram.)
(No. 18, cipher.) War Office, 14th November, 1899.

Your No. 27, cipher, of 11th November. The additional division of Infantry under Sir Charles Warren will with the least possible delay be despatched. The constitution of the division is the same as that of those in the Army Corps, but instead of one squadron, it is accompanied by one complete regiment of Cavalry.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 30, cipher.) Cape Town, 14th November, 1899, 3.33 p.m.

Just before dawn it is often darkest. I ought not, however, to hide from you that I think the situation is extremely critical. Chieveley was occupied yesterday by the enemy in strength. At Estcourt, Hildyard has now three battalions and 6-7-pr. guns. The Infantry reinforcements will reach him daily, but "Armenian," with the Artillery, left here only last night. Neither Clery's Column in Natal nor Methuen's Column to Kimberley, will be as strong as I should like. About Bethulie, the enemy have 4,000 men, and on the news of their advance, from 500 to 800 from Cradock may join them.

I hope for the best, but the advance in Natal with Infantry who are just off the ships and are short of Cavalry and Artillery, on the Boers in positions carefully prepared, will be a risk, but it is a greater risk to leave Ladysmith alone. In case of accident, it will be essential to have more troops, a stronger fleet, and a stricter blockade of Lorenzo Marques. I think you should, as speedily as possible, send both troops and men-of-war.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 24, cipher.) War Office, 20th November, 1899.

With the division now under orders we can send either one or two Field Artillery brigade divisions; which do you prefer to have? It is not likely that they will reach Cape Town before end of the first week in January.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 37, cipher.)

Cape Town, 20th November, 1899, 5.5 p.m.

On the evening of 22nd November I propose to leave for Natal.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to General Gatacre, Queenstown.

(Telegram.) Cape Town, 21st November, 1899.

I calculate it will be at least 5 days and probably a week before I have a second battalion to send you or a battery of Field Artillery, but I am anxious to get into a position to protect the Indwe Mines better than we do. Do you think it would be safe for you to advance your force or part of it to Stormberg and hold that instead of Queenstown? I am told it is a good position for a force the size of yours. Of course you will have no support.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 40, cipher.)

Cape Town, 21st November, 1899, 10.50 a.m.

Your No. 24, cipher. I prefer 2 brigade divisions. I shall want them if I lose Ladysmith. I should prefer that the first brigade division sent should be equipped as Field Artillery, but should be armed with Horse Artillery guns, which are lighter in draught and sufficiently powerful.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 39, cipher.)

Cape Town, 21st November, 1899, 2.52 p.m.

I have to-day received from Clery the following message:—"Hildyard reports as follows: Midnight, 19th November. It appears from correspondence received from Ladysmith that while a containing force of enemy still invests that place, the main body has gone south in order to intercept the reinforcements. According to the natives 2 commandos have crossed the Tugela river at Colenso and will take guns up on to the hills which com-

mand Estcourt, and will make an attack to-morrow. At Willowgrange the railway is seriously threatened, and accordingly I have reinforced the 5 companies there under Kitchener with some Cavalry and 2-7-prs. I consider that the line is safe to there to-night. Hildyard ends. The situation here, as telegraphed to you yesterday, possibly may develop into something serious. If a part of the enemy's force investing Ladysmith is going to support the movement against Estcourt, then I may be forced to give up Estcourt. As you know I am tied to the railway, and Boer's tactics appear to be to keep out of the reach of attack and to work round against the railway in rear. If the battalions now due do not quickly arrive, there might be difficulty in meeting this with my small force of mounted troops. I am, however, well aware that any such backward movement would naturally delay a subsequent advance. Therefore I have instructed Hildyard that I want, if possible, not to let Estcourt go, but that he is not to be cut off, and that he is to be ready, if necessary, to fall back towards Barton on Mooi river."

I have told Clery to hold on to Estcourt if possible. Three battalions left yesterday for Durban, and 1 goes to-day.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 41, cipher.)

Cape Town, 21st November, 1899, 2.50 p.m.

Methuen with Naval Brigade, with 4-12-pr. 12-cwt. guns, 9th Lancers, 63rd and 64th Batteries, Field Artillery, Guards, and 9th Brigade, and details, marched from Orange River this morning on Kimberley; he hopes to arrive there on the 26th instant.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 26, cipher.) War Office, 22nd November, 1899.

In reply to your No. 40, cipher. Three Horse Artillery batteries with separate ammunition column are being sent in addition to the Field Artillery Brigade Division accompanying Sir C. Warren's Division. To send Field Artillery with Horse Artillery guns is not considered expedient.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 49, cipher.)

Pietermaritzburg, 29th November, 1899, 3.38 p.m.

To forecast the future is difficult. My opinion is that whatever happens I shall, to restore order and protect communications, require a large force of mounted men. Last week Joubert raided this colony with 4,000 mounted men, and till he camped at Highlands we were helpless. As to siege train which you are preparing I do not see any real use for it, and I only accepted them because I thought you probably wished to employ Garrison Artillery. Saddlery, Colonial equipment, is what I shall want; it has only to last 6 months, and the same sort of equipment as was supplied to British South Africa Company, will do very well.

I shall mount Infantry and let them ride in trousers as the Boers do. (This explains my code telegram No. 098, of to-day.)

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller, Pietermaritzburg.

(Telegram.)

(No. 32, cipher.)

War Office, 30th November, 1899, 4.30 p.m.

A 6th division is being prepared, which, when ready, can follow the 5th Division, which is now being despatched. Can you let me know whether you are likely to want a 6th division, and if so, when? If it will be wanted soon, the horse transports must be at once got ready. Afterwards, if wanted, we can prepare a 7th division.

Appendix J. *From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.* *General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.*

(Telegram.)
(No. 52, cipher.)

Pietermaritzburg, 1st December, 1899, 3 a.m.
Your No. 32, cipher. The situation still appears to me extremely grave. Methuen's force seems to have all it can do to reach Kimberley; and to relieve Ladysmith will be a hard task for me. In the centre of Cape Colony the state of affairs becomes worse, and we shall not be too strong to deal with it even with the aid of the 5th Division. Mafeking meanwhile will without doubt fall; this will free a considerable force of the enemy to attack Matabililand. Consequently, if the enemy maintain their opposition another division will certainly be wanted or its equivalent in men. I think we have enough field guns, but I should like 8 or 10 4.7-inch naval guns, or similar long range guns, on good travelling carriages. We want a mounting off which the gun can be lifted so as to travel, separate from its mounting, in a bullock cart. People here assert that ammunition of all sorts is being smuggled into Delagoa Bay. Delagoa Bay should, I think, be blockaded absolutely and at once; this would be of more help to us than any number of divisions.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 70, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 10th December, 1899, 11.25 a.m.
I hope by the 1st January to have Methuen's force concentrated about Naauwpoort, Warren with Division about Middleburg Road, and Gatacre reinforced by 2 Cavalry regiments and 2 Brigades from Natal about Stormberg. I ought by the end of January, to have stamped out the rebellion in Cape Colony, overrun the Orange Free State, and be in a position to cross the Vaal river. I shall at that moment want the 6th Division. I have enough Cavalry; I do not want more. But I do want mounted men, and shall increasingly want them; these, however, I am able to improvise here from material in comparison with which Cavalry are really not so useful.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)
(No. 47, cipher.)

War Office, 10th December, 1899.
Your No. 70, cipher. We have just heard of Gatacre's reverse. Do you think that the 6th Division should arrive earlier on this account?

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 73, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 11th December, 1899, 9.30 a.m.
Your No. 47, cipher. The earlier the troops reach here the better, thereby giving us longer time to equip them and get them into condition; in this respect we have been over hurried of late. Except in these respects Gatacre's reverse does not seem to me to affect the date on which the 6th Division should be despatched. Of this reverse I have no details beyond a statement of losses. He, however, telegraphs from Molteno, and the inference is that although he will concentrate at Queenstown his position at Putter's Kraal is not immediately affected. The reverse accordingly amounts to the loss of about 1,000 Infantry by getting into bad country. The Derbyshire Regiment is due at Durban to-morrow, and that I am sending on to him; further, I have always looked forward to employing the 5th Division in the midland districts. Although my knowledge is imperfect I do not see any cause for anxiety.

(Written Despatch.)

Frere Camp,

Sir,

12th December, 1899.

The 13th Hussars march in here to-morrow, and the whole of the troops I can expect to collect for the relief of Ladysmith will then be here.

I to-day moved out General Barton's Brigade, less $\frac{1}{2}$ battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers, to a hill about 2 miles the Colenso side of Chieveley Station. With the Brigade went two Naval 4.7-in. guns and six Naval 12-prs., and I hope they will be able to hold some of the defences of Colenso.

After a careful reconnaissance by telescope I came to this conclusion, that a direct assault upon the enemy's position at Colenso, and result of it, would be too costly. The approach to the drift this side is a dead flat without any cover, and the enemy have a very strong position which they have systematically fortified just the other side of this drift.

When that is passed there is a steep defile commanded on both sides by high rocky hills to be ascended, and at the top is a very favourable position for the enemy. I enclose a letter from Mr. Lang, which is really a good description.

I have determined, therefore, to leave the 6th Brigade in position in front of Colenso, and to march on the night of the 13th with the whole force available to Springfield, force the passage of Potgieter's Drift, and then advance to Ladysmith by the Acton Homes—Ladysmith road.

It is open country to Springfield, and open country again about 2 miles the other side of the Tugela to Ladysmith; but I shall have a train of about 400 ox-wagons, and shall have 4 miles of difficult country about the drift. The operation, therefore, is not a very pleasant one, but it has this great advantage, I am sure to get water; on the other road the 9 miles of fighting from Colenso to Onderbroek would have been in a waterless country.

I attach a state of the force here.*

At the Cape Lord Methuen should be just attacking the positions about Spytfontein. He has been reinforced by a battery of 5-in. howitzers, and a Naval 4.7-in. gun, and if, as I have told him, he will simply shell one end of the position for some days, I have no doubt of his success.

General French is holding his own about Naauwpoort. General Gatacre having tried a night attack on Stormberg, was misled and met with a serious reverse, losing two guns and nearly 800 men.

He will be reinforced by the Derbyshire Regiment the moment they arrive, and I do not think the reverse he has suffered will compromise his position, but it will strengthen the hands of the disaffected in the Colony, and intensify the existing strain.

I hope as soon as I am through at Ladysmith to get back to the old Colony, and to endeavour to deal with the state of rebellion now existing there.

I should mention that, having no Cavalry bearer company here, and no divisional field hospital, and expecting a severe fight at Potgieter's Drift, which is 25 miles from the railway, I have organised a local bearer company of half whites, half natives, who will carry out any wounded.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,
REDVERS BULLER,
General.

Rosetta Station,
7th December, 1899.

Sir,

If the Tugela is crossed about 10 or 15 miles above Colenso it will be found the country is more open to get to Ladysmith, and there is lots of room to outflank the enemy. The country is also more or less flat, with odd kopjes from Ladysmith north-east.

By wagon road up the Colenso road is about one of the strongest positions that could be got. It is three positions, there is only one way of getting big guns up, and that is by the road. I suppose there are trenches across by now; you cannot get on one side, it is too stony, and deep stony embankments. The second position is about 1,200 yards

from there. There are lots of big stones as big as wool-sacks. The third position is almost worse; about 3 miles farther on stones and trees.

There is one old road leading from Colenso to Ladysmith past Pieters, stony hills and deep valleys; you will also have to keep the big guns in the road for the first 5 or 6 miles, and then you are just below Umbulwana.

Yours obedient,

H. LANG,
formerly of Laing's Nek.

General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.
(Written Despatch.)

Frere Camp, Natal,
13th December, 1899.

Sir,
I posted a letter to you yesterday, which, I believed, contained my last word before my advance on Ladysmith.

At the time of writing, I was fully impressed with the idea that the force under Lord Methuen was strong enough to overcome any opposition he might encounter. That hope has proved fallacious, and I heard last night that Lord Methuen's attack upon the position occupied by the enemy near Spytfontein had failed. I may observe that in Natal we heard this through Reuter, *via* Pretoria and Delagoa Bay, some hours before I heard of it from the Cape.

This has altered the general situation for the worse, and, in my opinion, so much so, that I do not think I am any longer justified in proceeding with my plans for the relief of Ladysmith by a flank march through Springfield and Potgieter's Drift.

This operation involved, as was evident from the first, the complete abandonment of my communications, and, in the event of want of success, the risk that I might share the fate of Sir G. White, and be cut off from Natal.

I had considered that, with the enemy dispirited by the failure of their plans in the west, this risk was justifiable, but I cannot think that I ought now to take such a risk. From my point of view, it will be better to lose Ladysmith altogether than to throw open Natal to the enemy.

I have arrived at this decision with considerable doubt. The real fact is, the enemy have had the whip hand of us ever since the war began, and we have had to attack with inferior force their superior forces in selected positions.

I certainly hoped to have found the relief both of Ladysmith and Kimberley less difficult than it has proved to be. I appear to have failed at Kimberley, and the undertaking in front of me is a very grave one.

Whether I win or lose, I have told General Walker that I consider the first phase of the campaign has ended, and that the time has come when both in this Colony and Cape Colony we must select and occupy strategical positions, and remain till winter on a policy of defence. During this time we must organise and train mobile columns.

I feel certain that such a policy is, and, indeed, has always been, the right one; the only reason I did not adopt it from the first was that I was, I thought, forced to try and relieve both Kimberley and Ladysmith.

Lord Methuen has, it seems, failed at Kimberley; I hope I shall not do the same at Ladysmith, but even if I do, I shall, I think, have enough troops in hand to secure South Natal, and to hold my communications until the dispositions necessary to this end can be taken.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
REDVERS BULLER,
General.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 79, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 13th December, 1899, 10.20 a.m.

I hear from Methuen that he has failed to force his way to Kimberley, and that he has retired to his entrenchments where he can maintain himself and that he thinks he can keep open his communications. I have told him that he must either fight or withdraw to Orange River; it will only be an inconvenience to lose Kimberley, but

it would be a disaster for his force to be cut off. Gatacre's misfortune and Methuen's failure sensibly affect my position; I was this day starting to march *via* Springfield and Potgieter's Drift, on Ladysmith. From the first it has been clear that as soon as I crossed the drift my communications would be quite uncovered, and the under taking meant in fact burning my boats, but I considered this action justifiable, as I hoped the news of the relief of Kimberley would dishearten the enemy. The reverse unfortunately has occurred, and I thought it too great a risk to make a flank march of 45 miles with an enormous wagon train across the front of a successful and active enemy, when the communications of our only effective force in the field would be thereby uncovered. Therefore to-day I am advancing to attack and try to force the direct road. I fully expect to be successful, but probably at heavy cost. From the first I have foreseen that the advantage gained by the enemy at the outset might only be recovered by our greater staying powers. If Methuen goes back to the Orange River the enemy probably will press their invasion of Cape Colony, and it will have to be our policy to delay the enemy and wait till winter comes. How much a blockade of Delagoa Bay would assist this policy it is not necessary for me to emphasize.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 49, cipher.) War Office, 14th December, 1899.

Warren has been ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to proceed immediately upon landing to take command of Methuen's force. The Commander-in-Chief considers it desirable to employ Methuen in future on Lines of Communication, but leaves his disposal to you. Gatacre also should in future, he thinks, be similarly employed; and Tucker is being sent out, to whom, if you approve, you are authorised to give Gatacre's Division. The latter you can meanwhile, if you think fit, withdraw, and you can send any good man you like to command the troops on the line of advance by which Gatacre was operating. Brigadier-General H. MacDonald is also being sent from India to command Highland Brigade, *vice* Wauchope.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 50, cipher.) War Office, 14th December, 1899.

On Saturday and Sunday four battalions of the 6th Division sail, and the remainder follows as soon as possible; the horse ships, however, will arrive about the 15th January. A 7th Division is being mobilised. Let me hear when you wish it to come; we must deal with the provision of ships in time.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding, Cape.

(Telegram.)

(No. 49 A, cipher.) War Office, 14th December, 1899.

On arrival, Warren is to be sent immediately to assume command of the forces under Methuen. Buller will be informed of this by telegraph.

From the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 0215.)

Chieveley Camp,

15th December, 1899, 6.20 p.m.

I regret to report serious reverse. I moved in full strength from camp near Chieveley this morning at 4 a.m. There are two fordable places in the Tugela and it was my intention to force a passage through at one of them; they are about 2 miles apart, and my intention was to force one or the other with one brigade supported by a central brigade. General Hart was to attack the left drift, General Hildyard the right, the main road, and General Lyttelton in the centre to support either. Early in the day I saw that General Hart would not be able to force a passage and directed him to withdraw. He had, however, attacked with great gallantry and his leading

Appendix J. battalion, the Connaught Rangers, I fear, suffered a great deal. Colonel Brooke was severely wounded. I then ordered General Hildyard to advance, which he did, and his leading regiment, the East Surrey, occupied Colenso Station and the houses near the bridge. At that moment I heard that the whole of the Artillery I had sent back to that attack, namely, the 14th and 66th Field Batteries and 6 Naval 12-pr. Q.F. guns, the whole under Colonel Long, R.A., were out of action, as it appears that Colonel Long in his desire to be within effective range, advanced without any scouts or effective Infantry supports close to the river. It proved to be full of the enemy who suddenly opened a galling fire at close range, killing all their horses, and the gunners were compelled to stand to their guns. Some of the wagon teams got shelter for troops in a donga, and desperate efforts were made to bring out the field guns, but the fire was too severe and only 2 were saved by Captain Schofield and some drivers, whose names I will furnish. Another most gallant attempt with 3 teams was made by an Officer whose name I will obtain. Of the 18 horses, 13 were killed, and as several of the drivers were wounded I would not allow another attempt. It seemed they would be quite useless sacrificing loss of life in gallant attempt to force passage unsupported by Artillery. I directed the troops to withdraw, which they did in good order. Throughout the day a considerable force of the enemy was pressing on my right flank, but was kept back by mounted men under Lord Dundonald and part of General Barton's Brigade. The day was intensely hot and most trying to the troops whose conduct was excellent. We have abandoned 10 guns and lost by shell fire 1. The losses in General Hart's Brigade are I fear heavy, though the proportion of severely wounded is I hope not large. The 14th and 66th Field Batteries also suffered severe losses. We have retired to our camp at Chieveley.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 87, cipher.) Chieveley Camp,
15th December, 1899, 11.15 p.m.

A serious question is raised by my failure to-day; I do not now consider that I am strong enough to relieve Ladysmith. Colenso is a fortress, which, if not captured by a rush could, I think, only be taken by a siege. Within the 8 miles from the point of attack there is no water and in this weather that exhausts Infantry. The place is fully entrenched. I do not think we saw either a gun or a Boer all day, but the fire brought to bear on us was very heavy. The Infantry were willing enough to fight but the intense heat absolutely exhausted them. I consider I ought to let Ladysmith go and to occupy good position for the defence of South Natal and so let time help us. But I feel I ought to consult you on such a step. 20,000 men, I consider, faced us to-day; both in arms and in position they had the advantage. They admit indeed that they suffered severely, but my men are dispirited because they have not seen a dead Boer. My losses have not been very heavy; much heavier indeed I could have made them, but the moment I failed to get on the run the result would have been the same. I was beaten. I now feel that I cannot say that with my available force I can relieve Ladysmith, and I suggest that for me to occupy a defensive position and fight it out in a country better suited to our tactics is the best thing that I can do.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding, Cape.

(Telegram.)
(No. 51, cipher.) War Office, 15th December, 1899.

Has Warren arrived and assumed command at Modder River?

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 90, cipher.) Chieveley Camp, 16th December, 1899, 1.25 p.m.
Your telegram reached me too late to answer on the 14th, but I telegraphed counter orders to the Cape. I

cannot agree with the Commander-in-Chief and allow Methuen, who has done very well, to be superseded by Warren, Commander-in-Chief, comfortable at home, has no idea of the difficulties here. It would, I think, be a fatal policy to supersede every General who failed to succeed in every fight, but I may say that, as I myself have since failed, I offer no objection in my own case, if thought desirable. The conditions are as follows: the atmosphere is tropical, the sun is vertical, the country is waterless, the watercarts improvised at the Cape are leaky beyond repair, and besides, in Methuen's case, the sandy dust is impregnated with salt. Accordingly you must camp where there is water, and water seldom is to be found at intervals of less than 10 miles. Infantry, therefore, cannot move freely more than 10 miles from their camp, and the heat dazes them. It is impossible to make accurate reconnaissances, or turning movements on any scale, for Infantry marching in the sun soon lose fighting power, while the enemy, who are all mounted, are always fresh. The enemy select their own positions and bury themselves; they are completely hidden. I shelled a position yesterday for over an hour, and the whole time we did not see anyone; all agreed that it was evacuated, but in reality it was held by a thousand men. The Connaught Rangers advanced yesterday unopposed till they crossed a piece of grass which had been recently burned, when they came under a withering fire from 3 sides, and yet they never saw their opponents for a moment. The grass was purposely burnt to give the range and also to show up the khaki uniform. Had it been winter Methuen would, I am sure, have won both his fights at Modder River easily, but in this midsummer the men get so dazed with the hot sun and the scorching that they have no dash left. Willing enough they may be, but they are physically incapacitated. I hope you will approve my orders to leave Methuen in command. The same argument applies to Gatacre.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 91, cipher.) Chieveley, 16th December, 1899.

I feel sure from what I saw of enemy's defences yesterday that we shall want 7th Division, and as rebels are being joined by Cape Dutch in large numbers, the sooner it arrives the better. Would it be possible for you to raise 8,000 irregulars in England, organised not in regiments but in companies of 100 each? They should be equipped as Mounted Infantry, be able to shoot as well as possible, and ride decently. I would amalgamate them with colonists. A party of the West Kent Yeomanry Cavalry are amongst the best irregulars I have here. Mounted men are absolutely necessary to finish this war, or indeed to hold our own. Infantry cannot cover the distances; with them one is always obliged to attack a prepared position, the very thing which ought not to be done, and the water difficulty is tremendous. I should like some Maxim-Nordenfelt 1-pr. guns, if you can get them, to accompany mounted troops; they are wonderful weapons. The enemy yesterday used mobile 2½-inch or 3-inch guns; they made excellent practice, and ranged about 8,000 yards, but luckily their shells seldom burst. A whole gun detachment was killed by one which did. This is the sort of gun we want a few of, something which can be taken a march of 40 miles. Our field guns are excellent when they get within range, but their range is too short, and they are not sufficiently mobile.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)
(No. 53, cipher.) War Office, 16th December, 1899.

The abandonment of White's force and its consequent surrender is regarded by the Government as a national disaster of the greatest magnitude. We would urge you to devise another attempt to carry out its relief, not necessarily *via* Colenso, making use of the additional men now arriving if you think fit.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 54, cipher.) War Office, 16th December, 1899.

I hope that you understand that we are greatly in favour of the policy indicated in your telegram No. 70, cipher, of raising local mounted corps, and that you are free to carry it out.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 55, cipher.) War Office, 16th December, 1899.

Four battalions of the 6th Division embark to-day and to-morrow, and the remaining 4 will embark next week, the Infantry of the 7th Division on 4th January and the following days. The Brigade Divisions of Field Artillery of both divisions will embark as soon as we can provide more ships. Additional Field Artillery to replace the lost guns will also be sent. Will you require any more Artillery? A Brigade of Cavalry, including a battery of Horse Artillery, will be sent as soon as ships can be provided. A considerable force of Militia and of picked Yeomanry and Volunteers will also be sent.

From the General Officer Commanding, Cape, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. L 230, cipher.) Cape Town, 16th December, 1899.

It is intended that 10th Brigade and divisional troops of the 5th Division shall be assembled at Orange River, and 11th Brigade at De Aar Junction. Then the former march and the latter rail to Modder River to join Methuen, whence relief of Kimberley will be proceeded with under Warren's orders.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 56, cipher.) War Office, 17th December, 1899.

Referring to your telegram, No. 90, cipher, you have authority to leave Methuen in command of his division; but as Warren must direct operations on the Kimberley-Hopetown line, and is senior, the former must be subordinate to him.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 57, cipher.) War Office, 18th December, 1899.

In Natal and in Cape Colony distinct operations of very great importance are now in progress.

The prosecution of the campaign in Natal is being carried on under quite unexpected difficulties, and in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government it will require your presence and whole attention.

It has been decided by Her Majesty's Government under these circumstances, to appoint Field-Marshal Lord Roberts as Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa, his Chief of Staff being Lord Kitchener.

From the Secretary of State for War to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

(Telegram.)

(No. 59, cipher.) War Office, 18th December, 1899.

Is it possible for you to find out from White up to what date he can hold out?

From the General Officer Commanding, Cape, to the Secretary of State for War.

(Received 18th December.)

(Telegram.)

(No. L 232, cipher.) Cape Town, 18th December, 1899.

Your No. 51. cipher. I have to inform you that Warren has been stopped at De Aar Junction, and as his division is to proceed to Natal, he has received orders to return.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State Appendix J. for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 99, cipher.) Frere Camp, 18th December, 1899.

As there is no water at Chieveley, I have had to move 2 brigades back to Frere, and I doubt if I can keep the remainder where they are now supplied with water by train. Warren's division is, I hear, arriving at the Cape. I have telegraphed to them to come on here and have told White to hang on if possible. I shall now be strong enough to attempt Potgieter's Drift and at the same time to hold the railway. Methuen is thus left; I told him to fill up his supplies and get ready to hold out; I told Methuen also to lay a railway loop round Cronje's position to enable him to get his Infantry closer. I am frightened by the utter collapse of my Infantry on Friday; on my left I lost nearly 300 missing, and on my right should have lost as many more but I and my staff rode down into the dongas and forced the men to get up and go home; the men were carrying nothing but ammunition, the retirement was perfectly orderly, there was no pursuit, and the enemy's shell fire was ineffective, and they simply sat down dazed with the heat. By this my powers are limited. When, however, I get Warren's division I shall try to relieve Ladysmith by short stages; there is only one stretch for 10 miles without water, and rain perhaps may fall then; to-day the heat is terrifying.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 101, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 18th December, 1899, 9 a.m.

Your No. 53, cipher. Much obliged; exactly what I required. I was doubtful as to what weight financial considerations at Kimberley should be allowed to carry.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 103, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 18th December, 1899, 5.5 p.m.

As to your telegram No. 56, the directions which it contained had already been given, but after receiving your No. 53, I ordered 5th Division (less two battalions urgently required at De Aar Junction) to Natal.

In my estimation it is the only way by which Ladysmith can be saved.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 104, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 18th December, 1899, 5.20 p.m.

Your No. 59 cipher. White reports as follows:—"My supplies can be made to last longer than a month. The enemy are reported to be putting dead horses in the Klip River, I certainly do not do so. There is an increase of gastric fever within the last month, 180 cases have occurred. Get reinforcements as quick as possible, including Indians and enlist in both Colonies jungle men, who will form reconnoitring parties and can ride." What he means by jungle men I do not quite know, and I imagine Indians would not meet your approval.* White says he hears that considerable impression was made by the enemy's losses on 15th. I cannot form any estimate of their losses, but the Colonial forces profess to know that these amounted to 2,000, the information coming from Boer sources. To me this seems excessive.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 110, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 21st December, 1899, 11.55 a.m.

White on being informed that I had sent for the 5th Division replied as follows:—"I received your message, and was delighted to get it. For 6 weeks I have provisions

* Sir George White explained in his evidence (14884) that the expression, as telegraphed by him, was "enlist every man in both colonies who will serve and can ride."

Appendix J. for the troops, and I am confident that I shall hold this place for that time ; but bombardment steadily becomes more trying. This morning one shell caused 22 casualties; dysentery and enteritis are very rapidly increasing. For 3 weeks I can get on well, and even keep the horses moderately fit, if you desire to wait for time. It is worth waiting a little to enable you to dominate and overwhelm the enemy's guns. You should bring every heavy naval or other gun you can get hold of. In regard to occupying a position near the Tugela, from which you can maintain a continued attack, water will be a difficulty. Do you think that you can arrange reservoirs, pumping stations or pipes?"

This season the drought is severe. I will try all that I can do, but my transport difficulties are very great.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.) War Office, 23rd December, 1899.

To carry out the original plan of campaign and advance through the Orange Free State in force appears to me to be the best way of co-operating with you when I arrive in South Africa. This will be facilitated by the following expression of my opinions :—I imagine from what I learn here that you are only waiting for reinforcements sufficient to enable you to hold at or near Chieveley an entrenched camp, and with the rest of the troops to turn the strong position which the enemy hold on the Tugela. The situation will have sensibly improved if you succeed, and I think it would then be advisable to evacuate Ladysmith and hold the line of the Tugela until the general advance is made. What troops could you spare on completing this operation? So also if Methuen releases Kimberley, I think he ought to fall back on the Orange River for a concentration in force on that line prior to advancing on Bloemfontein. We should never lose sight of the importance of concentrating all the available forces in Cape Colony for this object ; a very small increase to the garrison and a certain amount of ammunition and food would, judging from what has happened there since the war began, make Kimberley thoroughly secure. If you would let me have a statement of your views on the general situation, to meet me on my arrival at Cape Town, I should be greatly obliged, and also of the strength and disposition of the forces in South Africa, and especially of the capacity and readiness for service of the land transport, on which we mainly depend for a rapid advance into the Transvaal in sufficient strength.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 115, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 23rd December, 1899, 4.30 p.m.

The line from De Aar Junction to Modder River appears to me practically safe, *i.e.*, the troops on it are enough to cover it. Walker has been instructed by me to commence a branch line from north of Honeynest Kloof to Jacobsdal, Methuen being strong enough to hold railhead at the River Modder, and to cover the construction of the line. He will cut Cronje's communications at Jacobsdal, and, I expect, frighten him out of Spytfontein, and at the same time will threaten Bloemfontein seriously. Further, when the 6th Division arrives Jacobsdal will form an effective base, and I should propose that the new line be continued to Bloemfontein. This, I think, will not be an expensive line to make, and will be of great strategic advantage ; but as Lord Roberts is to fight this plan of campaign, I think he should, if he has not already started, exercise the right of veto. I am sure that this plan will, even more quickly than a direct attack on Burghersdorp, re-act on Cape Colony and disloyal Dutch.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 149, cipher.)

Frere Camp, 9th January, 1900, 11.50 a.m.

From two distinct and separate sources I have been given a statement of the numbers which the State Secretary relied on being able to put into the field, *viz.*, Transvaal, 85,000 ; Orange Free State, 25,000 ; Natal, 5,000 ;

Cape Colony, 30,000 ; total, 145,000. My informants believe that, excepting Orange Free State, which only provided 20,000, and Cape Colony, which up to date has not provided more than 10,000, these numbers have been realised, and there are now in the field at least 120,000 men. There are about 46,000 in Natal and on its borders. So far as I can calculate, the Burghers' lists in Transvaal have been without doubt falsified for years to conceal the numbers. Further, foreign mercenaries to a much larger extent than we were led to expect have been brought into the field.

From the Secretary of State for War to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts.

(Telegram.)

(No. 80, cipher.) War Office, 9th January, 1900.

Please let us know what you think about further reinforcements as soon as you have thoroughly examined the situation. We have arranged for the following reinforcements in addition to the 7th Division, *viz.* :—

1. Four Brigade Divisions, Field Artillery, embarking as soon after the 20th January as possible.
2. One Volunteer company for each Line battalion, amounting in all to about 7,000.
3. The City of London Regiment of Volunteers and the battery of the Honourable Artillery Company.
4. One Field Artillery battery of Volunteers from Elswick.
5. Colonial contingents, inclusive of 4 Artillery batteries, mostly mounted, and amounting in all probably to about 3,000.
6. Seven Militia battalions.

Of these some have already started. As to the Imperial Yeomanry it is not yet possible to say what number will be raised, but 4,000 at least will probably be the total, and the material, though raw, is good. We have also mobilised a Cavalry Brigade which could embark at once ; if, however, it is sent, only the remainder of the Household Cavalry and 5 Line regiments will be left at home. Do you wish to have it ? We are also mobilising the 8th Division, which could begin to embark about the 20th February, but if it goes there will only be 7 Infantry battalions left, and unless the 8th Division is urgently required this reduction of the Home garrison does not appear desirable in view of the general outlook. It might answer your purpose if we sent for the lines of communication 8 or more Militia battalions instead.

From the Secretary of State for War to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 81, cipher.) War Office, 10th January, 1900.

Your information as to numbers must, we think, be incorrect, as the total population of both sexes before the war was only 90,000, and at the Presidential election less than 25,000 burghers from 16 upwards voted. The difficulty, however, of the situation is fully recognised by us.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 6, cipher.)

Cape Town, 12th January, 1900, 10.45 p.m.

Your No. 80, cipher. My views on the general situation in South Africa are as follows :—Throughout the Colony the feeling of unrest is perhaps not so acute as it was three weeks ago, probably because the enemy seem unable to take advantage of the reverses we then suffered. Of our ultimate success the loyal Colonists are as confident as ever, and the desire for peace in some of the pro-Boer newspapers is pronounced.

Buller's calculation of the numbers of the enemy in the field, is, as far as I can gather from information supplied by the Governor, correct as regards the Cape Colony, Natal, and Orange Free State, *viz.*, 10,000, 5,000, and 20,000 respectively. It seems, however, impossible that

more than 40,000 could have been contributed by the Transvaal. A total of about 75,000 Burghers and Boers would be thus reached, to which any outsiders, who may have joined them, must be added, and putting this number at 5,000, then not more than 80,000 could, at any time, have been opposed to us. It would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to have prevented the Boers at the commencement of the war overrunning the whole country, if the larger numbers stated by Buller had been available, as we had not more than 20,000 to oppose them in all South Africa.

The Cape Colony is the only remaining local recruiting ground from which at least 10,000 more men might be drawn. After consulting the Governor I am, to reassure the people, sending to those districts, to which rebellion is most likely to spread, the whole 6th Division. Yesterday 3 battalions left this place for Port Elizabeth, and will go from there to Naauwpoort by rail. As to reinforcements that may be required, I am a little diffident about giving a definite opinion until matters still further develop, and the result is known of Buller's operation to relieve Ladysmith. I trust that if White and Buller succeed, without very heavy losses, in joining hands, it will not be necessary to send the 8th Division or another brigade of Cavalry. For the lines of communication I shall require 8 Militia battalions in addition to the 7 already detailed, but I should prefer 13 Militia battalions, and, if Lord Cromer agrees, the 2 Highland battalions, which are now in Egypt, 2 of the Militia battalions, to be sent here, taking the places of the latter. I hope, with the Regular Forces already under orders, the 4,000 Imperial Yeomanry, and the Volunteer battalion, and the Colonial details referred to in your telegram, that the force in South Africa will be sufficient, and am most reluctant to request the despatch of more troops from home.

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 154, cipher.)

Spearman's Camp, 13th January, 1900, 1.55 p.m.

The following is the situation here:—The river looked at from the south forms deep doubles. At the apex of one re-entering bend is Potgieter's Drift. The Boer position lies 6,000 yards off across the two salients, having command of from 200 to 500 feet; the intervening plain is without cover and flat; the enemy's flanks are unassailable; their defences are in two and three lines, the second line being out of sight of the plain with 8 guns. This position I do not think we can force. On the 14th we shall be concentrated here with 10 days' supplies, which I am unable to increase. My force consists of 5 Brigades, less 1 battalion; 42 guns, Field Artillery; 1 howitzer battery; 6 Naval 12-pr., and 2 guns, 4.7-in. I propose that Warren—taking 36 guns, Field Artillery; 3 Brigades, and 1,500 mounted men—shall cross 5 miles to the west at Trichard's Drift; the mountain which forms right flank of enemy's defence will be turned by his advance, while we do the best we can here with 1 Brigade and 3 battalions, howitzer battery and Naval guns. He agrees to this, but as he can only take supplies for 3 days, and will have to march not less than 15 miles from the river, and as he will have difficulty in obtaining water, the operation is undoubtedly risky. But this is the only possible chance for Ladysmith, where supplies running short, and the sick list is already over 2,000.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 47, cipher.)

Cape Town, 26th January, 1900, 10.5 a.m.

The reverse in Natal is most unfortunate, especially as I cannot possibly for another 10 days enter the Orange Free State. The collection of carriages is being pushed on with all speed, and, I trust, when I do start, I shall have sufficient to enable the force to strike the railway at Springfontein or thereabouts.

The enemy will be compelled by my being there to evacuate their positions at Burghersdorp and Colesberg. For the construction of temporary bridges at Norval's Pont Bridge and Bethulie Railway Bridge, and also for the rapid reconstruction of the 2 permanent railway bridges, materials are all ready. I trust the move towards Bloemfontein will necessitate the enemy lessening their hold on the Modder River and Natal.

Appendix J.

From the Commander-in-Chief to General Sir Redvers Buller.

(Telegram.)

(No. 97, cipher.)

War Office, 26th January, 1900.

Would it not be feasible, in case you should think it possible that your next endeavour to relieve Ladysmith may not be successful, for White to break out at night with all his mounted men, and as many others as he could carry in carts, together with some of his guns at any rate, and cross the Tugela River? The most likely moment for this endeavour would seem to be when you were engaged on the Tugela River, or immediately after, if you did not have decisive success. I am authorised by the Secretary of State for War to say that the Government is quite prepared to give you every support if you adopt this suggestion; but please understand that no restraint is placed on your entire freedom of decision.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)

(No. 52, cipher.)

Cape Town, 27th January, 1900, 3.10 p.m.

Your No. 98, cipher. The following has been sent to Buller:—

"I should be glad to have the earliest information of the reply you propose to send to Commander-in-Chief. It seems to me that White's action depends entirely upon the time he can hold out; the longer he can do so, the greater my chance of affording help from this side.

"If White could possibly hold out until the end of the month, instead of 15th February named by him as the latest date, I should hope to be able to give him and you material assistance. By the latter date I ought to have relieved Kimberley and be near Bloemfontein.

"The hostile pressure in Natal will probably be relieved by the fact of my threatening Bloemfontein, and thus enable Ladysmith to be relieved even before the end of February.

"It would be a desperate venture for White to break out, and it would be a severe blow to our prestige throughout South Africa, and would in no small degree embarrass our future operations should he abandon the position he has so long defended and the sick and wounded."

From General Sir Redvers Buller to the Commander-in-Chief.

(Telegram.)

(No. 171, cipher.)

Spearman's Camp, 27th January, 1900, 7.5 p.m.

Your No. 97, cipher. Many thanks. It has been one of my great difficulties that White has all along stated that he could help me very little, as when I originally planned his relief I fully expected to be met half way. I fear that it would scarcely be possible for him to break out, and I imagine that his horses, if not eaten, are starved, as he has had to feed his slaughter oxen on their food. Luck is dead against me, this last time cruelly so, but the enemy had 16,000 against me, or not less than the force that I could put into the field.

The fact is that two set battles are required to relieve White. I have always thought I could make a certainty of the first, but have been defeated. I am stopped by the necessity for the second. If, for example, I succeed here and then fail at Roode Poort, I shall be left with a demoralized force, short of water, perhaps 3,000 wounded, and 16 miles from anywhere. Our Officers expose themselves so unnecessarily that one loses them, and then the battalion is thereby demoralized. In a couple of days, however, I shall wire fuller particulars.

Appendix J. *From the Commander in-Chief to General Sir Redvers Buller.*

(Telegram.)
(No. 101, cipher.)

War Office, 27th January, 1900.

It is possible that my telegram of yesterday might be misinterpreted. Please understand that it is not intended to suggest that it is the best course for White to cut his way out. On the contrary, it is only when all the expedients for extricating him have failed that this plan, if practicable at all, should be adopted. The telegram, however, had better be considered as cancelled in view of Lord Roberts' subsequent communication to you.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 72, cipher.) Cape Town, 30th January, 1900.

Your No. 99, cipher. Less uneasiness than I had anticipated has arisen in Cape Colony, in consequence of Buller's check on the Tugela. He now proposes a second attempt which will, I trust, succeed. Should it fail, I think it would be inadvisable to reduce the Natal garrison, as we must continue to do our utmost to prevent Ladysmith from falling into enemy's hands. White says that by eating his horses, he can hold out 6 weeks longer, and still have guns efficiently horsed, and about 1,000 mounted troops available; the amount of assistance I can afford, in the event of another failure, must depend on the result of my operations for relief of Kimberley. Instead of leaving to-day, as stated in my No. 53 cipher, I have postponed my departure from Cape Town for about a week. I shall thus be enabled to collect on Modder River a larger force than I at first anticipated. After relieving Kimberley, my movements must depend on the situation as it then presents itself; but should such a plan appear feasible, I should make straight for Bloemfontein.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 74, cipher.)

Cape Town, 30th January, 1900, 11.20 p.m.

Following received from Buller, Spearman's Camp, 29th January:—

"For next try to relieve Ladysmith my plan is to cross the Tugela River three times, and using a new drift just discovered, to turn the Spion Kop position by the east. The discovery of this drift makes all the difference by enabling me to reach a position which I had hitherto considered inaccessible. I am only waiting for the Horse Artillery battery from India, and if it arrives, I hope to attack on Wednesday at 4 p.m. without fail. The Ladysmith death-rate is now 8 to 10 a day, and their hospital stores have run out, so delay is objectionable.

"This time I feel fairly confident of success, as I believe the enemy are very disheartened after their severe lesson last week, while we are all right. It is never safe to attempt to prophesy, but so far as my exertions can, humanly speaking, conduce to the desired end, I think I can promise you that I shall in no case compromise my force.

"In reply to your enquiries, when Woodgate was wounded, command on Spion Kop devolved upon Colonel Crofton, Royal Lancaster Regiment. By misinterpreting orders, he was superseded by Colonel Thorneycroft, and the latter ordered the retirement from the hill after night-fall, exercising in my opinion, a wise discretion, under the circumstances."

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.)
(No. 121, cipher.)

Cape Town, 6th February 1900, 6.30 p.m.

Following received from Buller:—

"I have pierced the enemy's lines after a fight lasting all of yesterday, without many casualties, and I now hold the hill which divides their position, and which will give me access to Ladysmith plain if I can advance. I shall then be 10 miles from White, while the enemy will have only one place beyond to stand. I must, however,

drive back enemy either on my right or left to get my artillery and stores on to the plain. This operation will cost from 2,000 to 3,000 men, and I am hopeful but not confident of success. Do you think the chance of relieving Ladysmith worth the risk, and how would such a loss affect your plans? This is the only possible way of relieving Ladysmith, and I know of no other if I give up this."

The following is my reply to Buller:—

Ladysmith must be relieved even at the loss you expect. I should certainly persevere, and my hope is that enemy will be so severely punished as to enable you to withdraw White's garrison without great difficulty. Let troops know that in their hands is the honour of the Empire, and that of their success I have no possible doubt.

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Head-quarters, Modder,
(No. 136, cipher.) 10th February 1900, 12.55 p.m.

Following received from Buller, from Springfield, 9th February (No. 193, cipher):—

"The operations of the past three weeks have borne in upon me the fact that I had seriously miscalculated the retentive power of the Ladysmith garrison. I now find the enemy can practically neglect that and turn their whole force on me. I am not consequently strong enough to relieve Ladysmith. If you could send me reinforcements, and if White could hold out until they arrive, I think it might be done; but with a single column I believe it to be almost an impossibility. I shall continue attacking it, as it keeps the enemy off Ladysmith, but I think the prospects of success are very small. Can you send me the other half batteries of 5-inch guns. I have two here, and should like the full batteries available."

Following received this morning, dated 9th (No. 195, cipher):—

"It is right you should know that, in my opinion, the fate of Ladysmith is only a question of days, unless I am very considerably reinforced. Where I go the enemy can anticipate me in superior force. I turned yesterday from Vaal Krantz, and am moving towards Colenso; the enemy have left Vaal Krantz and are now at Colenso. They do in six hours and seven miles what takes me three days and 26 miles. When I said that I should try and save Ladysmith the 5th Division had arrived at the Cape, and the 6th and 7th were likely to come and were expected to be at my disposal; but two days after you were appointed, and directed that all troops arriving after that date were to be kept at Cape. I understand from you that you expect to occupy Bloemfontein by end of February, and so relieve the pressure on Ladysmith. I hope the forecast will prove correct, but I cannot help feeling that to relieve Ladysmith as it is for such a chance is a great risk, and it is right I should say so. As for myself, I am doing all I can, and certainly have reason to think that I retain the confidence of all who know my difficulties; but if it is thought anyone else can do better, I would far rather be sacrificed than run the risk of losing Ladysmith. I should like you to forward this to the Secretary of State."

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Modder River,
(No. 141, cipher.) 10th February, 1900, 8.15 p.m.

Following is copy of a telegram I have sent to General Buller:—

"Your cipher telegrams No. 193 and No. 195 of 9th February open out such a large question that it seems necessary to recall what has taken place since my appointment to the chief command in South Africa. My views on the general military situation were communicated to you in my cipher telegrams, No. 1, dated London, 23rd December, and No. 3, dated Madeira, 26th December, in the first of which I pointed out the importance of concentrating all our available forces in Cape Colony, with the object of advancing on Bloemfontein, and in the second informed you that pending the landing in Cape Colony of the 6th Division the *status quo* in Natal did not appear altogether disadvantageous. On my arrival at Cape Town on 10th January, you did not ask for further rein-

forcements. In your telegram No. 157, cipher, dated 15th January, you informed me that you had collected stores more quickly than you had anticipated and were concentrating your troops for an advance, adding that you would probably be unaided as White had told you to expect very little help from him.

"In your cipher telegram, 158, dated 17th January, you repeated a message from White reporting that his force was much played out, and suggesting that you might apply for more troops if you felt any serious doubt of being able to get through to Ladysmith. On this you remarked that you questioned if you could do better with a larger force, the difficulties of supplies on the Tugela river without roads being enormous. You reported your withdrawal from Spion Kop in your cipher telegram No. 169, dated 25th January, to which I replied in my telegram, No. 26, dated 26th January. In this I informed you of my intention to collect sufficient transport and invade the Orange Free State early in February, and I suggested that you should postpone further attempts to relieve Ladysmith until the effect of the operations which I contemplated had become apparent. On 28th January, in your cipher telegram No. 179, you repeated a message of the same date from White in reply to a question from me in which he stated he could hold out for six weeks longer. Even then you did not ask for reinforcements, and as you disregarded my suggestion that you should act on the defensive until I had time to lessen the hostile pressure in Natal by advancing on the Orange Free State, the natural conclusion to be drawn was that you felt yourself strong enough, with the troops at your disposal, to make a further attempt to relieve Ladysmith. As for your remarks about the 6th and 7th Divisions, it is true that had you been holding chief command in South Africa you could have diverted them to Natal, but their original destination was Cape Colony, and, though you knew that I proposed to employ them in that Colony, you did not ask for their services, nor did you leave anything on record showing that you wanted their services. From the foregoing references, it will be seen that by the middle of January you were acquainted with White's position, resources and inability to afford you material assistance, and that on 26th January I gave you specific information of my intentions, which involved the employment in offensive field operations of every soldier in Cape Colony that could be spared from defence duty within the Colony. It will also be seen that, from the date of my assuming chief command until yesterday, I have had no reason to suppose that you considered reinforcements necessary for the relief of Ladysmith. Sending you large reinforcements now would entail the abandonment of the plan of operation, the object of which was explained to you on 27th January, and in the prosecution of which I am convinced lies our best chance of success both in Natal and on the North of Cape Colony. Such a course would involve endless confusion and protracted delay, and as Cape Colony is weakly held, might not improbably lead to a general rising of the disaffected Dutch population. I must therefore request that while maintaining a bold front, you will act strictly on the defensive, until I have time to see whether the operation I am undertaking produces the effect I hope for. The repeated loss of men on the Tugela river without satisfactory result is that which our small army cannot aim at. I will gladly meet your wishes as regards the remaining half batteries of 5-inch guns, but I can do nothing more. Your two telegrams under reply, and my answer to them are being repeated to the Secretary of State for War."

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Modder River, 12th February, 1900.

Following sent to Buller to-day, priority C 93, cipher, 11th February:—

"In continuation of my cipher telegram No. 141 of yesterday, and with reference to your telegram No. 195 of 9th instant, in which you give it as your opinion that fate of Ladysmith is only question of days, unless you are very considerably reinforced, I should like to have the views of your second in command on this question, which is one of such vital importance to our position in South Africa, that it is very necessary I should know whether Sir Charles

Warren shares your views. Show him all your and my Appendix I. telegrams on this subject, also White's telegram of 28th January to me, in which he states he could hold out until middle of March. I wish also to know why, as stated in your telegram No. 169 of 25th January, you considered it necessary to take command of operations which resulted in withdrawal from Spion Kop. Please send very early replies to both these questions."

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Enslin,
(No. 152, cipher.) 14th February, 1900, 7.55 p.m.

Following received from Buller, dated Chieveley, 13th February:—

"I have received following from General Warren:— 'Secret. With reference to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts' question of 11th February, No. C 93, as to whether I share your views expressed in your telegram No. 195 of 9th February, the matter involves an immense number of considerations and investigation of details on which I may or may not share your views, but on the main and important subjects I think that my views closely coincide with yours, as follows:—

"A.—In my estimation the force now in Natal is not sufficiently strong to effectually relieve Ladysmith if the Boers have long-range guns well directed, with good shells, except by getting hold of some position where we are able to get our artillery to pound away at the Boers in their trenches, and then worry and harry till they are tired out.

"B.—I consider that an attack on Bloemfontein and the occupation of the Orange Free State would materially assist in relief of Ladysmith by drawing off the Orange Free State Boers, because, immediately the Orange Free State is declared British territory, the Orange Free State Boers in Natal must either return home or lose their farms.

"C.—I agree with you and General White that it would be fatal to Ladysmith merely to remain on the defensive until operations are carried out in Orange Free State. I consider that the General Officer Commanding, Natal, is bound to continue closely attacking the Boers, even though he should know that he cannot effect relief of Ladysmith, by doing so, arranging, of course, that it may be done with as little loss of life as possible.

"D.—General White first stated that Ladysmith could only hold out to 15th February, but can now hold out to 15th March. This gives us nearly a month more. I consider that 10,000 would be much more effectually employed in Orange Free State and Transvaal in giving assistance to Ladysmith; at the same time I am of opinion that the Natal force is just so weak, without its proper complement of artillery, as to act with difficulty against positions held by the Boers, which are practically forts with fortifications. On the whole, I think that the most effectual arrangement is for the force here, kept up by drafts to full strength, to pound away with their artillery and hang on, and to worry the Boers to the utmost while a rapid advance is made on Bloemfontein, with the object of occupying Harrismith and Van Reenan's Passes, and at the same time for a proclamation to be issued stating that the Orange Free State is British territory, and must call on the Boers to return home or lose their farms.

"E.—You have shown me your proposals as to attacking Hlangwane, near Colenso. I think that this will much assist General White, and that if sufficient long-range guns can be got up, it is possible that the Boers may be worried by artillery until a passage is forced through to Ladysmith; at any rate, it is necessary constantly to pound away to keep the Boers off Ladysmith until they are drawn off by Lord Roberts' advance. The only point I would suggest is that, when a frontal attack is necessary, it should be done, if it is practicable, by sappers, so as to save life; but I have not met with a place in the recent operations where a sapper would be useful, as the Boers dread being killed in anything like equal proportion to our men. There are a considerable number of minor points I should touch on, but these five, A, B, C, D, E, are the most essential."

"My reply will be sent later."

Appendix J *From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.*

(Telegram.) Waterval Drift,
(No. 150, cipher.) 14th February, 1900, 8.15 p.m.

Following received from Buller, Chieveley Camp, 12th February :—

"Your résumé of telegrams is quite correct, except that you have omitted your answer of 16th January to mine of 13th and 15th, which you quote. In it you said: 'I am concerned to hear you can expect very little help from White, as that is the sole chance of Ladysmith being relieved.' I took the words 'sole chance' as a definite intimation that I was not to ask for reinforcements, and I should not have done so now had it not been represented to me that I ought to tell you I did not think I was strong enough to save Ladysmith unless reinforced. But pray do not think I wish to lay my troubles on you. I quite admit that I miscalculated the retentive powers of General White's force. I thought he would hold at least 10,000 men off me; I doubt if he keeps 2,000, and I underrated the difficulty of the country. I do not know your plans or where your troops are, and the last thing I wish to do is to involve your plan in confusion. I merely state the facts that I think Ladysmith is in danger, and that I find myself too weak to relieve it; but as you value the safety of Ladysmith, do not tell me to remain on the defensive. To do that means to leave the whole Boer force free to attack Ladysmith. General White has repeatedly telegraphed, 'I trust sickness amongst Boers preventing them throwing their strength on me,' and, again, 'the closer to Ladysmith you can establish yourself the better chance we should have.' I feel sure this is right policy, and I hope you will not say I am to rest supine and leave Ladysmith alone. During the late operations I am confident that the Boer force has been reduced by two men to every one I have lost, and for 3 weeks our operations have practically caused the cessation of the bombardment of Ladysmith. As I have before said, I shall do all I can and rely on it that I will not compromise any force. Perhaps you will repeat this to the Secretary of State also to complete the series."

My telegram quoted was as follows :—

"I am concerned to hear you can expect very little help from White. As that is the sole chance of Ladysmith being relieved, surely he must make an effort to co-operate with Warren as he approaches Ladysmith. It is, I am sure, needless for me to urge importance of there being no

delay on the road; rapidity and quickness of movement is everything against an enemy so skilful in strengthening their defensive positions."

From Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

(Telegram.) Waterval Drift, 15th February, 1900.

The following is a repetition of my telegram to General Buller :—

"No. 156, cipher. Your telegrams No. 198 of 12th February and No. 200 of 13th February. My reason for asking you to maintain strictly defensive attitude while still showing bold front was because you informed me that you felt yourself too weak to relieve Ladysmith without reinforcement, and considered its fall merely a question of days. As I am unable to spare reinforcements for Natal, it appears to me to involve useless waste of life for you to again undertake an enterprise which you regarded as hopeless until it could be seen whether my operation in Orange Free State would lessen forces opposed to you and make your task easier. At the same time I have no wish that you should adhere to a passive defence, provided that care is taken to avoid complications which may result in heavy loss of life. Subject to this condition I abundantly agree that the more you can harass the Boers the better. I therefore leave it to you to do what you think best, and rely on your assurance that you will not compromise your force. My force is at present operating in angle of Modder and Riet rivers, and I hope to be able to relieve Kimberley within a few days. My intention then is to march towards Bloemfontein. As regards Warren's telegram, I am glad to find that his views coincide in the main with yours, and also that he agrees with me in thinking that a rapid advance on Bloemfontein will materially assist in relieving Ladysmith by causing many of the inhabitants of Orange Free State to return to their farms. You have not correctly quoted my telegram No. 16, cipher, of 16th January, which runs as follows :—'I am concerned to hear you can expect very little help from White. As this is the sole chance of Ladysmith being relieved, surely he must make an effort to co-operate with Warren as he approaches Ladysmith. It is, I am sure, needless for me to urge the importance of there being no delay on the road; rapidity of movement is everything against an enemy so skilful in strengthening defensive positions.' The words 'sole chance' refer to your operations alone, not to White's help."

APPENDIX K.

Appendix K.

LADYSMITH SIEGE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN NOVEMBER 26th, 1899, AND FEBRUARY 28th, 1900, AS 'SUPPLIED BY THE WAR OFFICE TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

(See Questions 14688 to 14962.)

! No. 1.

From General Sir G. White to General Clerly.

No. 18 P, 26th November. My supply of hay will only last, at reduced ration, till about 20th December. Other supplies ample, but gun ammunition running low. When you are ready to cross Tugela, I propose to create diversion by fighting towards Onderbrook Hotel. Enemy has entrenched positions commanding this route, and we should attack on same date. What force can you advance with? Give details. May I reckon on 12th or 13th from Colenso or other point on Tugela. Report Buller's movements and situation, Kimberley and Mafeking.

! No. 2.

From General Sir G. White to General Clerly.

No. 19 P, 27th November. Received your No. 5 M, 21st November, and Campbell's, 25th November. Runners report, verbally, successful action, Mooi River and advance to Frere. Best congratulations. Two or three thousand Boers moved past Ladysmith to-day from south, believed returning Orange Free State, part by Drakensberg, part by rail through Transvaal. Propose to try and break gap in investment line through which my mounted troops can harass these movements and shall be glad of your early co-operation. Natives report Commandant, South African Republic, returned here yesterday. To avoid loss Officers should dress like men and carry rifles. Repeat General Buller.

No. 3.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Maritzburg, 29th November, No. 47, cipher. I am organising relief force, and only waiting for artillery. Have driven enemy north of Tugela River. Small force at Weenen; they have destroyed bridges at Colenso. Look out at night in two or three days' time for searchlight about Highlands. Methuen is at Modder River, en route for Kimberley, having defeated enemy in three battles, in last of which they were 8,000 strong and entrenched, under command of Cronje. Advertising to affairs in Europe, no chance of intervention. If you hear me attacking, join in if you can. I do not yet know which way I will come. How much longer could you hold out?

No. 4.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 20 P, 30th November. Flashing signals clouds seen last night for first time. Following portion only read:—"I do not yet know which way I will come. How much longer could you hold out? From Maritzburg. from Buller." Commencement of message and date not read. Situation here unchanged; but enemy still mounting additional guns against some of our essential positions. I have provisions for 70 days, and believe I can defend Ladysmith while they last. Hay or grazing is a difficulty; I have 35 days' supply of this at reduced ration. Small-arm ammunition, 5½ million; 15-pr. guns, 250 rounds per gun; 4.7-inch naval guns, 170 rounds per gun; 12-pr. naval guns, 270 rounds per gun; 6.3 inch howitzer, 430 rounds per gun. Enemy learns every plan of operations I form, and I cannot discover source. I have locked up or banished every suspect, but still have undoubted evidence of betrayal. Native deserters from enemy and our native scouts report enemy much disheartened by news of advance on Free State, victory

on Mooi River, and consequent retirement north of Tugela River. With regard to road of advance towards Ladysmith, I could give most help to a force coming via Onderbrook Hotel or Springfield, but enemy is making his positions on that side stronger daily. If force south of Tugela can effect junction with me, I believe effect will be immediate and decisive. At present cannot go large as I am completely invested, and must reserve myself for one or two big efforts to co-operate with relief force. It will be the greatest help to Ladysmith if relief force maintains closest possible touch with enemy. Hospital return—wounded, 225; dysentery, 71; enteric, 15; other fevers, 12; other diseases, 109. Additional portion of message deciphered—"If you hear me attacking join in if you can." Please repeat entire message. I will keep a good look out and do all I can. Repeat General Clerly.

No. 5.

From General Clerly, Frere, to General Sir G. White.

3rd December. Your questions by heliograph to Weenen received, and yours by runner to-day. The bulk of my troops are here and I hope will be able to move about 11th. Demoralised Boers were seen to have retreated north of Tugela River. Buller is still at Maritzburg. There has not been much fighting on this side yet. Hildyard made a night attack on the Boers south of Estcourt on 22nd and 23rd, and drove them out of their positions. The next day they commenced retreating. Kimberley and Mafeking are still all right, former probably practically relieved by now. Lord Methuen was slightly wounded at Modder River, but has returned to duty. The German Emperor has been well received in England, where present war creates greatest enthusiasm. Will inform you as to my exact plans later. We are using flashing signals nightly.

No. 6.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 58, 4th December. Your No. 20 P,* 30th November, received. I shall have concentrated four brigades of Infantry, five batteries of Artillery, one regiment of Cavalry, 1,000 mounted Volunteers, by 6th December, and shall attack. I cannot yet say which route, but will communicate with you in several cipher messages before I advance. I shall also send by searchlight messages in clear, but they will be false ones sent in order to deceive enemy.

No. 7.

Received without address, signature, or date, by runner, on 6th December.

No. H 59, cipher. The despatch to Natal of Cavalry and Artillery has been somewhat delayed; but I still hope to commence my general advance, 12th December, possibly sooner. Will try to let you know again. Sir Redvers Buller is now at Maritzburg. Very anxious to know strength and position of Boer force north of Colenso.

No. 8.

From General Clerly to General Sir G. White.

No. H 63, 5th December, Highlands. Buller says he will send you all sorts of messages by heliograph and flashing signals, in clear; but you are not to believe them. You are only to believe messages sent in cipher or in Lindustani.

* No. 4.

Appendix K.

No. 9.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 21 P, 6th December. Have strong evidence that Orange Free State Boers are proceeding in large numbers to Orange Free State, both *via* Drakensberg and by rail through Transvaal. My Cavalry is now shut in, and as regards arrival relieving force, it is too early for me to take and occupy more extended positions so as to free mounted troops to harass Free State withdrawal. Perhaps you can hurry advance, or if you think it necessary, I will try to harass Free State Boers at once. I believe large portion of enemy's force now faces Tugela.

No. 10.

From General Sir G. White to General Clerly.

No. 21 P, 7th December. Your No. H 63,* 5th December, received. Do not use Hindustani for true messages. Boers would have no difficulty in getting them translated. Inform Buller.

No. 11.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 65, 7th December. I have decided to advance by Potgieter's Drift. Expect to start 12th December and take five days.

No. 12.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 24 P, 8th December. This morning I made a demonstration with Cavalry to the north and east to draw enemy back from Tugela direction. Cavalry could not get far as enemy still in force to north and east. About 20 casualties.

No. 13.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller

No. 23 P, 8th December. Last night I sent out General Hunter with 500 Natal Volunteers under Royston, and 100 Imperial Light Horse under Edwards, to surprise Gun Hill. The enterprise was admirably carried out and was entirely successful, the hill being captured and a 6-inch gun and a 4.7-inch howitzer destroyed with guncotton by Captain Fowke and Lieutenant Turner, Royal Engineers, while a Maxim was captured and brought into camp. Our loss—one killed; Major Henderson, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and two men, slightly wounded. At the same time Colonel Knox seized Limit Hill, and one squadron 19th Hussars rode round Pepworth Hill, burning kraals and cutting Boer telegraph line. No casualties.

No. 14.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 25 P, 8th December. Captain Heath reported yesterday from balloon that very large laager of enemy, consisting of about 300 tents, is on this side Tugela in neighbourhood of Potgieter's Drift. Boers usually yield to heavy shelling.

No. 15.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 26 P, 8th December. Your message No. 65,† 7th December. I cannot make sense of eight groups which come between 66130 and 00852, although I have had them several times repeated. Please have ciphering checked and heliograph this part of message again.

No. 16.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 69, 9th December. The balloon was correct, but they have not enough men at Potgieter's to stop me. I am only waiting for wagons, which I am impressing. I still hope to start on 12th, and arrive near Lancer's Kop on 17th, but may be a day or two later, though I hope not. If I have hard fighting near Ladysmith I shall

look to you to feed my force for perhaps two days. I can only take three days' supplies across Tugela River, but that should be enough.

No. 17.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 27 P, 10th December. Your No. 65‡ of 7th December received and understood. Am I right in supposing you will force crossing of Potgieter's Drift morning 15th? If so, I will move out night 14th–15th, and work towards you as far as I can. As time is all-important factor in co-operation, you will, I am sure, inform me of any change.

No. 18.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 28 P, 11th December. Last night Lieut.-Colonel Metcalfe, 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade, with 500 men of his battalion, made a sortie to capture Surprise Hill, and destroy the 4.7-inch howitzer mounted there. They reached the crest of the hill undiscovered, and drove off the enemy, the gun being destroyed with guncotton successfully by Digby Jones, R.E. When returning they found their retirement barred by Boers, but forced their way through, using the bayonet freely. Boer losses considerable. Our losses are: 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade, killed—Lieutenant Fergusson and 10 rank and file; wounded—Captain Paley, Second Lieutenant Davenport, Second Lieutenant Bond, 40 rank and file. Six men, 2nd Bn. Rifle Brigade, who remained behind in charge of wounded, were taken prisoners. Royal Engineers, rank and file, one killed, one wounded.

No. 19.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Clear line. No. 72, cipher, 11th December. Your No. 27 P.§ I sent Barton's Brigade and six naval guns this evening to a point beyond Chieveley, whence during next two days they will bombard defences of Colenso. I propose to march with three brigades, two regiments of Cavalry, 1,000 Volunteers, five batteries Field Artillery, and six naval guns, to Springfield on night of 13th, force the passage of Potgieter's a.m. 15th, advance to water near Dewdrop 16th, attack Lancer's Hill 17th. But my actual movement depends on arrival of impressed transport. I may be disappointed, so cannot fix dates accurately without risking undue delay. Consequently, I think you had better not look forward to helping me before my attack on Lancer's Hill, unless you feel certain of where I am. Heavy rain before 15th may also delay me.

No. 20.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

Clear line. No. 29 P, 12th December. Your No. 72, 11th December, received and understood. Shall look out for heliograph on hills south of Potgieter's, and act according to circumstances.

No. 21.

From General Clerly to Sir G. White.

No. 65 H, 11th December. We think it possible that the Boers have flashing signals, and may use it to interfere and confuse our messages.

No. 22.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 78, cipher, 13th December. I have been forced to change my plans. Am coming through *via* Colenso and Onderbrook Spruit.

No. 23.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 30 P, 13th December. Your No. 78¶ of to-day received and understood. Shall be very glad if you will let me know your probable dates.

* No. 8.

‡ No. 19.

† No. 11.

‡ No. 11.

¶ No. 22.

§ No. 17.

No. 24.

From General Sir G. White to General Clerly.

No. 31 P, 13th December. Your No. H 65* of 11th. Boers use searchlight to hinder cloud signals, but not successfully.

No. 25.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 83, 13th December. Three brigades concentrate at Chieveley to-day. Fourth brigade go there to-morrow. Actual date of attack depends on difficulties met with; probably 17th December.

No. 26.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Clear line. No. 88, 16th December. I tried Colenso yesterday, but failed; the enemy is too strong for my force, except with siege operations, and those will take one full month to prepare. Can you last so long? If not, how many days can you give me in which to take up defensive position? After which I suggest you firing away as much ammunition as you can, and making best terms you can. I can remain here if you have alternative suggestion, but unaided I cannot break in. I find my Infantry cannot fight more than 10 miles from camp, and then only if water can be got, and it is scarce here.

[NOTE.—In his No. 92 of 17th, Buller said above message had been signalled correctly, but asked us to make following corrections:—Strike out from “if not, how many” down to “after which” inclusive, and substitute “how many days can you hold out?” Add to end of message, “whatever happens, recollect to burn your cipher, decipher, and code books, and all deciphered messages.”]

No. 27.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 32, 16th December. Your No. 88† of to-day received and understood. My suggestion is that you take up strongest available position that will enable you to keep touch of the enemy and harass him constantly with Artillery fire, and in other ways as much as possible. I can make food last for much longer than a month, and will not think of making terms till I am forced to. You may have hit enemy harder than you think. All our native spies report that your Artillery fire made considerable impression on enemy. Have your losses been very heavy? If you lose touch of enemy, it will immensely increase his opportunities of crushing me, and have worse effect elsewhere. While you are in touch with him and in communication with me he has both of our forces to reckon with. Make every effort to get reinforcements as early as possible, including India, and enlist every man in both Colonies who will serve and can ride. Things may look brighter. The loss of 12,000 men here would be a heavy blow to England. We must not yet think of it. I fear I could not cut my way to you. Enteric fever is increasing alarmingly here. There are now 180 cases, all within the last month. Answer fully. I am keeping everything secret for the present till I know your plans.

No. 28.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Clear line. No. 93, 17th December. I find I cannot take Colenso, and I cannot stay in force near there, as there is no water, but I am leaving there as large a force as I can to help you; but recollect that in this weather my Infantry cannot be depended on to march more than 10 miles a day. Can you suggest anything for me to do? I think in about three weeks from now I could take Colenso, but I can never get to Onderbroek.

No. 29.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

Clear line. No. 33 P, 18th December. Your No. 93, 17th December, received and understood. It is difficult

for me to make suggestions, as I do not know situation outside, or whether you have made serious attempt to take Colenso, and with what loss. Your messages were previously confident, and I had made preparations to fight towards Onderbroek, and could still do so if you had Colenso. I cannot advise leaving small force in advance of main body. It would probably be invested and be no real threat to enemy. Your front line should be held in full strength. Abandonment of this garrison seems to me most disastrous alternative on public grounds. Enemy will be doubly strong on Tugela if Ladysmith falls. I can only suggest getting every available reinforcement in men and guns and attacking again in full force as early as possible. Meantime I will do all I can to maintain an active defence, and will co-operate with you to the extent of my power if you advance again. How are you getting on in the Free State? We know nothing. Detailed news desirable to contradict mischievous rumours here.

No. 30.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Dated Head-quarters, Frere, No. 97, 17th December. 6th Division just arrived at the Cape; have telegraphed for it to come on at once. It will make me strong enough to try Potgieter's. How long can you hold out?

No. 31.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

Clear line. No. 34 P, 18th December. Your No. 97‡ of yesterday received and understood. Delighted to get it. I have provisions for men for six weeks, and have confidence in holding this place for that time; but bombardment may become more trying. I had 22 casualties this morning from one shell. Enteric and dysentery increasing very rapidly. I can get on well for three weeks, keeping even horses moderately fit, if you wish to wait for siege train. It is worth waiting a little to dominate and overwhelm enemy's guns. Bring every heavy gun, naval and other, you can get. Water will be a difficulty as regards occupying a position near Tugela River, from which you can maintain continuous attack. Could you arrange pipes, pumping station, or reservoirs?

No. 32.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 35 P, 18th December. Following from Lambton, R.N., to Officer Commanding, Naval Brigade:—“At long ranges I consider common and lyddite shell much preferable to shrapnel for clearing entrenchments.”

No. 33.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 98, 18th December. Your No. 32 P§ of yesterday received. My No. 97|| of yesterday gives situation. I am shelling Colenso and keeping all troops I can at Chieveley, but water is scarce. Boil all your water; we hear Boers are putting dead horses in Klip River. I will tell you immediately I know when Warren is coming.

No. 34.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 36 P, 19th December. All our scouts report marked diminution in usual number of Boer horses round here to-day. This may mean movement in strength towards you.

No. 35.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 109, 19th December. I was confident of taking Colenso, and think I ought to have done it had not my guns gone in to within 1,200 yards of Fort Wylie, where they were put out of action, and I only extricated two guns out of 12. I lost about 1,000 all told. Heard enemy lost 600 to 800, but I cannot say. Methuen defeated Boers at Belmont, at Graspan, and at Modder

* No. 21.

§ No. 27.

† No. 26.

|| No. 30.

‡ No. 30.

Appendix K. River. He again attacked them at Speyfontein, but failed to get home. He is now encamped at Modder River in front of Cronje, who has about 15,000 men very strongly entrenched. The 5th Division is just arriving, and the 6th and 7th Divisions are embarking in England. Dutch in Cape Colony are giving a good deal of trouble. That, I think, is about all the news.

No. 36.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 112, 21st December. Your message, 19th December, received. I expect that reinforcements will be concentrated here by 5th January.

No. 37.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 113, 22nd December. A man named Carl Christian Pietersen, believed to be serving in Natal Mounted Rifles in Ladysmith, is believed to be in secret service of enemy.

No. 38.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 37 P, 23rd December. Previous history of man referred to in your No. 113* of 22nd well known. He has been closely watched in camp and field. Appears thoroughly loyal and very forward under fire. Have you any evidence against him?

No. 39.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 0259, code. Your No. 37 P.† There is no evidence against the man referred to.

No. 40.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 131, 30th December, Frere. My intention is to start from here 6th January, by which time I hope the 5th Division will have arrived. My point of attack will be Lancer's Kop. It will take me about six days to get there from the date I start from here. I will inform you later of my exact date of departure from here, and will endeavour to keep you informed of my movements, but my telegraph line may be cut.

No. 41.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 38 P, 1st January. Your No. 131,‡ 30th December, received to-day. If you will trust me with further details of your plan, I hope to be able to assist you in the later stages of your advance on Ladysmith; but to do this effectually I should require to know on which line or lines you intend to force passage of Tugela.

No. 42.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 133, 2nd January. Your No. 38 P,§ 1st January. See my No. 97, 17th December. I adhere to the plan therein referred to of crossing Tugela River at Potgieter's. I expect a stiff fight when crossing the river, possibly a fight at the place I camp, between river and Lancer's Kop, and another fight there. If you can recommend me any better point to attack than Lancer's Kop, please do so. As troops are not arriving up to time, I doubt if I can start until the 8th January. I calculate it will take me seven days to reach Lancer's Kop.

No. 43.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 39 P, 2nd January. Your No. 133|| of to-day. As you intend crossing Tugela River at Potgieter's, Lancer's Hill becomes an essential point on your line of advance. If you can keep me informed of your progress,

I can help you by attacking Lancer's Hill from north, when you attack it from south-west. Communication by signalling from hill above Potgieter's should be easy. Do not hurry on date of starting on our account if recently arrived troops need rest, as I am quite confident of holding my own here.

No. 44.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 40 P, 3rd January. I have offers from two railway employés to attempt blowing up railway bridges at Sunday's River and Waschbank. Reward, £2,000 in each case if successful, but nothing to be paid for unsuccessful attempt. Would you like this tried?

[NOTE.—On 6th January, about 7 a.m., a telegram was sent to General Buller, informing him that we were being attacked. It was not numbered, and no copy was kept. See No. 2285, General Block.]

No. 45.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 41 P, 6th January, 9.30 a.m. Attack continues, and enemy been reinforced from south. All my reserves are in action. I think enemy must have weakened his force in front of you.

No. 46.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 42 P, 6th January, 12.45 p.m. We now have definite information that considerable numbers of enemy left Colenso yesterday, intending to take Ladysmith before fighting you. Have beaten them off at present, but they are still round me in great numbers, especially to south, and I think renewed attack very probable.

No. 47.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 43 P, 6th January, 3.15 p.m. Attack renewed. Very hard pressed.

No. 48.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 135, 5th January. Your No. 40 P,¶ 3rd January. I have already had Waschbank Railway Bridge blown up. Hear it has been restored, probably with trestles. It is only worth while to make another attempt at moment we seem likely to join hands. If it could be done at that moment thoroughly, to either bridge, I would pay the sum asked for; but I think it too much.

No. 49.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 43 P, 7th January. Yesterday morning, 2.45 a.m., an attack was commenced on my position, but chiefly against Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill. The enemy were in great strength, and pushed their attack with the greatest courage and persistency. Some of our entrenchments on Wagon Hill were three times taken by the enemy and retaken by us. The attack continued till 7.30 p.m. One point within our position was occupied by the enemy the whole day. In a very heavy storm of rain at dusk the enemy were turned out of this position at the point of the bayonet, in the most gallant manner by the Devonshire Regiment, led by Major Park. Colonel Ian Hamilton commanded at Wagon Hill, and rendered invaluable service. The troops have had a very trying time, behaved excellently, and are elated at the service they have rendered to the Queen. The enemy were repulsed everywhere with heavy loss, which greatly exceeds our own. Details will be sent as soon as lists are completed.

* No. 37.

|| No. 42.

† No. 38.

‡ No. 40.

¶ No. 44.

§ No. 41.

No. 50.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 44 P, 7th January. Our losses yesterday heavy. Officers killed, 14; wounded, 23. Men killed, about 100; wounded, about 230. Nominal list later. Most of the wounds were in the head. Troops here much played out, and a very large proportion of my Officers have, up to date, been killed or wounded, or are sick. I would rather not call upon them to move out from Ladysmith to co-operate with you; but I am confident enemy have been very severely hit. Please do not allow our losses to be published in local papers, as they thus reach and encourage the enemy.

No. 51.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 136, 5th January. Your No. 39 P,* 2nd January. I shall certainly try and communicate with you, and am taking limelight for that reason. I expect to start night of 9th-10th, and to have a fight to cross the river about the 15th. The enemy have entrenched themselves, but the position is not naturally as strong as at Colenso. Do you wish me to leave a signaller at Weenen when I start? It would be more convenient to remove him.

No. 52.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 45 P, 8th January. Your No. 136,† 5th January. Of course you must decide; but uninterrupted communication would be double value to me while you are en route for here.

No. 53.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 144, 8th January. After stating that his No. 139, which we could not decipher, referred to operations of 6th January, and might now be cancelled, and after making one or two unimportant corrections in his No. 136,‡ 5th January, goes on as follows:—"I start from here to-morrow and expect it will be six or seven days from then before I shall be able to leave Potgieter's, but I may be quicker. I shall try to keep up signal communication with you and I am taking a balloon which I hope you will see."

No. 54.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

8th January. Following received from Secretary of State for War:—"No. 78, 6th January. Reported here that a Dr. Brennan, Johannesburg, now in Ladysmith, may be supplying Boers with information. Suggest report be communicated to White if possible."

No. 55.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 145, 8th January. Sorry to hear of your severe list of casualties. Congratulate all the men, and say we shall strain every nerve to be with them soon.

No. 56.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 148, 8th January. Your No. 45 P.§ Signal station will be left at Weenen, but keep a good look out for signals to westward on the 11th and afterwards.

No. 57.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 157, 8th January. There is an idea here that the enemy may attack you again shortly, and at night. We commence to move to-morrow, Tuesday, night.

No. 58.

From Her Majesty the Queen to General Sir G. White.

Warmly congratulate you and all under your command for your brilliant success. Greatly admire conduct of the Devonshire Regiment.

No. 59.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 46 P, 10th January. Your reassuring telegram No. 145,|| 8th January, much appreciated by troops. My sick list now amounts to 2,000, including 615 cases of typhoid.

No. 60.

From General Sir G. White to Private Secretary to Her Majesty the Queen.

10th January. The garrison of Ladysmith are deeply grateful for the Queen's most gracious message, and beg to express their loyal duty.

No. 61.

From General Sir G. White to Governor, Natal.

10th January. I thank you for your appreciative telegram. It has gratified the garrison of Ladysmith much, and they are rejoiced to think they have rendered good service to Natal, a province that has shown such devotion to Imperial interests, and given this garrison so splendid a contingent with whom it is an honour to fight as comrades.

No. 62.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 156, 14th January. I find the enemy's position covering Potgieter's Drift so strong that I shall have to turn it, and I expect it will be four or five days from now before I shall be able to advance towards Ladysmith. I shall keep you constantly informed on my progress.

No. 63.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 47 P, 15th January. Your No. 156¶ of yesterday just received. I can wait. Wish you best of luck.

No. 64.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 48 P, 16th January, reference your No. 156**, 14th January. If you have considerable doubt of being able to get through to Ladysmith, would you put case to Roberts, and ask more troops. If you are repulsed now, Ladysmith will be in a bad way. If you are undefeated and ready to attack on any withdrawal of enemy's strength from your front, I think I could maintain this place till 15th February; but the sick would suffer badly. My force is much played out. I have 2,400 in hospital, and many very weakly men at duty. Sickness increasing daily. I have lost services of 230 officers in last three months, including killed, still non-effective from wounds, prisoners, and sick.

No. 65.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 159 of 17th January. Your No. 48 P,++ 16th January. I crossed one bridge at Potgieter's to-day, and am bombarding their positions. Warren, with three brigades and six batteries, has crossed by pontoon bridge at Trichard's Drift, and will move to the north to try and outflank Boer position. I somehow think we are going to be successful this time. We could not get reinforced in time to relieve you if we waited. Every man in this force is doing his level best to relieve you. It is quite pleasant to see how keen the men are. I hope to be knocking at Lancer's Hill in six days from now.

* No. 43.

+ No. 51.
¶ No. 62.‡ No. 51.
** No. 62.§ No. 52.
++ No. 64.

|| No. 55.

Appendix K.

No. 66.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 161, without date, received 19th January. Following from Secretary of State for War :—"Doctor Dyson Vaz said to have reached Ladysmith, 2nd December. Corresponds with Boer Agent at Lisbon. If traced should be watched."

No. 67.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 0354, code, 19th January. Following message received from General Warren last night :—"Colonel Lord Dundonald, with about 1,200 mounted troops, came into action this afternoon with a force of Boers to the west of Acton Homes. At 7 p.m. I reinforced him with 300 1st Royal Dragoons. He has occupied the kopjes after a fight, and is now holding the position. Field-Cornet Heilbron, 20 Boers killed and wounded, 15 prisoners. Lieutenant Shaw, Imperial Light Horse, severely wounded; two privates, King's Royal Rifle Corps, killed; and one Private, Imperial Light Horse, wounded."

No. 68.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 49, 19th January. Your No. 159* and No. 161.† Congratulate you and ourselves on your successful progress, and have greatest confidence in seeing you soon.

No. 69.

From General Sir R. Buller to Sir General G. White.

No. 0352, code, 15th January. Have you formed any estimate of the enemy's losses on 6th January. If so, please inform me.

No. 70.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

15th January. I returned bodies of 79 dead, killed within my position. Of course this cannot include all dead, but I have no means of verifying their losses and dislike making estimates based on uncertain details. Native reports place Boer loss at 500 to 600 killed and wounded.

No. 71.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

19th January. A force of 1,500 to 2,000 Boers moved from Clydesdale towards Acton Homes, 5 p.m. to-day, by main road.

No. 72.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 162, 20th January. Thanks for telegram respecting observations, movements of enemy. Can you see when enemy relieves garrison of trenches east of Spion Kop? The trenches are nearly always full of men, but we cannot see enemy go in or come out of them. Warren is meeting with great difficulties regarding roads, and his progress is very slow. I am sending him three more days' supplies.

No. 73.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

20th January. Your No. 162‡ of to-day. Relief of trenches east of Spion Kop not been seen from here. Will watch and report if relief observed.

No. 74.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 51 P, 21st January. If you can let me know when you intend decisive attack on Boer position, I will demonstrate here to draw as many as possible away from you. Experience leads me to think I can draw away a considerable number.

No. 75.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 166, 21st January. Your No. 51 P, 21st January. We are slowly fighting our way up the hill. I will let you know when help from you will be of most assistance. Reports received from all prisoners put the number of enemy in front of me at 10,000, and the number surrounding you at 5,000. I do not know if this is correct.

No. 76.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 52 P, 22nd January. Your No. 166,|| 21st January. I think 15,000 is too low an estimate of enemy's numbers round Ladysmith and facing Tugela. You are probably right about Ladysmith, but I believe there are more than 10,000 facing you, or in position to face you rapidly. Deserters report a movement on Saturday of detach'd force towards the Drakensberg to try and turn the left flank.

No. 77.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 53 P, 22nd January. Considerable activity in Boer camps to-day. Towards sunset about 500 Boers from here reinforced main Boer camp near Clydesdale. Shall open Artillery fire at daybreak to call them back.

No. 78.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 167, 23rd January. Warren holds the position he gained two days ago. In front of him at about 1,400 yards is the enemy's position west of Spion Kop. It is on higher ground than Warren's position, so it is impossible to see into it properly; it can only be approached over bare open slopes. The ridges, held by Warren, are so steep that guns cannot be placed on them, but we are shelling the enemy's position with howitzer and Field Artillery placed on the lower features behind the Infantry, enemy reply with Creusot and other artillery. In this duel the advantage rests with us, as we appear to be searching his trenches and his artillery fire is not causing us much loss. An attempt will be made to-morrow to seize Spion Kop, the salient which forms the left of the enemy's position facing Trichard's Drift, and (it must be done) from the position facing Potgieter's, it has considerable command over all the enemy's entrenchments.

No. 79.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 54 P, 24th January. Many thanks for efforts you are making. We await news of result with utmost anxiety.

No. 80.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 170, 25th January. Warren took Spion Kop the 24th and held it all day, but suffered very heavily: General Woodgate dangerously wounded, 200 killed and 300 badly wounded, and his garrison abandoned it in great disorder at night. I am withdrawing to Potgieter's, and mean to have one fair square try to get with you, but my force is not strong enough I fear. I shall send particulars to-morrow.

No. 81.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 55 P., 27th January. Your No. 170** of 25th only received to-day. We must expect to lose heavily in this campaign, and be prepared to face it. If you try again and fail, Ladysmith is doomed. Is not 7th Division available to reinforce you? I could feed the men another month, but not all the horses, and without guns my force could do nothing outside. My medical supplies are nearly out, and the mortality is 8 to 10 daily already. I put it to you and the Government whether I ought not to abandon Ladysmith and try to join you. I could, I think, throw 7,000 men and 36 guns into the fight. If

* No. 65.

No. 75.

† No. 66

‡ (Divide it?)

§ No. 72.

** No. 80.

§ No. 74.

you would commence preparing an attack and draw off the enemy, say in the afternoon of a day to be settled between us, I would attack that night, and do my best to join you. The attack from here ought to have great effect, but I fear my men are weak, and in some instances morally played out. The fall of Ladysmith would have a terrible effect, especially in India. I am deeply impressed with the gravity of the situation, and trust you will repeat this to the highest authorities. Deserters report Boers lost severely on 24th, and were quite disheartened by your Artillery fire. If we stick to them we may effect a junction but my proposal is a desperate one, and involves abandoning my sick and wounded, Naval guns, and railway rolling stock. I could not keep the field more than two or three days. I would hold on to the last here if political considerations demand it, or if there is a prospect of sufficient reinforcement to relieve us.

No. 82.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 173, 28th January. We had awful luck on the 24th; I had got two Naval guns and a Mounted Battery half-way up Spion Kop when the troops came down. If we had had the luck out of all the Colonels up there to have found a really good fighting man, we should have been in Ladysmith in four days. As it is, we are no better off, and some regiments here have had a severe shake. On the other hand, the Boers themselves admit very heavy casualties, and that they are tired out. We have held them in their trenches at a distance of from 1,000 to 1,400 yards for a week, and our Artillery fire has been very good. We have lost, say, 1,400. I cannot think their casualties less than 1,000. The question is can I get within a day's fight of you? At the present time they have the position at Potgieter's. I think I can certainly take that, but it will leave them on my left in the Acton Homes—Spion Kop position. They may not remain there, but if they do, I doubt if I can get forward to the Roodeport position, which is, I hear, heavily entrenched. I propose about Wednesday to attack Potgieter's. If I get through I shall be able to arrange with you for a simultaneous attack, you on Lancer's Hill, and me on Roodeport, and that I think offers the best chance of success. Believe me, I will leave nothing untried.

Your No. 55 P,* received since above was written. I agree with you that breaking out is only a final desperate resort. I shall try to force this position, and then we shall see. Some old Boers, who were very civil to our doctors on Spion Kop, told them that there were 16,000 of them in front of us, and not more than 4,000 left at Ladysmith. I have no means of knowing how true this is, but deserters say that most of the men are here. Lord Roberts says he cannot reinforce me, but that if you will wait till end of February, he will by then be in Bloemfontein, and will have relieved Kimberley, which will, he says, reduce the pressure on Ladysmith. I doubt Roberts's forecasts coming off, and think I had better play my hand alone, and as soon as I can. What do you think?

No. 83.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 174, 28th January. Following telegram just received for you from Lord Roberts:—"Please communicate following to White:—"I beg you will yourself accept and offer all those serving under command my warmest congratulations on heroic, splendid defence you have made. It is a matter of the deepest regret to me that the relief of Ladysmith should be delayed, but I trust you will be able to hold out later than the date named in your recent message to Buller. I fear your sick and wounded must suffer, but you will realize how important it is that Ladysmith should not fall into the enemy's hands. I am doing all that is possible to hurry on my movement, and shall be greatly disappointed if, by the end of February, I have not been able to carry out such operations as will compel the enemy to materially reduce his strength in Natal."

No. 84.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 56 P, 28th January. Thanks for your No. 173† of to-day. It is most provoking about losing Spion Kop. I think it would be better if you stick to bombardment, and slow progress by something like sap rather than commit yourself to another definite attack. Information, which I believe correct, says Boers are discouraged by superiority of your armament, and say they cannot stand it. Keep them, therefore, in their trenches and bombard them as heavily as you can. I don't think they will stand it long. I trust to your preventing them from throwing their strength on me. I will hold on six weeks more by sacrificing many of my horses, and that period of bombardment, coupled with Roberts's advance, will make Orange Free State men at all events clear off. I believe your estimate of enemy's numbers here and before you may be about correct, but his guns here are protected by wire entanglements and mines. Boers can, however, come here from Potgieter's in 90 minutes. In this lies their great strength, you must not let them leave you and throw their strength on me.

No. 85.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 57 P, 28th January. Your No. 174‡ of to-day. Please communicate following reply to Lord Roberts:—"Many thanks from self and force for message and congratulations. By sacrificing rest of my horses I can hold out for six weeks keeping my guns efficiently horsed and 1,000 men mounted on moderately efficient horses. I should like to publish your intention to advance *via* Orange Free State as early as you can permit me to do so. It will encourage my garrison and will be certain to reach and discourage Orange Free State men."

No. 86.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 121, 31st January. Consul, Delagoa Bay, reports Boers intend to flood Ladysmith by damming Klip River; German engineer in charge. Native deserter says dam is being made one mile north of Nelthorpe Station. What effect would this have on you?

No. 87.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 58 P, 31st January. Your No. 121§ of to-day. Consider enterprise impossible, and could have no effect.

No. 88.

From General Sir R. Buller's Chief of Staff to General Sir G. White.

No. 1526. Two troopers, Natal Mounted Rifles, arrived, Chieveley, 24th, report sent by you on secret mission which failed, and unable to rejoin you; also state under oath not to divulge cause of coming. Can you corroborate story?

No. 89.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller's Chief of Staff.

No. 59 P, 31st January. Your No. 1526. Yes, if names are Inman and Agnew. Mission was to blow up railway bridge, on Newcastle line; warned to be silent, but not put on oath.

No. 90.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

Clear line. No. 60 P, 2nd February. Information here that another serious attack will be made on Ladysmith very soon. Kruger, Steyn, and Joubert have met and arranged this. If made, I will signal to you, if possible and at night, one rocket first, to call attention,

* No. 81.

† No. 82.

‡ No. 83.

§ No. 86.

Appendix K. and then after interval of one minute three rockets fired at 15 seconds interval, all from Wagon hill, will mean I am seriously attacked. Will you acknowledge by two rockets in rapid succession from Spearman's Kop.

No. 91.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 184, 2nd February. Your No. 60 P* received and noted. I expect to be in position to try and force my way through on to the plain on Monday, at any rate I expect to attack that morning. Unless I can get to the plain I do not see how I can help you, but I shall do all I can. Do you think there is any chance of your being attacked before Monday, as if so, I shall concentrate to-morrow my force, which is now scattered for want of water?

No. 92.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 61 P, 2nd February. I have, what I believe, reliable information that Steyn, Joubert, and younger brother of latter, have held meetings near here, and determined to attack Ladysmith again. Kruger expected daily, when plan will be settled. Majority of Boers are for fighting on here to the last. At conference a Field-Cornet favoured peace. Steyn threatened to dismiss him, on which whole commando threatened to go home. Steyn told Officers attending meeting that they had to fight it out here as that was what they came to Ladysmith for. Boer losses 20th to 24th described as very great, probably 1,200. Effect of lyddite shell described as making great impression, not only killing Boers but burying them, leaving a hand sticking out here or a leg there. Your 184 just received. Do not expect attack before Monday. Attack to-morrow not very likely, but if made shall hope to give good account of ourselves. Attack on Sunday most improbable.

No. 93.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 185, 2nd February. Your No. 60 P.+ We have no rockets, but your signals will be acknowledged by two fires which would be lighted on Spearman's Kop.

No. 94.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 186, 2nd February. With reference to my telegram No. 185,† following just received from Secretary of State for War:—"Correspondent here has letter from Count Villebois Mareuil, saying Boers have laid their plans to take Ladysmith on 5th February, and will certainly do so. We believe Mareuil is on Joubert's Staff."

No. 95.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 188, 3rd February. Acknowledge receipt of this telegram. Bar accidents, I attack the position in front of me Monday morning, and hope to establish myself on the flats before nightfall. I shall try my best. Please note that the Boers removed the helmets and arms of our dead on Spion Kop. They may intend to try and deceive the sentries if they attack you.

No. 96.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 62 P, 4th February. Your No. 188§ of yesterday received and noted. We are all most grateful for your efforts on our account and wish you all success. Precautions taken against use of disguise by enemy.

No. 97.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 63 P, 4th February. One green warning rocket, then interval of one minute followed by red, blue, red rockets at 15 seconds interval.

No. 98.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

4th February. Your No. 63 P|| of to-day. Received and noted.

No. 99.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 190, 7th February. The enemy is too strong for me here, and though I could force the position it would be at great loss. The Bulwana big gun is here, and a large force. My plan is to slip back to Chieveley, take Hlangwane, the Boer position south of the Tugela and east of Colenso, and the next night try and take Bulwana Hill from the south. Can you think of anything better? I find I cannot get my guns and trains through these mountains. I hope to be at Hlangwane on Saturday: keep it dark.

No. 100.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 64 P, 8th February. Your No. 191 of yesterday. Gun opposite you was formerly on Telegraph Hill. Bulwana gun still in position here. Cannot offer suggestions as do not know country or where you propose to cross Tugela. I could help at Bulwana. The closer to Ladysmith you can establish yourself the better chance we shall have here.

No. 101.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 191, 8th February. My No. 190¶ of yesterday. For "Saturday" read "Monday."

No. 102.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 192, 9th February. Following received from Secretary of State for War:—"Suspensions exist that there may be leakage of official intelligence. If possible, ascertain from Ladysmith whether copy of Z or other cipher or code book was lost at Dundee." Please give the information required.

No. 103.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 65 P, 12th February. Your No. 192,** 9th February. Only cipher lost at Dundee was South African Playfair, with key-word "Lines." War Office telegraphic code also believed lost.

No. 104.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 66 P, 13th February. Considerable movement yesterday among Boer camps. All those north of Potgieter's moved, some towards Potgieter's Drift and some eastward. We anxiously await news from you.

No. 105.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 1780 (received without date on 13th February). Field-Marshal desires me to communicate the following to you:—"Your telegram, 28th January. I have entered Orange Free State with a large force, specially strong in Cavalry, Artillery, and Mounted Infantry. Inform your troops of this, and tell them from me I hope the result of next few days may lead to pressure on Ladysmith being materially lessened."

No. 106.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 67 P, 14th February. Two civil residents, H. J. Ladd and J. R. Gorton, have escaped from hospital camp I was allowed by Joubert to form for protection of sick and non-combatants out of fire. In doing this I consider they have made use of camp in a manner that violates

* No. 90.

† No. 97.

‡ No. 90.

¶ No. 99.

§ No. 93.

** No. 102.

§ No. 95.

guarantee I gave to Joubert, and that he would be justified in cancelling the immunity he has most considerably allowed to civilians, women, children, and sick. He has already threatened to do this, and I ask that Ladd and Gorton, who are reported to have arrived at Mooi River, may be arrested and handed over as prisoners to the nearest Boer Officer.

No. 107.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 68 P, 15th February. Following movements of enemy observed to-day:—About 50 wagons and 600 Boers from Roodiport to Surprise Hill; 55 wagons and about 400 Boers from Dewdrop to Underbrook.

No. 108.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 69 P, 15th February. Reference my No. 60,* 2nd February, and No. 63 P,† 4th February. Rocket station changed from Wagon Hill to Caesar's Camp, east end.

No. 109.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 70 P, 16th February. Considerable move northward took place yesterday afternoon and evening. Not less than 2,000 men, with large proportion of wagons, moving north up valley of Klip River towards Candy-cleugh (see page 33 of Report on Communications in Natal). Boers still working hard at dam in Klip River. When moving off, Boers set fire to several farms in Dewdrop Valley.

No. 110.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. O 415, code, 16th February. Your No. 67,‡ 14th February. Have given instructions for the two men you mention to be arrested if they can be found.

No. 111.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 202, 16th February. Your No. 66 P,§ 13th February. I am engaged in trying to turn the enemy out of the position he holds south of Tugela River and east of Colenso. It can best be described as Monte Christo Farm, and consists of west slopes of Cingolo Mountain and east slopes of Hlangwane Hill.

No. 112.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

Clear line. No. 203, 16th February. I hear that 300 Germans have joined the Boers round Ladysmith, and that you will be attacked before 26th February, and that I shall be attacked at the same time.

No. 113.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 71 P, 16th February. Your No. 203|| of to-day. I think another attack here quite possible. Have strengthened defences and will try to give good account of ourselves, but men are on very short rations, and are consequently very weak. We are eating our horses. Have no grain left for animals, and grass is very scarce.

No. 114

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 72 P, 19th February, 10 a.m. Sandbach's message to Hunter received. I congratulate you on your important success. We have observed 160 wagons coming from Tugela direction and moving north. Let me know when you intend attacking position north of Tugela, and whether you come *via* Bulwana or Colenso road, and I will try and co-operate.

No. 115.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 73 P, 21st February. We have observed reinforcements for enemy disembarking at Modder Spruit Station, and about 750 mounted men have been seen during last two days moving south *via* Bulwana.

No. 116.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 207, 21st February. I am now engaged in pushing my way through by Pieters. I think there is only a rearguard in front of me. The large Boer laager under Bulwana was removed last night. I hope to be with you to-morrow night. You might help by working north and stopping some of the enemy getting away. A large camp has been moved to-day from the hill between the station and Caesar's Camp.

No. 117.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 74 P, 21st February. Your No. 207¶ of to-day. We can detect no signs of enemy retreating; all indications point the other way.

No. 118.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 208, 22nd February. I find I was premature in fixing actual date of my entry into Ladysmith, as I am meeting with more opposition than I expected, but I am progressing.

No. 119.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 75 P, 22nd February. Reliable native scout reports all Free State Boers gone. Transvaal Boers chiefly collected at Woodhouse's Farm, two miles west of Pieters. Three guns on Table Hill, two miles west of Woodehouse's. Effect of your guns described as very great.

No. 120.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 76 P, 22nd February. Your No. 208** of to-day. I know you are beating the enemy, stick to them. I carried out a small operation this morning; but my men are so weak from insufficient and inferior food that they are unfit for the field, horses more so.

No. 121.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

(Without number or date.) Received 22nd February. Can only hold Monte Christo temporarily. Shall endeavour to open communication with you further on.

No. 122.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 77, 26th February. I have mounted a 4·7-inch gun and a Naval 12-pr. on Caesar's Camp. Table Hill is within range of the latter, and both Table Hill and Grobelaar's Kloof of the former. Can I help your operations by using them? I have only 80 rounds for 4·7-inch.

No. 123.

From General Sir R. Buller to General Sir G. White.

No. 211, 27th February. Your No. 77 P,†† 26th February. I think you will be able to help me, but I am not close enough to you yet. I shall communicate with you later on.

* No. 90.

+ No. 97

‡ No. 106.

§ No. 104.

¶ No. 112.

¶ No. 116.

†† No. 122.

** No. 118.

Appendix K.
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No. 124.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No. 78 P 28th February. I am now issuing only $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb. bread stuff daily. It is of very inferior mealie meal. At this rate I can hold on till 1st April; not longer. Report to Roberts if you think necessary. I have 21,000 mouths to feed, counting children half rations.

No. 125.

From General Sir G. White to General Sir R. Buller.

No 79 P, 28th February. Following Boer movements observed between dawn and noon to-day :—From direction of Pieters to behind Bulwana, 5 guns, 20 wagons, 300 men; from Underbrook to Roodeport, and on to north-west, 5 guns, 140 wagons, 350 men.

APPENDIX L.

Appendix L.

MEMORANDUM BY GENERAL THE RIGHT HON. SIR REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., ON THE EXPEDIENCY OF ENTRUSTING OUR MILITARY OFFICERS WITH INCREASED FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

(Vide Question 15591.)

In 1873 I took exception to an examination paper compiled by the late Sir George Colley. He said, "Can you write a better?" I brought him one the following day. He said, "Yes, in a sense that is a better paper, but I dare not set it, nor anything like it, every candidate would fail. Your questions are all problems and our candidates have not been taught to think."

It is no unfair criticism to say that most of our boys are taught to learn by heart, and not taught to think. To be a good officer in the field a man must not only possess some general knowledge but must also have hunter's instinct. This I may define as the capacity for immediate action dictated by rapid deductions based on knowledge of human nature, knowledge of ground, and quick, accurate, comprehensive observation.

Every year county-bred boys form a smaller, and suburban-bred boys a larger proportion of our candidates; and as a rule the latter have the least hunter's instinct. How are they to be taught? Drill, training, and lectures will do a good deal, and will teach them "How to do it." But we want more, we want to train them to know what to do; to make up their own minds, to appreciate instinctively the value of any possible action and its probable effect upon others, to learn how and when to co-operate, and when and why to play a lone hand. An echo from South Africa comes in here well as an illustration, though the story is probably untrue. The party were in a tight place; the Colonel turned to his men and said, "Men, for God's sake, tell me what to do." The men replied, "Colonel, for God's sake do something." When the blind lead the blind want of success is assured.

All teaching requires a foundation, and we want in the Army an organised system of which the young officer can acquire an understanding as he gains experience, and which as a test he can mentally apply to the problems he is confronted with in the course of his duty. Years ago I studied the nervous system of the human body in order to gain from a superficial knowledge of a complete organisation some practical rules to guide me in the solution of the various problems that presented themselves, and the knowledge has been invaluable.

But for general use a simpler training is required.

I wish to see a regular system of financial responsibility throughout the Army. I believe it could easily be introduced and that it would promote both economy and efficiency, but it would do more than that. Every officer would learn with the alphabet of his work, that he would have successive spheres of work within which he had freedom of action but outside which he could not step without reference to higher authority; and would thus acquire the framework of his future training. To train an officer to accept responsibility, in other words to act on his own initiative, you must give him power. Give the power and train him to use it by setting bounds to its use.

In a letter which I wrote to the War Office in October, 1901, protesting against the creation of a branch of the War Office at Aldershot, I said regarding this subject:—

"The object I aim at is to assure an economical and practical administration of the sums placed by Parliament at the disposal of the Secretary of State for the up-keep of the military districts, and to train our Generals, their Staffs, and the whole Army in administrative duties.

"I propose to attain these objects by:—

"(a) Centralising in the War Office the main problems of military policy, of preparation of regulations, of distribution of funds, and of adoption of patterns.

"(b) Vesting in the military staffs in the various districts (or in various groups of districts) the administration, under regulations issued by the War Office, of the funds granted to those districts.

"(c) Assuring an effective supervision over (b) by a local audit.

"N.B.—I say 'local' because the audit I wish for will be one whereof the Presiding Officer will be expected to confer with the Commanders as to any departure from regulations the audit may disclose. If a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming the auditor will pass the query. If none is forthcoming the auditor will send the case to the War Office, where it will be considered by the Military Staff as a disciplinary case against the Commander.

"In every such district the Senior Paymaster will be the financial adviser of the Commander, it will be his duty to keep the Commander advised of the limits of the power granted to him by regulations.

"If the Commander decides to over-rule the Paymaster the latter's opinion will be recorded. The accounts of the district will be compiled in the Paymaster's Office.

"As General Officers and their Staffs become sufficiently trained to administer their districts satisfactorily this local audit can be relaxed and will eventually disappear, the district accounts passing direct from the district through the offices of the Headquarter Staff in London to the Auditor-General. The regulations also will gradually admit of being enlarged in the following directions:—

"(1) Giving only maximum limits for allowances and expecting Commanders to allot in each case the payment they think desirable.

"(2) By introducing in store-accounts a system of bookkeeping by money value and not in kind, and allowing a discretion to Commanders as to the nature of the stores they demand if within their limit of value as fixed by regulation.

"(3) By gradually extending powers granted under 1 and 2 to officers of lower rank.

"(4) By permitting officers to spend within their districts a portion of any saving resulting from improved administration."

It will be observed that in the above proposals I have given an improved position to the Paymaster. He exists; his position is understood; but he is, having regard to the quality of the work he is now charged with, the most overpaid officer in the Army. He is now merely a teller or a computing clerk without power and without responsibility. He is fit to absorb and improve upon the work now done by a large, and as I believe unnecessary, Civil Staff at the War Office. I want to make the Paymaster's a live department with responsibility and power.

Again I wish the audit to be a live audit, and to secure that the money allotted to districts is wisely, properly, and economically spent, and while securing this to train the Generals in their duties. When I left Aldershot we were paying £20,000 a year for civil labour. Not one of the Departments employing these labourers was paying the same wage or exacting the same hours.

Each department was supported by a different War Office authority, and practically all the departments were competing in the labour market against each other.

Under a sensible audit this state of affairs could not have existed.

Appendix L. In my opinion it would be easy to institute a financial training on the lines indicated, and if instituted I believe it would prove an educational system of the highest value.

The case of the officers of the East India Company in the eighteenth century is worth considering in this connection. It cannot be denied that an unusual proportion of them were men of great boldness, readiness, and resource, fearless of responsibility and quick in an emergency. May this not have been the outcome of their financial training? I state the point for what it may be worth. If it be argued against them that

many of them were too skilful financiers, and that my proposal is therefore dangerous as risking waste, malversation, embezzlement, etc, there are fifty arguments I could urge in reply, but assuredly the one fact, that, owing to the vast expansion of our system of credit, and the increased facilities of communication, *salaries and wages are now regularly paid*; is of itself a sufficient answer, and gives of itself a reason for our purer public life, and a proof that these old days are gone never to return.

REDVERS BULLER, *General*.

March 2nd, 1903.

APPENDIX M.

CONTENTS OF STATEMENT OF LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR CHARLES WARREN, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., IN REPLY TO CHARGES Appendix M
MADE BY GENERAL THE RIGHT HON. SIR REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

(See Question 15657.)

- (1) Preamble.
- (2) Sir R. Buller's original orders and plan of attack.
- (3) Was Trichard's Drift the best place to cross for the attack contemplated.
- (4) It was not intended that the column should pass round by Acton Homes.
- (5) Can Sir R. Buller's instructions of 15th January be defined?
- (6) My plan of operations.
- (7) The night march was a surprise to the enemy.
- (8) The position in front of us at Trichard's Drift.
- (9) Sir R. Buller's views as to crossing the Tugela.
- (10) Considerations I had given to crossing the Tugela.
- (11) We made a record crossing of the Tugela.
- (12) The time that Sir R. Buller estimated the crossing would take.
- (13) While the artillery and vehicles were being passed over the Tugela the cavalry and infantry were engaged in feeling for the enemy.
- (14) Lord Dundonald feels for and engages the enemy.
- (15) Sir R. Buller depicts an engagement on 19th January that did not take place.
- (16) Sir R. Buller's inconsistent statements concerning the capture of the Rangeworthy hills on 20th January.
- (17) Sir R. Buller states that on 20th January he left me to carry out my own plan of operations, and yet he elsewhere states that on 21st, 22nd, and 23rd January he urged me to adhere to his plans, which he states had already been hopelessly wrecked.
- (18) Should the Rangeworthy hills have been attacked in preference to the attack on the defences at Potgieter's and Doornkloop?
- (19) Sir R. Buller did not give me the assistance in my attack that he could have given.
- (20) Sir R. Buller states that I swung round my left on 21st January, and subsequently he states that my right was in advance of my left, and that I refused to advance my left.
- (21) Sir R. Buller proposed an attack on our left on 22nd January, and also desired me not to execute any enterprise further to the left, as he anticipated a counter stroke from the enemy.
- (22) Sir R. Buller came over on 23rd January, and said to me "Attack or retire"; referring to Spion Kop, so far as I understood him.
- (23) From the first Sir R. Buller appears to have had misgivings as to the practicability of the attack on the Rangeworthy hills.
- (24) Sir R. Buller gives two very inconsistent views of the position occupied on the Rangeworthy hills from 20th to 25th January.
- (25) Spion Kop.—Brief description.
- (26) The capture of Spion Kop.
- (27) Engineer operations on Spion Kop.
- (28) Artillery operations on Spion Kop.
- (29) Water supply on Spion Kop.
- (30) Supplies of all kinds on Spion Kop.
- (31) Sick and wounded on Spion Kop.
- (32) Ammunition on Spion Kop.
- (33) The abandonment of Spion Kop.
- (34) Retirement across the Tugela.
- (35) The retreat of the Boers from Spion Kop, and the complete victory of our troops on evening of 24th January.
- (36) Sir R. Buller's orders and his suggestions.
- (37) Sir R. Buller's secret reports and charges against me.
- (38) My employment in subsequent independent commands.

APPENDICES.

- (A) Project for the crossing over a river with pontoons.
- (B) Report on water supply round Fairview to Groote Hoek.
- (C) Sir R. Buller's further instructions of 17th January.
- (D) Original draft of my telegram to Lord Roberts concerning Sir R. Buller's final advance to relief of Ladysmith.

STATEMENT OF LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR CHARLES WARREN G.C.M.G., K.C.B., IN REPLY TO CHARGES MADE BY GENERAL THE RIGHT HON. SIR REDVERS BULLER, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., RELATIVE TO HIS ACTION WHEN IN COMMAND OF A FORCE FROM 16TH TO 25TH JANUARY, 1900.

(General Sir Redvers Buller's statement will be found on page 178 ante.)

(1.) PREAMBLE.

In forwarding this statement, I have to observe that it would have been comparatively a simple task to reply to, or explain, facts that had actually occurred. I find myself, however, confronted with a series of fanciful episodes based on misconceptions and misapprehensions so numerous, that it is difficult to refute them or put them right in any limited space.

Sir Redvers Buller does not state what are his sources of information concerning events of which he was not an eye-witness, and his criticisms teem with erroneous assumptions, based apparently on an imaginary aspect of affairs. The account of operations given in his telegrams to War Office of 15th to 27th January, 1900, are in the main correct, but it differs so essentially from that given in despatches of 30th January, 1900, and in his evidence before the Royal Commission, that the two accounts might be supposed to refer to totally different operations.

A great many most important documents, which were forwarded to Sir Redvers Buller at the time, have not yet been published, which alone would in a great measure refute his criticisms and correct his errors of statement. But what is most required is a really correct narrative of events; if this were promulgated his adverse criticisms would at once fall to the ground, as they are founded on an erroneous view of affairs. I find that I cannot give such a narrative without occupying too much space, and I therefore must fall back upon the shorter method of taking Sir R. Buller's criticisms *seriatim* and traversing them, giving here and there short abstracts of events, so as to connect the whole together; and placing important telegrams, letters, etc., in an appendix. By these means I may succeed in compressing my statement into a comparatively short space.

(2.) SIR REDVERS BULLER'S ORIGINAL ORDERS AND PLAN OF ATTACK.

He states in his secret report of 30th January, 1900: "I had fully discussed my orders with General Warren before he started, and he appeared entirely to agree that the policy indicated of refusing the right and advancing the left was the right one. He never attempted to carry it out" (White Book [Cd. 968], p. 17).

Sir R. Buller is entirely incorrect in the first portion of this paragraph; he is confusing two distinct subjects. There never was any full discussion concerning the orders given to me of 15th January (White Book, p. 13).

The discussion that took place was concerning the attack originally contemplated *via* Potgieter's Drift; see orders of 9th January (White Book, p. 9). Until 15th January the Second Division was to cross at Potgieter's, and engage and drive back the enemy, and then the Fifth Division was to pass the defile between Krantz Kloof and Vaal Krantz; the discussion was concerning the method of carrying this out. I had previously proposed to take Doorn Kloof, which Sir R. Buller negatived.

The proposal to attack at Potgieter's was suddenly abandoned on 15th January, and I was sent to reconnoitre Trichard's Drift, with a view to crossing there; on my return, on the morning of 15th January, I reported that the crossing could be made, but that there was likely to be hard fighting subsequently. Sir R. Buller then drew up his orders, which I received on 15th January, and then I had to draw up my orders for the night march on the following day; there was no time for any full discussion, and as there were no correct plans of the ground, there could be no real discussion as to the form of attack.

Sir R. Buller pointed to Sugar Loaf (Bastion) Hill, on the Farm Map, which he said terminated the Boer lines, and told me to swing round my line from the west of Spion Kop, as a centre, and envelop Bastion Hill, so as to roll up the Boers. As to refusing the right and advancing the left, it was a natural consequence on the nature of the ground; I could not advance without doing so. The attack was commenced under the eye of Sir Redvers Buller on 17th January, and was carried out according to the orders he himself gave to General Woodgate, as will be shown.

(3.) WAS TRICHARD'S DRIFT THE BEST PLACE TO CROSS FOR THE ATTACK CONTEMPLATED?

This is a matter requiring consideration before the criticisms of Sir R. Buller on the carrying out of his instructions can be referred to.

Trichard's Drift was a convenient place to cross for an attack on the hills *immediately in front* of it, *via* Spion Kop and Three Tree Hill; but an attack on Three Tree Hill entailed the capture, at the same time, of the whole range as far west as Bastion Hill, and would have required four brigades.

Spion Kop, however, was *taboo* by order of Sir R. Buller; though it commanded the crossing with long range guns (see Intelligence reports) and rifle fire, and under such circumstances the crossing (for the attack to be delivered in the shortest space of time) should have been made three miles higher up the river, so that the attacking line would cover the crossing, and no flank march be required in contact with the enemy's guns and rifles.

As matters stood, the phrase "refusing the right and advancing the left," used by Sir R. Buller, meant a flank march along the front of the enemy's position, within the range of their guns and of their long range rifle fire. It could not have been intended that such a march should be made, while leaving the artillery and munitions of war to pass over unguarded and uncovered.

During the crossing a brigade was required to guard our left flank on the south side, and furnish working parties to hand haul the vehicles over the pontoons, and two brigades were required to cover the crossing and feel for the enemy.

Had four brigades been sent at first an attack could have been delivered 24 hours earlier, and had the crossing been made three miles higher up the river there would have been an advantage in time, but we should have been away from the support of our Naval guns.

(4.) IT WAS NOT INTENDED THAT THE COLUMN SHOULD PASS ROUND BY ACTON HOMES.

There is not an indication of any kind, in Sir R. Buller's instructions or remarks, that he proposed that the column should go round by Acton Homes; but his frequent allusion to attacking the left of the Boer position has given rise to the assumption that such a course was contemplated, and Lord Roberts appears to assume it in his despatch of 13th February, 1900 (White Book, p. 3).

Sir R. Buller puts the matter beyond doubt in saying: "From the first there could be no question but that the only practicable road for a column was the one by Fair View. The problem was to get rid of the enemy who were holding it" (White Book, p. 17).

I have, however, been blamed for not going round by Acton Homes.

Such a course, with only three brigades, would have involved the destruction of the Natal Army. At that time the Boers were elated with the check they had given our troops at Colenso, and any advance of a force *into the hills without first beating the enemy* would have had disastrous results.

The first essential in our advance was *not to divide* our comparatively small force. Therefore any breaks in our whole line by pushing my section far beyond Spion Kop was tactically wrong. My guiding rule in crossing at Trichard's Drift was to keep touch with the troops at Potgieter's Drift; so long as we did so my right was more or less protected, and the long range guns could help us. Had we done otherwise and passed off to the left our communications would have inevitably been cut off. General Lyttelton's telegrams to me all point to the same view. I am sure that anyone with military knowledge, and aware of the inexperience of our officers and men in Boer warfare, will realise that (so long as the Boers were jubilant) our strength and safety lay in our keeping together and *beating them* as near to the river as we could get them to fight.

That the Boer intention was to lure us on to Acton Homes I do not doubt. The valley there is a *cul de sac* where battalions could have been annihilated by small bodies of Boers placed in the hills surrounding it on three

sides. Sir R. Buller on 17th January himself informed me, that according to report, the intention of the Boers was to lure us away to west, and he advised me to be careful in advancing my left too far to west; he also subsequently sent me telegrams desiring me not to get away too far to the left, and pointed out that the road by Clydesdale (on the Acton Homes and Ladysmith road) was not suitable for advance, being full of dongas and rugged hills.

(5.) CAN SIR REDVERS BULLER'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR 15TH JANUARY BE DEFINED?

Originally they seemed simple enough, though absolutely undefined. "You will act as circumstances require, but my idea is that you should continue throughout refusing your right, and throwing your left forward till you gain the open space north of Spion Kop."

First I will allude to the discretion given me. It is distinctly stated that *I am to act as circumstances require*; if there is any meaning to be attached to words, this means that the responsibility for the form of attack rested with me, and I claim to be judged according to that responsibility, and not according to the "idea" of Sir R. Buller, which was only put forward as a general guide. Either I had the responsibility or I had not. If I had, then Sir R. Buller cannot state that I disregarded the instructions in exercising the discretion he gave to me.

With this preamble I proceed to point out what Sir R. Buller's instructions actually were intended to convey. Bishop Baynes (in "My Diocese during the War," p. 189) gives the idea in a few words, as derived from General Lyttelton. I was, when in line, to swing my left forward, with my right resting on Spion Kop as a pivot. This is the only meaning that can be attached to the proposals. My left was to envelop Barton Hill; this was stated to me verbally, both at Spearman's and at Trickard's Drift, by Sir R. Buller. So far the meaning appears simple enough, and Sir R. Buller in his secret paper (White Book, p. 17) also points out that the only practicable road was by Fair View, and that "the problem was to get rid of the enemy who were holding it." Thus it is evident that from the first Sir R. Buller had views only concerning the initial operations involving the taking the outer line of the Rangeworthy Hills. It was still a problem in his mind how the further advance was to be made.

In further confirmation as to the road to be taken is the list of waters along the road from Fair View to Groote Hoek supplied to me on 15th January. (Appendix B.)

Thus far there is no apparent difficulty. But on 17th January Sir R. Buller wrote me a letter—received 18th January (Appendix C)—stating that, when watching the attack on the enemy's lines by General Woodgate, he did not consider that General Woodgate had kept his left sufficiently disengaged. This letter adds to the instructions and complicates them, for instead of attacking in line, and swinging round the left, he now proposes that when the line is in contact with the enemy, and cannot advance, it is to *turn half-left*. He says: "If you can make a direct advance, it will be in line, but if you are checked, the next advance must be by moving half-left; I mean that to get on your left will creep outward and forward, and your right follow." It is clear from this that I was to search for an opening where I could attack, commencing from the west of Spion Kop, and moving to the left.

It will be seen from General Buller's telegrams of 17th to 27th January, 1900, that these instructions he gave me were adhered to so far as they could have any meaning attached to them. But in fact, the terms "to refuse the right and advance the left," without any limitations or explanation, is merely a kind of oracular statement. It can always be said afterwards that it was carried out too far or not far enough. If it meant swinging round the left on a pivot, it would depend on the length of the line, how far it extended, and if it meant moving off diagonally to the left, with the enemy's lines continuous, it meant going into the Drakensburg. There seems to be only one reasonable conclusion as to which was intended, namely, the attack on the Rangeworthy Hills.

(6.) MY PLAN OF OPERATIONS.

Sir R. Buller states: "I was dissatisfied with Warren's operations, which seemed to me aimless and irresolute."

I can say that I had very clear and certain plans in my own mind, keeping in view Sir R. Buller's instructions;

and I may say also that I had had particular facilities for knowing the Boer method of warfare, having served with Boer burghers against Kaffirs in 1878-9, and having commanded an expedition against Boers in 1884-5.

I had heard many methods of relieving Ladysmith discussed, but not one that I considered likely to have been successful. The general idea was to send a large body of cavalry (some 3,000) to make a dash at the Boer lines round Ladysmith, either by Acton Homes or Weenan. Our cavalry and mounted men were not then fitted for such enterprises in mountain countries, and such an attempt would only have resulted in their being surrounded in the mountains. They were not numerous enough, experienced enough, or well enough armed to succeed in such a business so long as the Boers were jubilant.

Only two methods of relieving Ladysmith were possible, and in each case it would consist of *breaking up*, and not merely in *breaking into*, the Boer lines. (1) On the one hand, by an overwhelming assault of infantry on a position of the Boer lines, combined with a general advance of our whole long line; or (2) on the other hand, by pounding away with our artillery at the Boers in their trenches until they were demoralised, and nearly on the run, and then launching an infantry assault. We were not strong enough to sweep over the country by sheer force of numbers, and our only prospect of success lay in the second method, of preparing a way with artillery bombardment of the Boer lines. It will be seen from Appendix D (my telegram to Lord Roberts, of 12th February, 1900) that this is what I proposed in the final advance to relieve Ladysmith, and in that way we did relieve Ladysmith.

My plan, therefore, was to demoralise the Boers with artillery fire, and then to assault their lines with infantry fire, and this would take some time.

The mere gaining a temporary advantage could only be considered as an *accessory*; our main object was to knock the confidence out of the Boers, to show them the points in which British soldiers (as then taught) excelled them, viz., in endurance, perseverance, tenacity of purpose.

It was necessary that they should learn this, and they did learn it at the Rangeworthy Hills and Spion Kop, and again about Hlangwane, the Gomba, and Pieters.

My instructions in the main seemed clear to me, and even without them, very little change in the course pursued could have been made, given the crossing at Trickard's Drift. Spion Kop being *taboo*, the only possible place for attack was the Rangeworthy hills as far as Barton Hill; beyond that the valley of Acton Homes runs between two ranges of hills, and was swept with the fire of long-range guns, to which we could not reply, having none ourselves.

At the time of receiving my instructions, the topography of the country was unknown, and I had to reconnoitre to find out how the roads ran, and feel for the enemy and elaborate a plan of attack.

(7.) THE NIGHT MARCH WAS A SURPRISE TO THE ENEMY.

Sir R. Buller states: "The arrival of the force at Trichard's Drift was a surprise to the enemy, who were not in strength."

It was intended that the crossing should be commenced as a surprise, and the hills immediately commanding the crossing occupied by our troops; but the hills beyond could not be reached so rapidly by our troops as by the enemy who were camped immediately behind Spion Kop, and within two hours of sunrise on 17th January the Boers could have had from 5,000 to 10,000 men ready to oppose us.

The enemy did not oppose us strongly at Trichard's Drift because, in doing so, they would have been more or less exposed to the fire of our Naval guns situated near Potgieters, and they wanted to turn us away from the help of those guns.

(8.) THE POSITION IN FRONT OF US AT TRICHARD'S DRIFT.

Spion Kop and the Rangeworthy Hills are the commencement of the Drakensburg Mountains. Commencing at Potgieter's Drift, these hills first run south-westerly, culminating in Spion Kop, which stands out as the salient of a position overlooking the Tugela at a distance of about three miles, and is a strategic point of great importance. Then, with a break, they run north-westerly for about ten miles as the Rangeworthy Hills, till they become absorbed in the Drakensburg Mountains. These hills form the watershed

Appendix M.

of two river systems; to the east are the branches of the Blaubank River, running towards Ladysmith, and on the west are the branches of the Venter's Spruit, which runs under Van Reenan's Pass, and passing through a broad valley, falls into the Tugela west of the Rangeworthy Hills and Spion Kop. This broad valley, in which Acton Homes lies, is entirely unconnected with the Ladysmith plateau. Acton Homes is commanded on the east, north, and west by high hills, and has of itself no strategic value. There is no open plain to the north of Spion Kop, except the small basin plateau of Groote Hoek, about a mile and a half wide, and connected with the Ladysmith plateau. It is separated from the Venter's Spruit and from Acton Homes by the watershed of the whole of the Rangeworthy Hills.

There are two roads over the Rangeworthy Hills; the more southerly by Fair View to Groote Hoek, immediately west of Spion Kop. It is about five miles from Trichard's Drift to Groote Hoek by this road; the more northerly road runs nearly east-and-west through Acton Homes; after running over the Rangeworthy Hills, it passes through a rugged country about Clydesdale, full of dongas and kopjes.

No advance could be made by Acton Homes without first securing the hills north, east, and west. Thus, strategically Acton Homes could not be considered as a route for advance, except with an overwhelming force.

The road by Acton Homes, however, was known to be the line of communication of a large portion of the Orange Free State Boers, and the question would naturally arise whether it was desirable to hold and secure it.

The answer is clear. For a large and overwhelming attacking force Acton Homes was a point to secure, but for a small attacking force such as that with Sir R. Buller, the Acton Homes position was to be avoided. For the relief of Ladysmith it was strategically a mistake to attempt to cut off the Boers from the Orange Free State at a time when they were desirous of proceeding there to resist Lord Roberts' threatened advance. The true strategy lay in inducing the Orange Free State Boers to retire into their own country, so as to diminish the preponderating Boer force then in Natal.

(9.) SIR R. BULLER'S VIEWS AS TO CROSSING THE TUGELA.

I do not think that Sir R. Buller can have consulted any experienced Colonist as to the proposed crossing, for he says: "I do not think you will find it possible to let oxen draw the wagons over the pontoons. It will be better to draw them over by horses or mules, swimming the oxen." (White Book, p. 17.) He does not appear to realise that horses and mules when unused to going over such bridges, have to be coaxed over for the first time. In peace time a few could be got over without much delay, but in war that little check, with thousands of animals, amounts to many hours, and is a serious consideration.

The whole number of vehicles sent with us would have taken more than 10 hours to pass a given point at their usual speed. What would be the time they would take when the oxen had to swim over and the wagons pulled over by mules unaccustomed to pontoons?

Is it possible to make any estimate? Supposing the ox wagons could be got across at the rate of four an hour (with 232 ox wagons), it would take 58 hours, and the mule and horse vehicles (say 252) could not, even with trained mules, be got over quicker than 12 an hour, taking 21 hours, thus giving a total of 79 hours. But with untrained mules it would take at least double that time, or in all 100 hours, or, working night and day, 4 days 4 hours.

Again, the pulling of a heavily-laden ox wagon out of a drift or up a rutty bank by mules is an almost impossible task, so that the mules and oxen would have had to be on the road at the same time, one set to pull the wagon across, and the other set to pull the wagon up the bank by a path at right angles to the pontoons.

I feel convinced that this matter of crossing our 500 vehicles, with thousands of mules and oxen, had never been thought out. The problem was left to me to solve.

(10.) CONSIDERATIONS I HAD GIVEN TO CROSSING THE TUGELA.

We were aware on leaving Cape Town for Natal that the Boers had made the north bank of the Tugela their

line of defence. It was a formidable obstacle, as it is about 100 yards wide, has a rapid current, and in wet weather is impassable by any of its fords. On board ship I instituted war games to consider the crossing, and I came to the conclusion that the best point to cross at (failing Hlangwani) was opposite to Doornkloop, near the junction of the Greater and Lesser Tugelas; and that it was a necessity that we should at once establish a post on the north side of the Tugela, with a pontoon bridge, so as not to depend on the rise and fall of the river.

On January 15th I issued projects to the senior officers of the 5th Division (see Appendix A), calling on them to state how they would cross over an imaginary river defended by one long-range gun, with a view to causing the officers under me to think the matter well over.

On January 15th I issued plans of the country about Potgieter's (from the farm map), but had to withdraw them at once, and make and issue plans of the ground about Trichard's Drift, and on January 17th I issued a more complete plan divided into numbered squares, so that officers could signal to each other and to me concerning particular spots of ground they wished to refer to.

(11.) WE MAKE A RECORD CROSSING OF THE TUGELA.

It has been inferred from Sir R. Buller's remarks that the time taken in crossing the Tugela was excessive. On the contrary, it was a record crossing, as will be seen from the comparison given below.

Sir R. Buller states (White Book, p. 6) that in retiring across the Tugela on January 25th-27th he took 47 hours, viz., from 9 a.m. January 25th to 8 a.m. on January 27th, and he speaks of this crossing as reflecting great credit on his staff officers of all degrees.

In crossing the Tugela on January 17th-18th I had about the same numbers of vehicles to cross as had Sir Redvers Buller, but they were more heavily laden with food and ammunition, and I completed the crossing in 38 hours, or in about three-quarters of the time taken by Sir R. Buller, viz., from 8 a.m. January 17th to 10 p.m. on January 19th.

The crossing on January 17th and 18th was infinitely more difficult than the recrossing on January 25th to 27th, because the wagons were all full; the conductors, drivers, etc., were for the most part amateurs, so great had been the drain in Natal for properly qualified transport men. The mules were scratch lots, hastily got together for the 5th Division, and did not know their drivers, and ramps had to be cut on the banks of river.

The discipline of the troops was excellent, but the discipline amongst the drivers and conductors had yet to be established, and anything in the least out of the way caused confusion. The regimental and staff officers had had no experience at such crossings, and I was almost the only officer present who knew about crossing animals under such circumstances, with the exception of the Colonists, who ably assisted in the work.

The mules could not be trusted to go over the pontoon by fours as taken out of the carts, but had to be led two by two, and the wagons had to be hauled over by fatigue parties.

It would have been impossible to have got the vehicles over in the short space of time had I not extemporised a second bridge for part of the time, and got a great number of the wagons over by the drift.

It may be said that the whole time was occupied in getting over the artillery, troops, and munitions of war, as the food wagons were got over separately.

(12.) THE TIME THAT SIR R. BULLER ESTIMATED THE CROSSING WOULD TAKE.

Sir R. Buller states in his telegram to War Office on morning of January 18th the time he expected the crossing to take. "Four miles higher up (Trichard's Drift) Warren has crossed the river by a pontoon bridge 85 yards long, and hopes that his force will, by the evening, have advanced five miles from the river. To his right front the enemy are busily entrenching."

Now this information must have been derived from his personal observation when with me all the afternoon of January 17th overlooking the crossing; and it is thus plain that he then expected that I should have got over my vehicles by evening of 18th, and advanced five miles.

Now what was the actual result of our crossing? By the evening of January 18th I had crossed all my vehicles and troops, and was ready to march my infantry and artillery before sunrise on the following morning; part of my cavalry had proceeded about nine

miles from the river, had encountered the enemy near Acton Homes, and required all the remaining cavalry to support them, and General Woodgate had arranged for a night attack on the enemy's position in front, it being considered too strong to attack by day. This is a copy of General Hart's note to General Woodgate on subject:—

"The operations you propose might be done by night with the moon. It would probably, I think, result in severe repulse by day."

This was written early on morning of January 18th, and shows that General Hart must at that time have considered the enemy to have been gathered in considerable strength if two brigades could not attack without severe repulse.

(13.) WHILE THE ARTILLERY AND VEHICLES WERE BEING PASSED OVER THE TUGELA THE INFANTRY AND CAVALRY WERE ENGAGED IN FEELING FOR THE ENEMY.

Sir R. Buller states: "Sir C. Warren instead of feeling for the enemy elected to spend two whole days in passing his baggage. During this time the enemy reinforced and strengthened his position." (White Book, p. 17.)

"He met with very slight opposition, but remained that day and the 18th passing over his baggage." (Evidence, Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, February 18th, 1903.)

"At that time we had a fine chance. After the 17th our advantage was fast vanishing." (Interview with "Daily Mail," April 18th, 1902.)

The manner in which facts are misrepresented in these paragraphs gives a very wrong complexion to affairs. It has led the public to suppose that I took with me all kinds of camp equipage that should have been left behind.

There was no baggage with my column in the ordinary acceptance of the term, and Sir R. Buller has given a wrong impression in speaking of artillery and munitions of war and food for the march under that name; although I would observe that the term was used generally for the whole *impedimenta* of the column.

In my force orders of January 16th is the following: "The only baggage that will be taken with the column will be the great coats of the men, camp kettles, and a certain proportion of regimental tools, with 20lbs. per officer, including their canteens. All other baggage, blankets, and waterproofs, and other gear will be packed in separate wagons, and will proceed to Spearman's Hill."

Thus the vehicles with the column contained only what was required for the first line—great coats, food, and munitions of war, besides the artillery, engineer, and medical stores, and vehicles. It was, I believe, the lightest equipped column of a mixed force that was at any time sent out during the war in South Africa. (See Lord Roberts' orders concerning transport, January to June, 1900.)

Thus my force has been pictured as luxuriating in all kinds of comfort during those eight days north of the Tugela, while the men had nothing but their great coats, not even waterproof sheets, and were sleeping out in the rain in the open.

Again, Sir R. Buller states that I did not feel for the enemy during those two days (January 17th and 18th). This is absolutely untrue.

The Cavalry Brigade was ordered across the Tugela to feel for the enemy as soon as Lord Dundonald reported himself to me on January 17th. The horses did not like the hollow noise of the pontoons, and they went over by the drift (with some difficulty to the smaller horses). They did not complete their crossing till the evening of 17th, and they bivouacked that night within the infantry lines. This crossing took place immediately under the eye of Sir R. Buller, who was watching it all the afternoon. On morning of 18th the cavalry went west and north-west, and Lord Dundonald reported to me that the Rangworthy Hills were occupied in force by the enemy. That afternoon he came in collision with the enemy, and asked for reinforcements, which I sent him.

Two brigades of infantry under Generals Woodgate and Hart crossed the Tugela on the morning of January 17th, and at about noon Sir R. Buller met General Woodgate at the ferry, and gave him orders relative to the attack, told him not to hurry, and to give the men their dinners before he started. The hills immediately commanding the pontoon were cleared of the enemy by about 3.30 p.m. for, say, 2,000 yards from the river. Beyond that there was a dip in the ground.

Sir R. Buller witnessed the attack, and wrote letter (Appendix C.) already referred to. On morning of January 18th General Woodgate proposed to advance, but General Hart considered it too dangerous by day (see No. 12), and a night attack was arranged, which did not come off. On the afternoon of January 18th I reconnoitred the position on the Rangworthy Hills, and saw that if we took them we could not take our wagons by the Fairview Road without first taking Spion Kop also, or rendering it harmless. I therefore thought it necessary to reconnoitre the Acton Homes road, which I did next day.

Thus of the two days (17th and 18th) which Sir R. Buller states I occupied in passage of my baggage, without feeling for the enemy, on one day (17th) the work was carried out under his own eyes; he gave orders himself to my subordinates, and he claimed my attention all the afternoon, instead of allowing me to be occupied fully with my own arrangements. If matters were not being carried out in accordance with his views, it is strange that he should not have notified this to me verbally or in writing. His letter (Appendix C.) shows, however, that he had nothing to say against what was being done, but he referred only to a tactical error which he supposed General Woodgate had made. I may add that General Woodgate assured me that Sir R. Buller was mistaken in his assumption.

(14.) LORD DUNDONALD FEELS FOR AND ENGAGES THE ENEMY ON JANUARY 18TH.

A great deal of confusion has arisen as to the position of Lord Dundonald's engagement, because the maps of the country issued in the daily papers showed Spion Kop to the west of Acton Homes, and the engagement is depicted in some maps as taking place on the Boer lines of the Rangworthy hills. Nothing of the sort occurred.

Lord Dundonald himself reported that the engagement took place two miles west of Acton Homes, and Sir R. Buller in his telegram to War Office of January 18th, says it took place to west of Acton Homes.

The facts as related by Lord Dundonald are briefly as follow:—At about 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., on January 18th a party of 200 to 300 Boers were seen by the advanced cavalry to be going west along the Acton Homes road, in the direction of the Orange Free State. They were successfully ambuscaded by Major Grahame, at a point where the road crosses the Venter's Spruit, near Frere's Store, at 25 miles from Ladysmith. Some of the Boers were shot down, most of them fled, but several got away to the west of Frere's Store, and took up a position amongst some rocks, probably near farm. *Nooitgedacht*; they numbered about 30 altogether.

This exploit was seen by Lord Dundonald from his signal station at Earthcote, and he sent me an "express," saying he was heavily engaged, and required all the cavalry to assist him. This I received about sunset. I sent all the cavalry at once, and detached General Hildyard's Brigade to march at 4.30 a.m. next morning to Venter's Spruit to support him. This was a serious mishap, as it appeared at the time, altering all my plans, but next morning I learnt how trivial the engagement had been, though it was a most successful and well-arranged exploit, treated as an exploit only.

Later in the night I learnt more of the engagement, but it was not till about 10 a.m. on the following day that I ascertained that Lord Dundonald could hold his own without further assistance. The advanced post of cavalry, to the west, remained in this position till the morning of January 20th, when it was shelled out by the Boer long-range guns above Acton Homes.

Thus a skirmish of Lord Dundonald with a few Boers riding along a road west of the Venter's Spruit and Acton Homes has been changed by Sir R. Buller into a forward movement of the cavalry eastward towards Ladysmith. In this affair the cavalry got too far away to the west, and quite out of the direction of Ladysmith.

Sir R. Buller tells the "Daily Mail" (April 18th, 1902): "But for Warren, Lord Dundonald, after winning Acton Homes, would have pressed forward, and probably ended the matter by entering Ladysmith. Warren effectually stopped Dundonald by refusing him further supplies."

Lord Dundonald never had the slightest prospect of getting past Acton Homes to Ladysmith; if he had attempted to do so he would certainly have been captured.

I found it necessary, when he got so far away from me, to remind him of Sir R. Buller's orders, and said: "Our objective is not Ladysmith; our objective is to

Appendix M. effect junction with Sir R. Buller's force, and there to receive orders from him." To this he replied, "I quite understand your general plan, and that we have to unite with Sir R. Buller." At this time Lord Dundonald was corresponding direct with Sir R. Buller, I presume by his orders.

Lord Dundonald never gave me the slightest indication that he would push forward by east or north-east towards Ladysmith, or that he found any opening in that direction; so far as I know he was never able to make any reconnaissance of the Boer lines in that direction. In any case, he never sent me any information up to January 19th, except the following: "Silbourne, who took the flag of truce into the enemy's lines last night, reports the heights on either side of main road [Acton Homes to Ladysmith] to be very strongly defended," and a verbal report that the enemy were concentrating at Acton Homes. In his report subsequently he states that on the afternoon of January 18th (i.e., on his arrival at Acton Homes) he sent out patrols to the west and north-west, and saw that large numbers of the enemy were continually arriving from the east, to concentrate and resist an attack by him on the Acton Homes to Ladysmith road, and he made no attempt to meet them. So far from the cavalry having pushed up in any way to the enemy's lines on the Rangworthy hills, the tendency was entirely in the other direction, and the position taken up west of Acton Homes was an anxiety to me on that account.

(15.) SIR R. BULLER DEPICTS AN ENGAGEMENT ON 19TH JANUARY, WHICH DID NOT TAKE PLACE

The events on January 19th are briefly as follow:—The troops and vehicles of the force were all on the march from Trichard's Drift to Venter's Spruit Laager early in the morning. General Hildyard's brigade started at 4.30 a.m. to assist Lord Dundonald, if it should be necessary. General Woodgate's and Hart's Brigades covered the flank march of the vehicles, which were in six parallel columns. In doing so General Woodgate was directed to search for any weak point in the Rangworthy hills defence, and to make a reconnaissance up the slopes of Three Tree Hill, where I considered we could attack. In the meantime I reconnoitred towards Acton Homes, and saw that it would be impossible to take troops in that direction with wagons without occupying the hills beyond, and for this we were too weak.

I then settled to attack the Rangworthy hills on the morning of January 20th, sending our wagons back again to Potgeiter's, as we could not take wagons by either of the two roads. I then saw Lord Dundonald, who was still in possession of the site of his engagement of 18th, but could not assist by any advance. I then communicated my plans for the next day to the Generals and Staff Officers concerned. There was no engagement on the 19th, except the flank march of the brigades, and the reconnaissance made.

These are Sir R. Buller's criticisms on the work of January 19th:—

"On 19th he attacked and gained a considerable advantage; on the 19th I ought to have assumed command myself. I saw that things were not going well—indeed, everybody saw it" (White Book, p. 17).

"On the 19th Lord Dundonald, with Warren's cavalry moving northward, had taken the right flank of the Boer position, whereas General Warren had advanced to the westward, and was crossing Venter's Spruit. I was dissatisfied with Warren's operations, which seemed to me aimless and irresolute. Dundonald's movement was a decided success, and should have been supported by artillery, while Warren's infantry should have attacked the salient which Dundonald's success had left exposed. On that night I debated with myself whether or not I should relieve Warren of his command." (Evidence Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, February 18th, 1903.)

These are the statements of a man in a dream. No such occurrences ever took place so far as I know. Lord Dundonald was with me on the afternoon of the 19th, and his reports never mention any such occurrence.

If Lord Dundonald had really taken the right flank of the Boer position would not Sir R. Buller, who was in direct communication with Lord Dundonald, have asked me for a report, and telegraphed it to the War Office?

In these statements Sir R. Buller finds fault with me for going down to the water at Venter's Spruit; in his letter to me of January 17th he tells me to do so in these words: "If your direct road is blocked, we must go forward by moving off to the left, and this will have

the further advantage, that it will keep you near the water at Venter's Spruit." (Appendix C.)

The only possible solution I can suggest to this extraordinary misconception is that Sir R. Buller imagines that Lord Dundonald's attack on Bastion Hill on January 20th took place on January 19th against some position further north than Bastion Hill, and that he was subsequently withdrawn from it. But as Sir R. Buller was on the ground on 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, I cannot understand his falling into such errors.

(16.) SIR R. BULLER'S INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE CAPTURE OF THE RANGEWORTHY HILLS ON 20TH JANUARY.

Telegram to War Office, 20th January:—"General Clery, with part of Warren's force, has been in action from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. to-day. By judicious use of his artillery he has fought his way up, capturing ridge after ridge, for about three miles. Troops are now bivouacking on the ground they have gained, but main position is still in front of them."

Telegram to War Office, 27th January:—"Sir Charles Warren, as I have said, drove back the enemy and obtained possession of the southern crest of the high tableland, which extends from the line Acton Homes, Hungers Poort, to the western Ladysmith Hills."

This is how this successful engagement was depicted in the despatches of 30th January and subsequently:—"On the 20th, instead of pursuing it (his imaginary advantage of 19th), he divided his force, and gave General Clery a separate command" White Book, p. 17).

"On the 20th I went over and saw Warren. He had that day attacked the salient and taken it, but instead of supporting Lord Dundonald, he had induced him to fall back from the position which he had occupied on the 19th." Again he states he wished to relieve me of the command. (Evidence Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, 18th February, 1903.)

These later statements are simply a mass of misconceptions. There was no advantage gained by Lord Dundonald on 19th January, and I could not have induced him to abandon a position he never occupied. I did not divide my force and give General Clery a separate command.

Further, Sir R. Buller did not come over to see me on 20th January, as stated by him before the Royal Commission. It might be supposed that he had simply made a mistake of dates, but he says, "On 20th I went over to see Warren. He had that day attacked the salient, and taken it." He states that on this day he found that his own plans were hopelessly wrecked, and that then he left me to carry out my own plans, sending me the reinforcements I asked for. This is all wrong, as will be shown in (17). He did not come over on 20th, but he came and interfered with my operations on 21st, 22nd, and 23rd.

(17.) GENERAL BULLER STATES THAT ON 20TH JANUARY HE LEFT ME TO CARRY OUT MY OWN PLAN OF OPERATIONS, AND YET HE ELSEWHERE STATES THAT ON 21ST, 22ND, AND 23RD JANUARY HE URGED ME TO ADHERE TO HIS PLANS, WHICH HE STATES HAD ALREADY BEEN HOPELESSLY WRECKED.

"I continually proposed to General Warren that he should attack the enemy's right, which was *en l'air* and not strong, and which was part of the original programme to try and turn, but I never suggested doing this hurriedly or without adequate forethought and preparation." (White Book, p. 16.)

"On 20th I went over to see Warren. I saw . . . that my own plan of operations had been hopelessly wrecked . . . I concluded to leave Warren to pursue his work, merely suggesting to him certain changes in the posting of his troops for the greater security of the position. I then returned to my former position to watch for my chance."

Thus Sir R. Buller, though considering my operations to be aimless and irresolute, concludes on 20th January to leave me to carry them out. Yet, while considering his own plans hopelessly wrecked, he on 21st to 23rd continually urges me to adhere to the original programme of attacking the enemy's right (we had already taken it). Yet again he states that by 23rd the enemy against us were 15,000 strong, and that the right was too strong to attack. "The enemy's right was too strong to allow me to force it."

It will be seen that while I was in command Sir R. Buller speaks of the force in front of me as being

insignificant, only 600, but that when he took command it amounted to 15,000. He makes no suggestion as to where these 14,400 men were located during the interval. As it only took three hours for a party of Boers to get from their extreme left to their extreme right, from Colenso to Acton Homes, they must always have been close at hand. I therefore mention this subject in (18).

(18.) SHOULD THE RANGEWORTHY HILLS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED IN PREFERENCE TO THE ATTACK ON THE DEFENCES AT POTGIETERS AND DOORKLOOF?

In order to consider this question I take the number of Boers given by Sir R. Buller, though I am quite satisfied that it is greatly below the mark. But for the sake of comparison it is necessary to take some approximate number. He states that there were 7,000 Boers opposed to us (White Book, p. 14), but he does not add whether he includes the Orange Free State Boers at Acton Homes or not.

Sir R. Buller had on the morning of 16th January on his side 21 battalions of infantry and about 2,000 mounted men, say 23,000 in all, nearly three to one of the enemy. With this preponderating force, with the command of the high ground at Spearman's and Zwart's Kop, with two 4·7in. and eight 12-pounder long-range naval guns and 42 15-pounder guns and six 5in. howitzers, he hesitated for four days, and eventually declined to attack the enemy; all this time the enemy were strengthening their defences about Spion Kop. Then, though he disliked mountains himself—he says “I always dreaded mountains” (Evidence, Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, 18th February, 1903)—he detailed me to attack the mountains in the Drakensberg, a much more difficult task than that which he had hesitated to undertake himself in the plain. He gave me for the work 12 battalions and 1,500 mounted men, and 36 field guns, to attack a mountain stronghold, where he himself says there was no convenient position for artillery; he would give me no long-range guns with which I could reply to those of the enemy.

Supposing there were 7,000 Boers against us, we may estimate 2,000 as required for the trenches opposite Potgieters, leaving 5,000 Boers opposed to me, not to speak of the Orange Free State Boers on to our left that would be called upon.

To strike a balance. Sir R. Buller, with the commanding position for his long-range guns, and with 23,000 men, hesitated to attack a low-lying position held by 7,000 men; yet, dreading mountains, he sent me with 18,000 men, and without long-range guns or balloons, intelligence or adequate staff, to attack a line of mountain positions held by 5,000 Boers with long-range guns. I must, however, point out that Sir R. Buller's statement of 7,000 Boers is inconsistent with the Intelligence reports and with his subsequent statements.

Early in January the Orange Free State Boers occupied the Tugela heights to west of Spion Kop, while the Transvaal Boers occupied the heights to the east of Spion Kop. Just behind Spion Kop were camps of both forces.

The Intelligence reports of 10th January stated that there was a large base camp of Orange Free State Boers at Acton Homes, which supplied a camp of 100 wagons behind Spion Kop.

The Intelligence report of 16th January stated that since the 11th January there had been a general move westward up stream from Colenso of the enemy's forces, and that the only commandoes left at Colenso were that of Krugersdorp and part of that of Swaziland, and that the trenches west of Spion Kop would hold 400 men, with long-range guns firing on Trichard's Drift.

Sir R. Buller (White Book, p. 17) states that the 600 men against me on the 16th had increased by 23rd January to 15,000, when he took up the command.

Now, it is not to be supposed that this increase occurred suddenly, and Sir R. Buller himself states that from the 17th the enemy were rapidly concentrating before Trichard's Drift. The question arises, can any approximate estimate be made of the numbers on each particular day? It may be assumed that immediately the advance on Trichard's Drift was discovered the enemy would concentrate there with all their force. I suggest, therefore, the following increase, based on Sir R. Buller's figures, though I myself think the numbers were much greater from the first:—

16th January.—600 (in position in front of Trichard's Drift, with camps behind).
17th January.—10,000 (from camps behind).
18th January.—11,000.
19th January.—13,000.
20th January.—14,000.
21st January.—15,000.
22nd January.—15,000.
23rd January.—15,000.

(19.) SIR REDVERS BULLER DID NOT GIVE ME THE ASSISTANCE IN MY ATTACK THAT HE COULD HAVE GIVEN.

(a) Had General Barton been directed to attack and harass the enemy at Hlangwani and Colenso, he might have kept a considerable number of Boers off me, but owing to his receiving no instructions to do so, the Boers left his front to a great extent. (See his report, White Book, p. 43.)

(b) Had Sir George White been communicated with, he might have made some demonstration; but I think his garrison was too feeble to do anything, and that the Boers knew it, and left their lines round him to a great extent.

(c) Sir R. Buller made no use of the 10th Brigade at Potgieter's, although he states in his instructions (White Book, p. 14): “I shall threaten both the positions in front of us, and also attempt a crossing at Skiet's Drift, so as to hold the enemy off you as much as possible.” This he did not attempt to carry out.

(d) Sir R. Buller kept the balloon with him when it was comparatively useless, and never gave me any information about the enemy from 17th to 23rd January, except what he got from Sir G. White. The balloon with us would have been invaluable.

(e) Sir R. Buller kept all the long-range guns with him, though they were urgently required by us, and yet he did not use them to advantage. He could have enfiladed the whole length of the Boer lines opposite to me, and made havoc among the enemy's entrenchments with his lyddite shells. I was not aware at that time that his guns had so long a range, and he may not have been aware of it either.

(f) Sir R. Buller did not send me the 10th Brigade and the 5in. Howitzer Battery till 22nd January; if they had been sent at first operations would have been expedited.

(g) Sir R. Buller allowed me no extra staff to assist me in work of an independent command, and would not permit me to take any regimental officers to assist me unless the commanding officers concurred. All said that they could not spare any officers.

(20.) SIR R. BULLER STATES THAT I SWUNG ROUND MY LEFT ON JANUARY 21ST AND SUBSEQUENTLY HE STATES THAT MY RIGHT WAS IN ADVANCE OF MY LEFT, AND THAT I REFUSED TO ADVANCE MY LEFT.

Telegram to War Office, January 21st, 9 p.m.: “Warren has been engaged all day, chiefly on the left, which he has swung round about a couple of miles. The ground is very difficult, and as the fighting is all the time up hill, it is difficult to say exactly how much has been gained, but I think we are making substantial progress.” (White Book, p. 17.)

“On the 21st I find that his right was in advance of his left.” He then proceeds to state that my artillery were crowded on one small space, and that I had divided my fighting line into three independent commands, independent of each other, and independent of myself. This statement about independent commands independent of me is purely imaginary.

With reference to the artillery, it is still a question how far guns should be concentrated and how far they should be distributed; in this case I exercised my own judgment, in which General Clerly and the Commandant Royal Artillery concurred. As to putting artillery on the left, the 15-pounders were of little or no use then, except against infantry; what we wanted was long-range guns to reply to those of the Boers on the left. I urged strongly on Sir R. Buller the necessity of long-range guns, and he sent me the 5in. howitzers, which were very useful, but still had not sufficient range.

In the morning, however, I heard from Colonel Kitchener that a force of Boers were moving down against our left from Acton Homes, thus requiring 15-pounders on my left. Upon which I telegraphed to General Clerly, 9.35 a.m.: “A Boer force is coming round beyond left from Acton Homes. I am taking two batteries down there at once to support the left,

Appendix M which is very weak near Sugar Loaf (Bastion) Hill." It will be thus seen that I acted on my own initiative in putting guns on the left; in fact, I had spoken to General Clery on subject on previous day that it might be necessary.

At 6 p.m. this evening I rode out to west, and came to conclusion that an attack might be made on hill north of Bastion Hill if I had another brigade, and there was a preparation of howitzers. But I considered it would be very risky. I telegraphed to General Buller, saying I thought the Boers were going to make a trek to the north, and urged him to send me three battalions more, so that I could close the road, and secure their wagons.

- (21.) SIR R. BULLER PROPOSED AN ATTACK ON JANUARY 22ND ON OUR LEFT, AND ALSO DESIRES ME NOT TO EXECUTE ANY ENTERPRISE FURTHER TO THE LEFT, AS HE ANTICIPATED A COUNTER STROKE FROM THE ENEMY.

"The days went on, I saw no attempt on the part of General Warren either to grapple with the situation or to command the force himself." (White Book, p. 17.) The 10th Brigade had only arrived during the forenoon of this day, and the 5in. howitzer battery the previous evening and this morning, and Sir R. Buller had sent me a telegram at 5 a.m.: "I think it possible the enemy may try a counter stroke; they are concentrated, while your troops are widely extended, and do not support each other. I should be cautious how I attempted any enterprise further on the left at present." Sir R. Buller arrived in the morning, and told me he wished me to attack the position in front of Bastion Hill on our left on the Rangeworthy Hills if I considered it desirable, and that I must consult my Generals on the subject, otherwise he proposed to retire the force. I went over the positions with Sir R. Buller, and again I pointed out to him that unless Spion Kop was taken or neutralised we could not march our wagons over the hill road, and I had proposed to send them back, but that I hoped to capture the position in front of us after a few more hours' fire, when we had got the howitzers into work. He replied: "Of course, you must take Spion Kop." I then arranged that if we decided not to attack on the left we would take Spion Kop that night. I was myself, however, desirous of going on with the bombardment, and then assaulting the position in front of Three Tree Hill. At this time the trenches of the Boers had only been under fire one day, the 21st, and the howitzers had not yet commenced.

At the meeting of Generals, General Clery was most emphatic against an assault on the left from Bastion Hill, and I concurred with him, because I could see no particular object in possessing this position at great loss, as there were other positions behind it. The best position to capture was evidently that in front of Three Tree Hill, but it was not yet prepared for assault.

Next to this was Spion Kop. The advantages of an attack of Spion Kop over that on the left was that we should there have the fire of all our guns from both sides (i.e., Three Tree Hill and Potgieter's), and very few Boer guns could be trained on it. While in regard to the position on the left, we could get but few of our guns on it, and it was under fire of a great number of the Boer long range guns, to which I could not reply.

- (22.) SIR R. BULLER CAME OVER AND SAID TO ME (JANUARY 23RD): "ATTACK OR RETIRE." IN SAYING THIS HE REFERRED ONLY TO ATTACKING SPION KOP, SO FAR AS I UNDERSTOOD HIM.

Sir R. Buller states (White Book, p. 17) that he calculated that at this time there were 15,000 against us, or more than twice the number there were against him at Potgieter's, when he hesitated to attack. He states (White Book, p. 23) that for four days I had kept my men continuously exposed to shell and rifle fire, etc." All this conversation related in paragraph 2 of his despatch of January 30th (White Book, p. 23) was new to me when I read it. It certainly was never addressed to me, and the paragraph is written as though Sir R. Buller had had no report from me from January 19th to 23rd. At the time of this alleged conversation we had held the position for bombarding purposes on 21st and 22nd, and the 5in. howitzers had only been in use on 22nd, so that the position was not prepared for assault. Sir R. Buller said the assault must take place that night, or he should retire the force, and accordingly I arranged for the capture of Spion Kop. He refused to allow General Coke to go in command of the assaulting party, and ordered me to place General Woodgate

in his place. Now General Coke I knew, was well acquainted with throwing up earthworks, but I was not aware that General Woodgate was so acquainted. I had proposed to lead the assaulting column myself, but Sir R. Buller said I must not do this, but must occupy a central position all the time, so as to command the attack on Spion Kop, and be ready to provide against a counter stroke on our left, which he expressed some anxiety about. I quite saw the wisdom of this remark.

- (23.) FROM THE FIRST SIR REDVERS BULLER APPEARS TO HAVE HAD MISGIVINGS AS TO THE PRACTICABILITY OF THE ATTACK ON THE RANGEWORTHY HILLS.

I consider that the pessimistic views of Sir R. Buller respecting our advance were most injurious to our success; nothing could be more depressing to a force than for the Commander-in-Chief to hold such views on the subject as he has since expressed.

Sir R. Buller was with me all through January 17th watching the enemy, and yet he says to "Daily Mail" (April 18th, 1902): "After the 17th our advantages were fast vanishing, for the enemy was fast concentrating before us. "By the 19th, through Warren's dilatoriness, it was all but gone. I might have saved the situation, but after the 19th I could not well have done so." "On the 20th I went to see Warren. I saw that the advantages I had hoped for had been let slip, and that my own plan of operations had been hopelessly wrecked." (Evidence, Royal Commission on the War in South Africa.)

It is thus apparent that so early as 18th Sir R. Buller was contemplating the possibility of a retirement. Yet all this time Sir R. Buller gave me no hint of his entertaining such views.

- (24.) SIR REDVERS BULLER GIVES TWO VERY INCONSISTENT VIEWS OF THE POSITION OCCUPIED ON THE RANGEWORTHY HILLS FROM JANUARY 20TH TO 25TH.

Telegram to War Office, January 23rd: "Warren holds the position he gained two days ago. In this duel the advantage rests with us, as we appear to be searching his (the enemy's) trenches, and his artillery fire is not causing us much loss."

Telegram to War Office, January 27th: "The actual position held was perfectly tenable, but did not lend itself to advance, as the southern slopes were so steep that Sir C. Warren could not get an effective artillery position, and the supply of the troops with water was a difficulty."

"His force was in a good position, and might be successful. In any event, whether successful or not, the troops would spend some little time under fire in fairly close contact with the enemy, and would then gain comparatively cheaply that battle training in what I knew them most deficient." (Evidence, Royal Commission, February 18th, 1903.)

"General Warren's disposition had mixed up all the brigades, and the position he held was dangerously insecure." (White Book, p. 5.)

"For four days he had kept his men continuously exposed to shell and rifle fire, perched on the edge of an almost precipitous hill. I said it was too dangerous a situation to be prolonged, and that he must either attack or I should withdraw his force." (White Book, p. 23.)

"His position was insecure." (Evidence, Royal Commission, February 18th, 1903.)

The question of the security of the position must be a subject for opinion depending on many circumstances, but I was quite satisfied with it, and felt convinced that the Boers would not attack us from the front, though we were always liable to attack from the Spion Kop side.

As to mixing up my brigades, they had already been mixed up by Sir R. Buller. The 10th Brigade had left two battalions behind in Cape Colony, and had two temporarily attached, and it was now a Corps Brigade detached from 5th Division, while General Lyttelton's Brigade had been attached to the 5th Division, though it belonged to 2nd Division, and General Hart's Brigade had been attached to the 2nd Division, so that the brigades were all mixed, but not by me. If Sir R. Buller means that the battalions of the brigades were mixed up, I can state that there was less mixing up of battalions on this occasion than in any other engagement I witnessed in Natal. So far as I know the only mixture was the York and Lancaster on the left and the Connaught Rangers on the right; but such changes are inseparable from modern warfare, where an advancing line, if it intends to hold what it gets, must remain on its ground. These dispositions were made by General

Clery, of whom Sir R. Buller has stated that "with a thorough knowledge of his profession, he thoroughly understands how to lead his troops in the field."

Any battalion coming on to the Rangeworthy Hills from General Hildyard's Brigade were attached to General Hart's Brigade, in accordance with the following memorandum from General Clery: "8.30 p.m., January 21st. I will be glad if it was made clear that all troops coming up the ridge occupied by General Hart would come under his orders. If you approve, please instruct General Hildyard."

(25.) SPION KOP: BRIEF DESCRIPTION.

The Spion Kop range is separated from the Rangeworthy hills by a broad gully running from north to south. It commences at a neck (800ft. above the Tugela), the point of junction of the two ranges connecting the northern point of Spion Kop (550ft. above the neck) to Green Hill (450ft. above the neck). Green Hill is the south-easterly point of the Boer position on the Rangeworthy hills. This gully runs down for two miles to the Tugela, with a slope of about 400ft. per mile; about half-way down a gully runs into it from the north-west, half a mile long, and falling about 250 in that distance; at the head of this valley was the Engineer bivouac, situated about three-quarters of a mile south of Three Tree Hill, and there was a fair road running down it. At the junction of the two gullies the Engineers cut through the drift on January 24th, and made a crossing for wheeled traffic on to the Spion Kop side. This crossing will be called Spion Kop Drift. Just above the drift a dam was made across the gully (running from Spion Kop), to collect the water in the spruit for the use of the force on Spion Kop. From Spion Kop Drift there was a gentle ascent towards Spion Kop made available for wheeled traffic for about three-quarters of a mile (rising 200ft.), until it reached the backbone connecting the Spion Kop spur with the hill above to the east of Wright's Farm.

On the south-east slope of this backbone or ridge a supply dépôt was established, called the Spion Kop Supply Dépôt, where were congregated during the afternoon of January 24th the regimental wagons containing food and supplies, the ammunition carts, the ambulances and the dressing stations.

The wagons and carts went backwards and forwards between the supply dépôts at Venter's laager and the Spion Kop supply dépôt, through the Engineers' bivouac. The ambulances also went by this way to the field hospital at Wright's Farm. There was, however, a short way (down the main gully) of getting to Wright's Farm, up which the mountain guns came on 24th. From the Spion Kop supply dépôt the ascent to the southern and principal summit of Spion Kop commences by a zigzag path roughly made by the Engineers through the rocks and boulders, and by troops moving up and down. The distance to the summit is about a mile, and the difference in level about 800ft., so that the average rise is about 1 in 7.

There was, however, no uniform gradient; the path leads up steep gradients and along comparatively level plateaux. There are two main plateaux, the upper and the lower. The time it would take to walk from Engineers' bivouac to summit of Spion Kop without any obstacles in the way is 15 minutes to the drift, 15 minutes to the supply dépôt, and about 40 minutes from thence to the summit—an hour and 10 minutes in all. During January 24th the distance was traversed on several occasions within an hour and a-half, but owing to the congested state of traffic, due to carrying down wounded men, and also when darkness came on, the time required was much increased.

The dressing station on the summit was at first immediately in rear of the troops, but it was subsequently withdrawn for greater safety to the northern end of the Four Tree Spur, just under the top slope.

The Dorset Regiment, in reserve, was placed at the southern end of the Four Tree Spur, which was two-thirds of the way up. The gunslide was made down the steep rocks, just where the Dorsets were, about half way up; immediately below this was General Coke's helio position, at about 200 feet above the supply dépôt. From here downward was the slope averaging 1 in 10, with the exception of one steep place.

In the original ascent on the attack of January 24th, at 3 a.m., four out of five mules gained the summit before any track was made, which to a certain extent indicates that there were no places where actual climbing was required.

(26.) THE CAPTURE OF SPION KOP.

Appendix M.

The misstatements concerning the engagement on Spion Kop have been so numerous that it would require a volume to refute them all. As an example I may point out that the late Colonel Henderson, the official historian of the war, in a preface to Count Sternburg's work, "My Experience of the Boer War," states that a force of 4,000 held a position where there was not room for 500, while Colonel Thorneycroft reported on the ground that with six battalions the force was really inadequate to hold so large a perimeter. On the one hand, I have been blamed for crowding the troops on top, and on the other hand for not sending sufficient reinforcements.

The principal charge made against me by Sir Redvers Buller in his despatches is that I did nothing to assist the troops there. He states that I made no arrangements, and that Colonel Thorneycroft exercised a wise discretion in abandoning his post; and he comes to the conclusion after he (Sir R. Buller) had issued an order that there was to be no retirement, after I had telegraphed "No surrender," and after I had written to Colonel Thorneycroft a letter (which he received) stating that it was of vital importance that the position should be held.

I am quite convinced that throughout the war there was no occasion when matters were more fully considered and provided for, considering the short space of time permitted. I have further to mention that Sir R. Buller states that I ought to have done certain things at sundown, such as clearing the trenches, deepening them, arranging for artillery on the top. These were all divisional matters, which must be superintended by the officer commanding on the spot. So far as I was concerned I sent to Spion Kop everything I possessed that would be of use. Sir R. Buller had debarred me from going myself. In any case, the retirement commenced at sundown, and no intimation of this reached me till 2.30 a.m.

(27.) ENGINEER OPERATIONS ON SPION KOP.

The 17th Company Royal Engineers only had been sent with my force, the 37th Company Royal Engineers being kept by Sir R. Buller at Potgieter's.

I sent half the 17th Company Royal Engineers, under Major Massey, up Spion Kop, with General Woodgate's column, provided with entrenching tools, and at 3.30 a.m. on morning of January 24th I sent the remainder of that company, and also Colonels Wood and Sim, Royal Engineers, and their staff officers, to do all that was necessary on the slopes and summit of Spion Kop. They were employed there most of the day. The work they carried out was very considerable, and consisted of (a) entrenchments on summit; (b) gunslides on slopes of Spion Kop, completed at 3.30 p.m., for naval guns should they arrive; (c) making mule path up Spion Kop slopes, and wagon road over the drift at foot; (d) making dam for water at foot of Spion Kop for carts to fill and take up to mule path.

For these purposes not only the Engineers, but also their *bâtmens* and Kaffir drivers and boys turned out and helped; every man was employed on the works, and they worked well.

During the day I sent up to the summit of Spion Kop every pick, shovel, and crowbar, and sand bag (2,000) we possessed. They were taken up by the Middlesex and Dorset Regiments. I also had three coils of 3in-rope brought up from Venter's Spruit laager to the Engineer bivouac, to be ready in case Sir Redvers Buller should send over any long-range guns to reply to those of the Boers.

At 4.30 p.m. I telegraphed for 37th Company Royal Engineers to be sent over to relieve the 17th Company Royal Engineers during the night. They arrived at Trichard's Drift at 8.25 p.m., arriving at foot of Spion Kop at 12.30 a.m., on January 25th. They were about to ascend to relieve the 17th Company Royal Engineers when they were stopped by the retirement.

(28.) ARTILLERY OPERATIONS ON SPION KOP.

The 4th Mountain Battery started from Chieveley by train for Spion Kop on morning of January 23rd, and commenced march from Frere at 5.30 p.m., but did not make much way in the darkness. It marched all day of 24th, reaching Trichard's Drift at 2.30 p.m. Sir R. Buller told me it must have rest before it went up Spion Kop. It arrived at foot at 7.30 p.m., intimation being sent to officer commanding Spion Kop, and the ascent was commenced at 12.30 a.m., but progress was arrested by the retirement of the force from Spion Kop.

Appendix M. I constantly asked Sir R. Buller for long-range guns. At 4 p.m. on January 24th I gathered from a note from Sir R. Buller that he was sending two naval 12-pounders, and I at once sent Captain Hanwell, R.A., up Spion Kop to report to officer commanding, and look out for sites for these guns, and I detailed Lieutenant Otto Schwykkard as guide to these guns. I detailed Colonel Sim, R.E., to go with a fatigue party of 600 men to make the epaulements for the guns, and two relays of 600 each from regiments as reserve were ordered. Lieutenant James, R.N., arrived with the guns at about 8.30 p.m., and left with Colonel Sim about 9.30 p.m. They arrived about midnight at the foot of Spion Kop, and met the force retiring.

Lieutenant Doomer, R.A., was sent to foot of Spion Kop on night of January 23rd to report on the practicability of getting up guns, and to signal effects of artillery fire. He was on Spion Kop from 7 a.m. till 5 p.m. signalling information to Commandant Royal Artillery. He reported it impossible to get 15-pounder guns up the slopes. The naval guns could, however, have been got up readily, and could also have been used on the slopes in reply to pom-poms, etc. Attempts were made to get up machine guns without avail. Lord Dundonald offered to get up one of his machine guns during the night of 24th, and this offer I accepted; he would have done it but for the retirement.

(29.) WATER SUPPLY ON SPION KOP.

Most elaborate arrangements were made for the water supply of the troops. It would have averaged one gallon per man for the troops originally sent up.

Every pack-mule in the force was employed, 25 mules in all, and Major Sargent, Deputy Assistant Adjutant General, and Major Williams, Provost Marshal, were employed all day supervising. Everything was done that could be done, but the men were suffering from artificial thirst, due to their having just arrived in a very hot climate and having been exclusively fed on tinned meat.

Water was brought up in water-carts from the dam to the Spion Kop dépôt, and from there it was loaded up on mules in biscuit boxes. Of course, a good deal of water was spilled from the boxes, but they were the only receptacles we had. There were East India pickul bearers in the force which Sir R. Buller had at Potgieters, and they were asked for, and eventually sent, but they arrived without their pickuls.

(30.) SUPPLIES OF ALL KINDS ON SPION KOP.

Supplies of all kinds were plentiful at the foot of the hill. All the regimental supply wagons of the battalions of the 5th Division and other corps on our side engaged were congregated there in the afternoon, and the troops had exactly the same supplies available then, as they had had during the whole period of the expedition. Moreover, at 5 p.m. nearly all the 11th Brigade who had gone up during the night had come down for water and food. General Coke states the men brought down eight or ten water bottles to fill, and took them up again. There was a limited amount of water on the hill in springs, which had been developed.

(31.) SICK AND WOUNDED ON SPION KOP.

The Principal Medical Officer reported at 7.30 p.m. on 24th January that 150 wounded had been brought in, that every available stretcher of 4th, 10th, 11th Brigades had been sent, and 24 ambulances as well. The field hospital complete was at Wright's Farm, near Trichard's Drift, and the wounded were brought down to the foot of Spion Kop and transferred to ambulances.

(32.) AMMUNITION ON SPION KOP.

There was a plentiful supply of ammunition. In fact, the Dorset Regiment were employed all night in bringing it down after the retirement.

(33.) THE ABANDONMENT OF SPION KOP.

The retirement from Spion Kop is an unique episode in our military history, and seems unaccountable (taking place, as it did, at nightfall, when there were at least 10 hours of rest before dawn next day) unless the retirement of the King's Royal Rifles from the Twin Peaks may have influenced Colonel Thornycroft's proceedings.

In order that some of the misconceptions concerning Spion Kop may be cleared up, I give the following brief account:—

I had telegraphed at 11.50 a.m. to Colonel Crofton that Colonel Thornycroft was placed in command of the

summit with rank of Brigadier-General, and it was Colonel Crofton's duty to communicate to Colonel Thornycroft this order, together with my former message to him of 11.50 a.m., telling him to hold out "to the last; no surrender," and that I was sending him three battalions to support him.

That this heliograph of 11.50 a.m. was written out correctly and communicated to Colonel Crofton there can be no doubt, as it was subsequently picked up by a Boer on Spion Kop, and published in the "Daily Mail."

How it reached Colonel Thornycroft I do not know, but as Colonel Crofton continued throughout the day to command the 11th Brigade, he must have been in communication with Colonel Thornycroft at intervals. Either Colonel Crofton retained the command, or he handed it over.

Sir R. Buller states, "The officer who was placed in command on the top of the hill made several efforts to communicate his situation to General Warren, but received no reply." (Evidence, Royal Commission, 18th February, 1903.)

This is a very grave mis-statement, as I will show. At 1.25 p.m. I heliographed to Officer Commanding Spion Kop:—"Please say where Thornycroft is: has he assumed command?" Reply:—"Colonel Thornycroft is not here." At 1.35 p.m. I again said to Officer Commanding Spion Kop: "Is General Coke on Spion Kop?" It was received, but I got no reply.

At 1.40 p.m. I said to Officer Commanding Spion Kop: "Please give me your views on the situation on Spion Kop, and inform me what you can do, and if anything can be done to advance the tactical situation." It was received. At 1.50 p.m. I said to Officer Commanding Spion Kop: "What battalions have you got on Spion Kop?" At 2.15 p.m. I said to Officer Commanding Spion Kop: "Is General Coke on Spion Kop?" All these heliographs were seen by General Buller, who states that he was at the signal station, and saw all the messages I sent or received.

About 2 p.m. the sun began to be obscured, and it was difficult to send heliographs.

It seems certain that these messages must have been sent on to Officer Commanding Spion Kop, and that either Colonel Crofton or Colonel Thornycroft knew that General Coke was coming up.

At 2.30 p.m. Colonel Thornycroft wrote the only report he sent during the day, and which was a reply, I believe, to my heliogram of 1.40 p.m. This report was seen by General Coke at 3 p.m., who said on it: "I have seen the above, and have ordered the Scottish Rifles and King's Royal Rifles to reinforce. The Middlesex and Dorset Regiments and Imperial Light Infantry have also gone up. . . . We appear to be holding our own at present" (White Book, p. 27). This was received by me at 4.30 p.m., and so far there seemed to be no anxiety. At this time there were seven battalions on and about the summit.

At 3.30 p.m., or an hour before I received this report, I received a telegram from General Buller, stating there were seven battalions on Spion Kop (giving their names), and saying that Colonel Hill seemed to be in command. General Buller's remark on the tactical situation was, "We hold up to the saddle on our right."

At 3.40 I received a heliograph from General Coke, sent after he had endorsed Colonel Thornycroft's report, saying: "The hill is being cleared of the Boers; the necessary reinforcements have been sent up; Scottish Rifles just reached top, etc."

About 3.30 p.m. Colonel Sandbach, Assistant Adjutant-General to Sir R. Buller, arrived from Spion Kop on his way to Sir R. Buller, and gave a good account of affairs.

Thus the period during which I received no messages from Spion Kop was from noon to 3.40 p.m.; but I had several times communicated with Spion Kop during that time up to 2.15 p.m., so that had Colonel Thornycroft or Colonel Crofton or Colonel Hill any messages to send they would have sent them.

At about 4.30 p.m. I was making arrangements for sending the naval guns and working parties for the epaulements, and sent Captain Hanwell out to select sites for the guns on Spion Kop, and I assume that the latter reported his arrival to Colonel Thornycroft. I received no further communication from Spion Kop till about 7.30 p.m., the heliograph being not now available; but at 6.30 p.m. I sent by oil light a message to General Coke asking whether two battalions would be sufficient to keep on top of Spion Kop, saying that the others might be kept over in reserve.

After 7.30 p.m. I received General Coke's review of the situation, written at 5.30 p.m., and soon after a further report from General Coke, brought by Major Williams, taking a more cheerful view of affairs. Then I received a report from Lieutenant Winston Churchill, who had left me at about 4 p.m. for Spion Kop. I received no further communication from Colonel Thorneycroft till after he had reported the retirement to me at 2.30 a.m.

Sir R. Buller states I could not be found because I had changed my camp. My divisional wagon had been moved because it had been shelled, and a man had been severely wounded under it and a horse killed close to, but my bivouac was only changed a short distance, and the position was known at artillery headquarters. The fact is, the night was so dark from mist at times, that it was easy to lose your way, even in a few yards.

Sir R. Buller states in his evidence that I appealed to the nearest brigadier for reinforcements on Spion Kop on morning of 24th January. He had directed me to apply to General Lyttelton for any assistance from Potgieters, because General Buller was so often away from there, and I was in constant communication with General Lyttelton from 17th to 25th January. I was under the impression that Sir R. Buller had seen my telegram, and that all my telegrams to General Lyttelton were duplicated and sent to General Buller. The taking of the Twin Peaks by King's Royal Rifles by General Lyttelton was exactly what was required, and General Buller would not have done better himself.

General Buller could readily have recalled the troops General Lyttelton sent if he had wished to do so, as he was at the Signal Station looking on all the time.

At 10 a.m. I asked for assistance, and the hours at which the troops crossed the Tugela are as follow. (White Book, p. 45):—

Bethune's, 11.45 a.m.

Scottish Rifles, 12.30 p.m.

King's Royal Rifles, 1 p.m.

At 1 p.m. General Lyttelton told me what he had done, and said he would send still further assistance if occasion offer, and General Buller was looking on. It is not intelligible that for three hours he was not aware what General Lyttelton was doing, immediately under his eyes.

Unfortunately General Buller did retire the King's Royal Rifles during the afternoon. Had it not been for this I doubt if Colonel Thorneycroft would have retired from Spion Kop. It will be seen that the helio messages as follows were sent. (White Book, p. 46.)

3 p.m. "Retire steadily till further orders."

3.30 p.m. "Retire steadily till further orders."

4.50 p.m. "Unless the enemy has retired you will fall back."

6 p.m. "Retire when dark."

I would here mention that when I received notice of the retirement from Spion Kop at 2.30 a.m. on January 25th I sent off at once duplicate messages by telegraph and mounted messenger to Sir R. Buller. Our telegraph clerk could not call up the Potgieter station.

The following is the message I sent by orderly:—

"2.30 a.m., Warren, to Chief of Staff; pressing. Colonel Thorneycroft has on his own authority abandoned the position of Spion Kop, and the troops are evacuating the place; can you come on at once and decide what to do? An immediate decision must be arrived at. The line is intercepted."

Sir R. Buller received the message at 5 a.m., and arrived at my bivouac at 6 a.m.

(34.) RETIREMENT ACROSS THE TUGELA.

The abandonment of Spion Kop might have been reduced to a mere episode in our advance to the relief of Ladysmith had not Sir R. Buller committed himself to the plan of retirement, in order to try a new line of attack at Vaalkrantz, almost from the first day after our crossing.

He issued an order that there was to be no retirement, saw us well on our way across the Tugela, and then, instead of supporting us with all his vigour, he commenced to look for a new line of attack.

Had we re-occupied Spion Kop on the morning of 25th January, we should have been masters of the situation, but Sir R. Buller could think of nothing but retirement from our positions so well gained.

I had constantly brought before his notice that the Boers were getting shaken, and that the Orange Free State Boers wished to be off as early as 21st January. I pointed this out to him:—"Telegram: 'Warren to General Buller. 6.30 p.m. I am under the impression

from various indications, that the Free State Boers are preparing a great trek to the west, and that the present fighting is to secure their line of retreat. If you can push on the three battalions to reinforce me as quickly as possible, I think I can manage to close the road to the west and secure some of their wagons."

To this General Buller replied that he expected the enemy might try a counter-stroke.

I continually pointed out to Sir R. Buller up to 23rd January that the Boers were preparing to retreat, and he would not hear of it. Here is a telegram from Lord Dundonald:—"2 p.m., 22nd January. One of my patrols reports that the enemy are placing a gun on high hill just north of B. in square B. 33 of big blue map, thus protecting their line of retirement to Free State. There is also a movement to big hill in D. 33, which effectually commands all approaches towards their right flank, and further protecting their retirement."

(35.) THE RETREAT OF THE BOERS FROM SPION KOP, AND THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF OUR TROOPS ON EVENING OF 24TH JANUARY.

(1) Lieutenant Otto Schwykkard, when acting as guide to naval guns, ascended Spion Kop by moonlight, just after our troops had abandoned it, and entered the Boer lines. Here he found none but killed and wounded, except one hospital assistant; there had been a general retirement of the Boers.

(2) Colonel Burn Murdoch and a reconnoitring party ascended Spion Kop on morning of 25th January, and found it abandoned by the Boers ([Cd. 458] p. 75, Blue Book).

(3) At 9.25 a.m. 25th, telegram from Chief of Staff:—"A few Boers have been observed trying to ascend east of Spion Kop, and may commence sniping."

(4) At 2.30 p.m., 25th, telegram from General Lyttelton:—"Some Boer reports have reached me of a steady Boer movement from our left to our right, down stream. Can you judge from the pressure against you whether it is due to the Boers weakening the right?"

(5) Intelligence Report C. 32, 27th January: "Natives tell scouts that day after Spion Kop fight large numbers of Boers and wagons trekking towards Berg [westward], thus confirming our suppositions. They, however, are now returning. Natives show great disappointment at unlooked-for result of battle, after apparent victory.—(Signed) A. W. CAMPBELL, Lieutenant, R.A."

(6) The Spion Kop battle, as seen from Ladysmith (from special correspondent of "Times"?): "There was no change in the Boer positions till Wednesday, 24th." At that time the Boers had two large canvas camps near Spion Kop Nek and four large wagon laagers further north.

During the afternoon of 24th the Boers were seen inspanning, and towards evening they began trekking towards Van Reenan's Pass. On morning of Thursday, 25th, it was observed that many of the Boers had left the laagers, and that others were going in full retreat. The wagons extended for miles. On Friday morning it was observed that the Boers had re-appeared.

(7) Commandant Edwards, Staff Officer to General Botha, has stated that the Boers were all on the run on the afternoon of 24th January, and that our abandonment was a complete surprise to them. The Boer leaders held a council on evening of 24th January, and believing that the Twin Peaks (the key of the position, in their views) was still held by King's Royal Rifles, they determined to abandon the positions about Spion Kop.

(8) Some Boers who had been on Spion Kop on 24th January told my Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant Lowther, in May, 1900, that the Boers were in full retreat from Spion Kop on evening of 24th January, and that our victory was complete.

(36.) SIR R. BULLER'S ORDERS AND HIS SUGGESTIONS.

I have to call attention to the unfair position taken up by Sir R. Buller regarding my action. Either I was responsible for what I did, or I was acting under orders; but Sir R. Buller makes my position depend upon after results.

He states that he only suggested to me putting General Woodgate in command of the attacking column, instead of General Coke. It was most distinctly an order, for he stated he would not have General Coke in command. He states that he only suggested to me putting Colonel Thorneycroft in command of Spion Kop, and yet he says, in a letter of 24th January—

Appendix M. "I have telegraphed to you to put Thorneycroft in command."

On the other hand, in respect to his suggested attack from our left, he says that I refused to carry out his instructions in not attacking there. Yet he told me to consult my generals as to doing so, and telegraphed to me at 7 p.m., 22nd January:—"If you mean to attack there, I should organise the attack thus: Shell with howitzers stop howitzers as you open machine guns from Snymburg hill, and then attack. One battalion to attack, and all to open fire on the other scances."

If I had (against my own judgment and the judgment of the generals I consulted) attacked on this occasion, and failed, is it to be supposed that Sir R. Buller would have accepted the responsibility for the action he states that he constantly urged on me?

(37.) SIR R. BULLER'S SECRET REPORTS AND CHARGES AGAINST ME.

I have to call attention to the adverse reports and charges Sir R. Buller has made against me, while (so far as I know) he was on the most friendly terms with me. He gave me no hint of any kind that he was reporting against me, and was, apparently, on such friendly terms that I often was asked by officers of other divisions to bring matters for them before him. I had myself for many years had a friendly feeling towards him, and though on several occasions after the war commenced I was warned that he was not friendly, I did not credit it, and did not realise the manner in which he had treated me, until I saw copies of the Spion Kop despatches in May, 1900, on my way to Griqualand West.

Sir R. Buller gained his information in an informal manner, and not according to the usual routine, and he did not seem to have a good knowledge of topography or any mental prospective as to the value of the various items of information he received from so many different sources. The result was that he was apt to have an incorrect and distorted view of matters, which it was difficult to correct. If the correct view could be put before him he would suddenly grasp it and treat it as if he had always known it: and sometimes I succeeded in putting a correct view before him, but, as a rule, he would not permit me to proceed with what I had to say. As an instance of the manner in which he secretly re-

ported wrong information, without informing me, I relate the following:—

On 12th February, 1900, on looking at some telegrams in Sir R. Buller's book relative to the relief of Ladysmith, which Lord Roberts wished me to see, I caught sight of a telegram from Sir R. Buller to Lord Roberts, stating that I had had an acrimonious dispute with my staff relative to Spion Kop. I called Sir R. Buller's attention to this, and requested an explanation, and he assured me that he had found he had made a mistake, and had explained to Lord Roberts that the dispute was between Colonel Thorneycroft and Colonel Hill. This instance will give you some idea of the random manner in which Sir R. Buller wrote about me, and how terribly handicapped I was in my dealings with him.

I claim that, as I was in independent command (according to all the usages of war), I should have been informed of all the statements concerning my conduct made against me, and given an opportunity at the time of replying to them. Under such a system as that adopted by Sir R. Buller the reputation of no officer was safe.

(38.) MY EMPLOYMENT IN SUBSEQUENT INDEPENDENT COMMANDS.

Sir R. Buller states: "I can never employ him again in an independent command."

Yet after Vaal Krantz, on 7th February, Sir R. Buller suddenly left the field, leaving me in independent command, to extricate the force from the position, and he sent me a very complimentary telegram on my doing so.

After Vaal Krantz I was always in command of at least three brigades up to the relief of Ladysmith, and I pushed the advance through, my command being always to the front. On the last day, (Pieters) I organised the successful advance, and commanded the whole line north of the Tugela and east of Onderbrook, while Sir R. Buller was south of the Tugela. I received several congratulatory telegrams and verbal thanks, given before my Staff, but on most days Sir R. Buller omitted to mention my name in the accounts of the actions given in his despatches.

CHARLES WARREN, Lieut.-General, R.E.

18th April, 1903.

APPENDIX A.

PASSAGE OF RIVER BY PONTON BRIDGE.

(SCHEME BY LIEUT.-COLONEL BLOMFIELD, 2ND LANCASHIRE FUSILIERS.)

(1) Till "Long Tom" is silenced nothing effective can be done. This gun is by scale 2,650 yards from the bridge, the south end of which it commands.

(2) I estimate enemy at 15,000, with 12 field guns.

(3) Our force, two divisions, with usual proportion of field artillery.

(4) I should advance two batteries to hill (B), and one to hill (A), and endeavour by cross fire concentrated on "Long Tom" to subdue its fire. As, however, the range exceeds 4,000 yards, and our artillery has, I presume, only shrapnel, it will be a difficult job. All guns to be worked by "deliberate" method.

(5) The hill (C) must next be occupied by infantry, some of whom might work on to (D) if cover be available.

(6) With (C) held as a bridge head infantry might effect a crossing, but as I anticipate that hills (E) and (F) will be held by enemy's field guns, which must also be silenced by our artillery (see 4 above), the occupation of (C) will be most difficult.

(7) Balloon reconnaissance should be freely used if balloon section Royal Engineers is with either of the divisions.

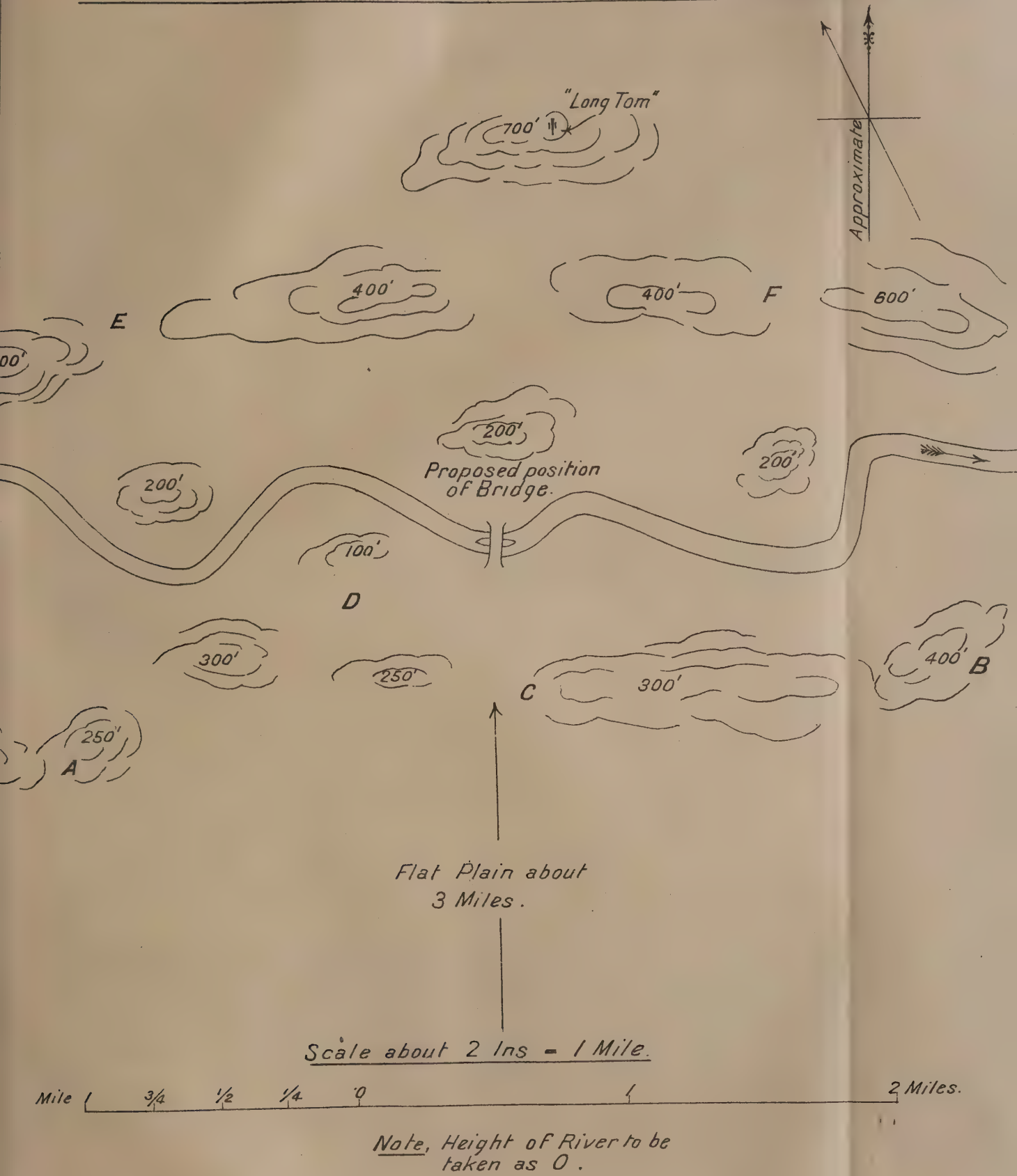
(Signed) C. BLOMFIELD, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers.

Springfield, January 15th, 1900.

APPENDIX A.

IDEAL SKETCH.

Of passage of a River, to be accomplished by throwing over a Pontoon Bridge.



APPENDIX B.

Appendix M.

REPORT ON PROBABLE WATER SUPPLY NEAR ROAD FROM TRICHARD'S DRIFT TO GROOTE HOEK, PASSING NORTH OF SPION KOP RIDGES. REFERENCE TO D OFFICIAL MAP, SCALE 1 IN. TO 1 MILE.

(1) About one mile from the drift (No. 13) is the Englishman's house, Mr. Wright's, at present unoccupied; about a quarter of a mile beyond the house are the first lot of kraals met with; they are on both sides of the road.

Water is obtained for the house and the kraals from a donga running down into the Tugela, east of the house.

(2) About $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the drift the road forks; here are the second lot of kraals on both sides of the road; there is cultivation around these kraals, and they get water from a spring about a quarter of a mile east of the road.

(3) About $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the drift is a kraal consisting of six huts in a row; they get water from a donga a few hundred yards to the east, said to be a running stream after rains.

(4) About four miles from the drift is a kraay of two huts close to the road. They get water from the donga west of the road, which runs down past W. Coventry's house.

(5) About five miles from the drift, west of this road is the head of a donga, in which it is said there is a good spring of water.

(6) The enemy's camp at Groote Hoek have been drawing their water from the farmhouse of C. Coventry. This is said to be an uncertain supply for large bodies of troops; but spruits passing G. H. Wright's are generally running streams at this time of year.

(Signed) A. J. SANDBACH,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Intelligence.

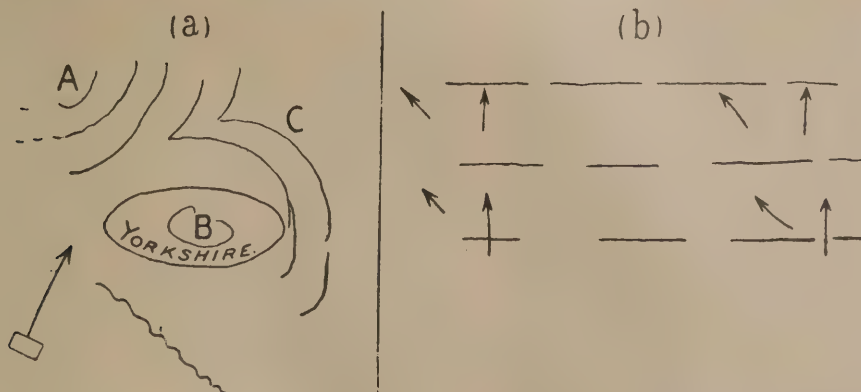
Headquarters, Mount Alice, January 16th, 1900.

APPENDIX C.

FROM SIR R. BULLER (JANUARY 17TH, 1900, RECEIVED JANUARY 18TH.)

My dear Warren,—I am carrying coals to Newcastle probably, but on the chance I write to say I wish you would, if you have not already done so, point out to Woodgate that his advance from Smith's Farm to-day was all wrong. The one thing, if we mean to succeed, is

to keep our left clear. He was at Smith's Farm; the Yorkshires had occupied a kopje to the east, and he had advanced north-east; this was wrong. He offered his left to the enemy. I give a small diagram:—



(A) was the hill you wished to hold, and (B) looking into the kloof (C), where you thought the enemy might be. (B), of course, was properly occupied, but when Woodgate advanced, he, instead of moving up to (A), which, when (B) was occupied, he could safely do, he moved across as marked by the arrow, so that if an enemy had been behind (A) his left flank would have been exposed; this is what I want all commanders especially to avoid.

If your direct road is blocked, we must go forward by moving off to the left, and this will have the further advantage that it will keep you near the water at

Venter's Spruit—consequently the left flank must always be thrown outward. If you can make a direct advance it will be in line, but if you are checked the next advance must be by moving half left (see D); I mean that to get on, your left will creep outward and forward and your right follow. I don't know if I have made myself clear. Wynne will explain, but until you have so far encircled the enemy that you can wheel to the east, pray always try to overlap their right with your left.

(Signed) REDVERS BULLER.

Appendix M.

APPENDIX D.

COPY OF THE ORIGINAL TELEGRAM DRAFTED BY SIR CHARLES WARREN, FEBRUARY 12TH, 1900, GIVING HIS OPINION TO LORD ROBERTS AS TO WHETHER HE SHARED SIR R. BULLER'S VIEWS EXPRESSED IN TELEGRAM OF FEBRUARY 9TH.

"Commander-in-Chief (Sir R. Buller), with reference to Field Marshal Lord Roberts' question of February 11th, 1900 (C.93) as to whether I share your views in your telegram of February 9th.

"(1) This matter involves an immense number of considerations, and innumerable details in which I may not hold the same opinion as you do, but although I do not know to what extent there may be any divergence of opinion, on the main and important subject I think that my views closely accord with yours, as follows :—

"(a) In my opinion (and it is an opinion I have held since I arrived here, though not so securely based as now), the force in Natal is not sufficiently strong to effectually relieve Ladysmith (if the Boers have long-range guns well directed with good shells) *except by getting into some position* where we are able to get our artillery to pound away at the Boers in their trenches, and thus weary and worry them and kill them out.

"(b) I consider that an attack on Bloemfontein and the Orange Free State would materially assist, because after the British Government is again proclaimed the Orange Free State Boers must return to the Orange Free State, or lose their farms; at present they cannot be deprived of their farms.

"(c) I agree with *you and with Sir George White* that it would be fatal to Ladysmith merely to remain on the defensive until operations are going on against the Orange Free State. I consider that the General Officer Commanding the Natal Field Force is bound to continue actively to attack the Boers, even though he may know that he cannot effectively relieve Ladysmith, arranging, of course, that it may be done with as little loss of life as practicable.

"(d) Sir George White first stated that Ladysmith could only hold out to February 15th, but now considers that by sacrificing the horses he can hold out to March 15th. This gives us nearly a month more. I consider that 10,000 men would be more effectively employed in the Orange Free State than in Natal in giving assistance to Ladysmith; at the same time, I am of opinion that the force here is just as weak, *without a proper complement of long-range guns*, as to be able to act with difficulty. On the whole I think the most effective arrangement is for the force here (with drafts sent up to fill all vacancies) to pound away with artillery and harry and worry the Boers to the utmost, while a rapid advance is made to secure Bloemfontein and vicinity, Harrismith, and Van Reenan's Pass, and at the same time to proclaim the Orange Free State a Sovereignty, and to give out that the Orange Free State Boers must return, otherwise their farms will be confiscated.

"(e) You have shown me your papers as to taking Hlangwani Hill. I think that this will most assist Sir George White, and that if sufficient long-range guns are got up, it is possible that Ladysmith may be relieved from this side, at any rate it is worth trying. The only point I would suggest is, that the advance when the attack is made, should be made by some kind of trap, so that there may be no great loss of life, as I am confident that what the Boers dread most is to lose heavily, so long as we are only losing few."

In giving this opinion, I was only asked to state whether I shared Sir R. Buller's views given in his telegram. I was not asked whether I thought I would have relieved Ladysmith with the force we had, but only as to prospects of the force acting under Sir R. Buller.

APPENDIX N.

Appendix N.

PRÉCIS OF EVIDENCE BY MAJOR-GENERAL BARTON, C.B., C.M.G.

See Questions 16181-16395.

1.—From all circumstances governing the question, it is self-evident the British Force originally designed for the campaign, was insufficient, and ill proportioned.

In Natal, force would have been sufficient if cavalry had not been shut up in Ladysmith.

2.—Shooting of our infantry was very good, and much better than Boers.

Shooting of cavalry bad, and carbine useless.

Shooting of Reservists requires improvement.

Marching of infantry as a rule splendid, but differed in corps.

Horsemanship and horsemastership capable of improvement; the latter depends on the directors of operations and the staff as well as on the rider; waste of horses due greatly to our depending on imported horses and making insufficient effort to secure the horses of the country. As a rule horses taken from Boers suffered as much from sores and sore backs as our own.

Intrenchments and cover.—The training of our infantry in this respect was good; but officers should be assisted by manuals issued regularly by the R.E. and kept constantly up to date.

The R.E. are quite up to date themselves, and ready to do this, but it was not done.

Wallace spade is a useless encumbrance. The spade to be of any service must be large, strong, and of the best material, capable of attachment to the person on special occasions, and not carried permanently by the soldier.

The principle of taking cover should differ materially in the "attack" from the "defence"; the creeping crawling methods of attack are believed to be wrong.

General physique, morale, and intelligence of infantry on arrival were of the highest order. Chief improvement was in the men becoming more handy in camp or bivouac, and better able to take care of themselves; this is quickly learnt.

Chief deduction as regards future training is more independence for commanding officers and company leaders. Less dry nursing by Generals and staff, who are often guided by elaborate programmes, and judge by book work, rather than by results or work in the field. More stress should be laid on combined tactics, and simultaneous attacks of different bodies on several separate points.

3.—Staff officers and regimental officers should stick to their own work; at present staff duties are introduced too much into the training of regimental officers.

The first and chief point necessary to obtain a really efficient staff is to select only first-class regimental officers and to insist on the rule (without any exception whatever) that all officers under rank of Lieut.-Colonel commanding a corps must perform *bonâ fide* regimental duty after three or four years on the staff.

Company officers should be relieved of pay responsibilities.

4.—(a) Owing to paucity of A.S.C. supply officers there was mismanagement entailing enormous loss to the State.

Most of the butchering should be done by corps.

(b) Very good.

(c) No special knowledge.

(d) The number was colossal, quality varied, but there were many of the very best, although faulty staff management never gave them a chance until late in the campaign.

5.—Railway management was faulty. Much more should have been done to cope with difficulties of improving the personnel, and improving facilities for entraining troops generally throughout the lines of railway.

Though styled military railways, there was not discipline enough.

Ox transport in Natal was excellent and well organised—a very considerable inferiority was observed in Cape Colony after relief of Ladysmith.

Traction trains used very successfully in Pretoria district, but they should always be under officers specially qualified in steam.

As a general rule regimental transport should be adopted on manœuvres and active service.

The infantry are always very shabbily treated in load tables.

6.—Medical arrangements were good, but the organisation of units should not be interfered with, *e.g.*, the Fusilier Brigade was deprived of its medical services on transfer from the Natal Army to the Cape Colony side.

The R.E. were slack in the early stages, especially in the matter of water-supply. They were first-rate during later stages of campaign.

It is a question to what extent the duties of Q.M.G. are now merged in the Chief Engineer.

7.—It is doubtful whether such heavy guns as 4.7 or 6-in. are really needed in the field.

Field guns should fire common shell, as having far greater destructive power and moral effect than shrapnel. They should also be quick-firing.

Lee-Metford rifle is good, but sighting is defective in a large proportion; or the ammunition is uncertain.

Officers should be invited to bring defects to notice.

FURTHER EVIDENCE REGARDING ORGANISATION OF ARMY, ETC.

Organisation is generally approved; except as regards present system of M.I.

Advocate a permanent M.I. establishment with each battalion in excess of eight company organisation. This establishment to be under the C.O. and be used for training as many suitable men as possible.

The establishment may be from a minimum of one section—about 25 men, to a complete M.I. company of present fixed establishment for M.I.

All other M.I. to be abolished and cavalry increased. These M.I. to be utilised in battalion training, and brigade training.

They would form nucleus for rapid expansion, but would not otherwise interfere with battalion organisation and efficiency.

On service every N.C.O. who is extra regimentally employed should be at once classed as supernumerary, and his place filled up in the corps, and absorbed when he returns.

The place of officers should also be filled up much more liberally than was done during the war.

There was an enormous and unnecessary waste of men on the Line of Communications, and the practice of grabbing individual men and entire drafts was freely indulged in.

All anomalies, such as the Militia Reserve, should be abolished. Every officer and man should fill one place only in the organisation of the Army.

Cavalry should have best rifle available, which must have great range—consistent with this range it should be as light as possible provided it does not kick.

Infantry officers should be encouraged to keep horses—this only needs the provision of stabling in all infantry barracks, and permission to have soldier grooms at the discretion of C.O.

Rifle shooting and instruction should be made more popular and palatable; and penalties for men who are not first class should be provided as much as possible.

Appendix N. Musketry figures should not be published.
Carriage of ammunition by the soldier needs improvement.

There was unnecessary delay in assembling Reserves and embarkation at beginning of war—deficiency of khaki clothing was generally believed to have been the cause.

The raising of local corps for active service is so frequently resorted to, that it is time a code of very simple standing orders, suitable for all cases, should be compiled, and kept ready at all times in pamphlet form for issue to officers and men on being enrolled.

All enrolment should be for the duration of the war.

More stringent rules are necessary regarding public utterances, communications to the Press, to war correspondents, and historians. During the war the door has been thrown wide open for juniors to criticise and attack their superiors behind their backs; while the former are quite ignorant of the circumstances and instructions which have governed the actions of their superiors.

Some officers doubtless have benefited largely in their reputations by communications to the Press, etc., made by their subordinates; others have been most unjustly criticised. In either case discipline suffers.

The practice of the Navy, as regards errors or crimes committed by officers, may with advantage be adopted in the Army. At present military officers are removed from their posts, are publicly slighted and held up to opprobrium, without even being told the nature of their error; and they have absolutely no redress whatever.

While not having had much experience of Colonial corps raised for the war, there can be no doubt that the C.O. and a large proportion of the officers should be officers of the Regular Army; but the N.C.O.'s should be irregulars. This does not apply to permanent volunteer or local corps, such as the Natal Carabineers or some of the Cape mounted corps.

The breaking up of divisions and brigades was premature.

APPENDIX O.

Appendix O.

STATEMENT BY MAJOR-GENERAL BARTON, C.B., C.M.G. respecting his Action while in charge of Forces in South Africa.

(See Questions 16181—16395.)

While I was serving in Pretoria, in May, 1902, and when peace was daily expected, my attention was called to the second volume, "*Times' History of the War*," in which I am most severely criticised in regard to my action on first arrival in Natal and at the battle of Colenso.

I was unable to procure this volume, and only saw extracts therefrom; but on arrival home I personally referred the matter to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, and claimed his protection.

I also asked that the matter might be referred to a court of inquiry, which his Lordship said was not possible.

The "*Times' History of the War*" is understood to claim special opportunities for accurate information, and is regarded generally as an authoritative publication; it bears, moreover, the stamp of official recognition, because, after an order had been published in South Africa prohibiting officers to communicate accounts of operations for public circulation, another order appeared, permitting such information to be furnished to Mr. Amery, editor of the "*Times' History*."

This permission was restricted to "personal experiences," but there is no doubt that in some cases the terms of this permission have been exceeded, even to the extent of junior officers criticising their seniors, while the former were quite ignorant of the instructions given to the latter, and imperfectly informed of the circumstances which governed their action.

On arrival at Durban, on November 17th, 1899, I was ordered at once to Mooi River Station to assemble my brigade there.

I caught the first train, and proceeded in advance of my staff, which had not yet landed.

I had no information of the situation in Natal. I did not see General Clery, when I passed through Pietermaritzburg, nor any of his staff; my written instructions were: "To watch the country, and co-operate with Hildyard at Estcourt to protect the railway line."

Beyond this no plan of campaign was communicated to me.

My battalions and staff had not been brigaded together before, and were all strange to me and to one another.

On arrival at Mooi River Station at 3 a.m., November 18th, I found 230 men, Thorneycroft's newly raised M.I., had arrived the evening before, and also the first battalion of my brigade.

There had been some confusion about the destination of this battalion, which caused it great discomfort; probably attributed to me, but for which I was in no way responsible.

Mooi River Station had every conceivable defect as a military position; it was not of my choosing, though it was necessary to have some force there to guard the important railway bridge. No preparation had been made for occupation by troops or defence, but a supply dépôt was in process of formation.

I had to make at once all my dispositions for defence of the station, bridge, and line, without knowing when the next troops would join me, as this depended on the arrival of ships, regarding which I had no information. I had no Intelligence officer or agent, no guide, local scout, interpreter, or map; and no transport at all; nor anyone possessing local or colloquial knowledge of Dutch and Kaffir languages necessary for gaining information, and no officer who possessed any previous knowledge or experience of the country. On Thorneycroft's recommendation I appointed one of his officers temporarily as Intelligence officer, etc., but the next day was warned from headquarters (Pietermaritzburg) that his loyalty was doubtful.

Immediately on my arrival at Mooi River I had applied to headquarters Pietermaritzburg for an interpreter or guide; the answer was not satisfactory. Even-

tually Mr. McFarlane, a gentleman of much colonial experience, joined me as Intelligence agent, but not till late on the night of 22nd November.

On the eastern side, towards Weenen, most of the farmers are Dutch, and they were in sympathy with the enemy.

At 10 a.m. on the morning of my arrival at Mooi River Hildyard telegraphed he was being attacked from N.W.

Mooi River is 23 miles from Estcourt, too far for active co-operation with infantry; but as I expected the Boers would try and isolate Estcourt, and as I learnt that Hildyard had a detachment at Willow Grange, I sent 500 infantry by rail and 100 M.I. by road to permanently occupy Highlands, promising to send another 500 on arrival of next battalion.

These two intermediate posts would have protected the line and ensured my maintaining communication with Hildyard, would have formed points d'appui for our very small bodies of M.I. patrolling the line and country; and Highlands would have served as a jumping-off ground for any operations I might undertake to the north as soon as I was sufficiently equipped to take the field; a most useful point, seeing I had no maps to work with, and no knowledge of the locality.

Further, the occupation of these two posts would have prevented the concentration on the Highlands plateau of the two Boer forces which were now moving south of Estcourt by Weenen on the east and the Hlatikulu Mountains on the west; estimated at about 7,000 men all splendidly mounted.

The following day (viz., November 19th) I was ordered to withdraw the infantry from Highlands and patrol the line with mounted men. I therefore withdrew the infantry on November 19th, but left the 100 M.I. at Highlands, with orders to scout, but to fall back if outnumbered or in danger of being cut off.

I do not question the wisdom of my superiors, but these changes of plan give a bad impression, and also cause to a commander considerable doubt as to the extent of his independence.

On November 19th 500 men of Bethune's M.I. reached Mooi River en route for Estcourt, and I urged that they should remain under my command, because I was responsible for sending trains of men, horses, guns, and stores to Estcourt, where there were already about 300 mounted men, all possessing local knowledge and experience.

In this I was overruled, and I recognised that General Clery wished to make Hildyard as strong and mobile as possible, his force being at the rail head, and better able to engage the Boers than mine, which was very incomplete and not mobile.

Hildyard also withdrew his detachment from Willow Grange, and on November 21st the Boers drove in our M.I., formed a junction on the Highlands plateau, and they cut the line and telegraph, thus isolating Estcourt and stopping communication between Hildyard and myself.

At this time (viz., on November 20th) I heard that a large supply dépôt had been formed at Nottingham Road (south of Mooi River), and was entirely unguarded; as the enemy were reported to be moving south on my western flank, I sent 500 infantry by rail unobserved during the night back to occupy Nottingham Road, and 100 M.I. by road to Rosetta.

Boer scouts approached Nottingham Road the next morning, but, finding it occupied, they withdrew. I protected these places till arrival of the next Brigade.

These places were not in my sphere of responsibility, but I considered it necessary to act as I did, and also I contemplated having to operate to the south, as there were no troops between me and the sea.

I did not co-operate with Hildyard in his fight near Willow Grange on November 23rd, for which I have been blamed, because I had no knowledge of his inten-

Appendix O. tion, owing to delay in the delivery of a note he sent me by native messenger. The scene of his fight was about 18 or 19 miles from me; he attacked at daylight, and I did not receive his note till 10.30 a.m. the same day, by which hour he had retired towards Estcourt.

I made a full report of the whole circumstance at the time.

On receiving Hildyard's note I prepared a column to reconnoitre in his direction; but, as it was starting, I received a message from Headquarters (Pietermaritzburg) that Eland's Kop, south of Mooi River, and completely covering the railway, was occupied by the Boers. This being partly confirmed, I felt compelled to divert the column towards Eland's Kop. The report, however, proved to be incorrect.

The Boers had long-range guns that they were able to put in positions which I was at that time not strong enough to occupy, but from which, at a range of from four to five miles, they were able to drop some shells into Mooi River Station on November 22nd and 23rd; though they did no damage. On both occasions I moved out and engaged the enemy, but my guns were quite outclassed.

I received the following messages from Headquarters (Pietermaritzburg):—

From A.A.G., Pietermaritzburg, to G.O.C, Mooi River:—

November 23rd, B 83. Your 74. I hope to send you a regiment of cavalry (Royal Dragoons) about Monday next. (Stop.) The two remaining battalions of your brigade will probably (*sic*) with you to-day. (Stop.) Don't run any risk about your camp. (Stop.) If those fellows in your front stay there much longer we may bag the whole lot. (Stop.) Will send you the first mounted troops that arrive.

From General Clery to G.O.C. Mooi River. B. 103, November 24th:—

Your 88. I will probably send you two long-range guns to-day. (Stop.) I hear from Nottingham Road that patrol of Rifle Association reports as follows:—

"Considerable force of Boers moving from Simon's Farm Camp to Highlands about 4 p.m." Message ends. Can your scouts confirm this?

Be careful for a day or two how you risk too much.

These messages speak for themselves. I therefore sent a secret note by messenger to Hildyard to say I would operate in his direction on Wednesday, November 28th, by which time I expected to be able to take the field with a mobile force, and by combined action to attack the Boers with advantage, and under circumstances that if I gained any success, I could follow it up.

On November 24th the two last battalions of my brigade arrived. On November 25th, at about noon, the Boers on the Highlands plateau were reported by my scouts to be moving eastward. I reconnoitred with a column of two battalions, one field battery and 250 M.I., when there appeared no doubt the enemy were retiring on Weenen, intending to cross the Bushman River by bridge there, and then make for the bridge over the Tugela at Colenso.

Believing I had very little prospect of interfering with the Boer retirement through the difficult thorn country in the Weenen district, I sent the above column through under Lord Dundonald during the night to Estcourt (23 miles), notifying Hildyard by mounted messengers the line the Boers were taking, that my reinforcement would reach him at daybreak, and might enable him to move out in force to intercept the enemy before reaching Colenso, as he was much nearer to the enemy's line of retreat than I was. I added that I would bring the rest of my brigade to Estcourt the next day, as Lyttelton had now reached Mooi River with two battalions. Hildyard moved out from Estcourt with his whole force on arrival of my column, and tried to intercept the Boers.

I kept the remainder of my brigade back because a force of Boers was still reported on the western flank, and it was necessary to watch it, and also to repair the line and telegraph. This was effected during the night, and a train pushed through to Estcourt at daylight on November 26th; but as I was on the point of marching with the remainder of my force, I was stopped by orders from Pietermaritzburg. Later in the day I received orders to march to Estcourt, which I reached on November 27th.

The guns referred to in telegram No. 88 arrived early on November 25th. The cavalry regiment did not reach me at all.

The transport of my brigade was delivered partly at Mooi River, but not completed till I had been 10 days at Estcourt.

The Boers gained no military advantage beyond the capture of some stock, which they could not have been prevented from seizing in other parts of Natal at that time; I claim that my attitude at Mooi river checked the progress of the enemy further south, and there is nothing to show that any other action on my part, during the week I was there, would have had better results.

The difficulties I experienced at first were to some extent inseparable from the opening of a campaign in a strange country, where the enemy already possessed great advantages before I arrived. I have never complained of such difficulties, which I did my best to meet as they occurred, nor do I question the wisdom of the orders sent to me, or changes in my dispositions, but I protest most emphatically against the criticism which is levelled at me alone; also that an attitude of caution enjoined on me, and changes forced on me, which might be attributed to my vacillation, should have led to my being publicly accused of being "decidedly nervous and chiefly concerned in the defence of the station and bridge at Mooi River." And I consider I was entitled to the support of my superiors.

BATTLE OF COLENZO.

I have also been publicly blamed for not supporting Dundonald in the capture of Hlangwane, and it is ascribed to my fearing to take responsibility. My brigade was detailed as a support, or, more correctly, as a reserve, and I was ordered to take it to a particular spot pointed out on a sketch plan of the country.

The object of sending a mounted force to occupy Hlangwane was that it might be done quickly, so as to cover and assist the advance of Hart and Hildyard across the river. I have reason to believe that Buller thought Hlangwane was not held by the Boers, or I think he would have made other dispositions for its capture.

I had no report or message from Dundonald, and did not know he was being seriously opposed.

After Hart had been repulsed and Hildyard's attack stopped, I rode over to a battalion of my brigade that I had sent, in accordance with my instructions, to cover our right flank; I found it about two miles on the right, with Dundonald's battery, which had no other escort, and I then observed that the occupation of Hlangwane had failed. While there, Dundonald came up and asked me to support his further advance on Hlangwane.

I saw the situation for myself, and it was a question whether the attack should be renewed; if so, it needed fresh dispositions, which it was not in my power to make.

I had already disposed a considerable part of my Brigade for the protection of Long's field guns, which had ceased fire, and of Ogilvy's long-range naval guns, which were then in action. Although it was not possible to withdraw the field guns then, I had rendered them secure against capture.

In regard to the occupation of Hlangwane, nothing could now be gained by haste; it was not an occasion when immediate action on my part could gain an advantage or avert a disaster.

I am also prepared to give my reasons for considering entirely fresh dispositions necessary if the attack was to be renewed.

Nothing had been ascertained of the strength or positions of the Boers south of the Tugela, nor of their means of reinforcing or withdrawing their men.

It was a question whether Buller wished to hold the hill of Hlangwane permanently; and under every rule and principle of war it was my duty to refer to him before committing any part of my infantry brigade to offensive action at such a distance, namely, about five miles, from the place assigned to it by Buller himself.

There would be no difficulty in ascertaining his wishes quickly by heliograph or messenger.

At this time I saw Buller crossing the plain towards us; he observed the situation for himself, and then, far from wishing me to move on towards Hlangwane, he blamed me for having brought one of my battalions so far to the right, and he ordered me to retire it nearer to the place he had appointed for my brigade.

I did so, leaving three companies with Dundonald.

At this time Buller was intent on the withdrawal of Long's field guns.

The following evening, at 6 p.m., Buller sent for me and had a long conversation with me about the battle. He again said I had taken one of my battalions too far to the right, but added I was quite right not to support Dundonald further in a venture that could then gain no result.

I never heard the incident referred to again until March or April, 1902.

I am most anxious and desirous that the fullest publicity may be given to the part actually played by myself and my brigade at Colenso, and am ready to give full information and proof of every act and incident that came under my observation. I never made any secret of Dundonald's request and my refusal. I referred to the incident in my official report, furnished the next day. I have not been blamed by my official superiors, but attacked behind my back on information possibly given to the Press by those who did not know the circumstances or had other ends to serve.

TACTICS.

On 27th February, 1900, when my brigade attacked the left of the Boer position at Pieter's Hill, we failed to obtain the full success deserved, because the two brigades I was told would attack simultaneously with me, did not do so. By this the Boers were able to reinforce their left, and attacked me on three sides, besides bringing guns and pom-poms to bear on my brigade, and I had no artillery to reply with.

It caused serious and unnecessary loss; the whole position was not captured till dusk; and, although this success effected the relief of Ladysmith, the Boers were able to break up their camps, remove guns, etc.; and escape during the night, thus evading pursuit.

Hence I favour simultaneous attacks on two or more points of an extended position, though all need not be pressed home at the same time.

In the action at Rooibdam on 5th May, 1900, when I commanded the attacking force, the Boer position was on a very extended ridge, strongly fortified by stone breastworks, and I had only two battalions for the attack, aided by two squadrons of Imperial Yeomanry with two guns R.H.A., under Colonel Meyrick, that did excellent service by containing and occupying the attention of the Boers on the right flank of their position, while I first captured a commanding feature on the Boer left; then finding the position too strong on that flank, I held the Boers in front, and advanced from my left, and completely turned all the Boer defences.

In the final advance every man of my force was in the firing line. It is solely and entirely due to this most successful and decisive engagement, of a small British force against a carefully prepared position, strongly held by Boer forces specially intended to block the road to Mafeking, that Colonel Mahon's flying column was enabled to make a long start unmolested, and eventually to effect the relief of Mafeking; and I am aware there is considerable disappointment among the troops engaged at Rooibdam, at the comparatively slight notice or recognition of the service performed, especially so as its importance was thoroughly recognised and acknowledged by the Boers themselves.

The chief lesson of the first Boer war of 1881 was that, where small forces are opposing one another, mounted men armed with rifles can always surround infantry, and this was frequently exemplified during the late war, especially so when De Wet attacked me at Frederickstad, and gathered all the local commandos to his help.

Just keeping his men out of rifle range, he was able to shell me with six guns, whatever positions I took up, until at last he gave me a chance by advancing a detachment in the night, which entrenched itself about a mile from my outposts, leaving their horses another mile back, in the bed of a river.

Failing to move them by artillery fire, I attacked with infantry across the open plain, and on this occasion had convincing proof that the Boer is not such a good shot in action as he is represented. I am positive, if the tables had been turned, the Boers would never have reached the trenches they were holding.

The action ended in the first serious defeat experienced by General C. De Wet, and resulted in the restoration of British prestige at Pochefstroom, where De Wet had made inflammatory speeches, boasted of capturing my force, and urged the whole district to renew fighting and carry on the war to the bitter end.

SURRENDER OF BURGHERS.

In regard to the surrender of burghers after the capture of Pretoria, I was at Lichtenberg at the time, and we did not at first promise protection to Boers who surrendered; but surrendered burghers began to arrive from Pretoria, and they had received passes in Pretoria, promising them protection; we had therefore to conform.

I never had any faith in the success of the oath or declaration of neutrality, because all the leaders kept aloof from us; and, as the Boers are singularly amenable to and influenced by their leaders, I felt convinced that the scheme could not have any lasting success, quite apart from the question of protection, which we were not in a position to afford.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

In my opinion concentration camps were an absolute necessity from the Kaffir question alone, if for no other reason.

As early as May, 1900, during my advance in the Western Transvaal, when all the burghers were on commando, I was earnestly appealed to by terrified Boer women to protect them against armed bands of Kaffirs, who were scouring the country, terrorising, stripping, robbing, and committing outrages towards Boer women.

I did everything in my power to protect the burgher families, sent mounted men in all directions, and succeeded for the time in completely ridding the district of these Kaffirs, whom I arrested. In some cases armed Kaffirs who opposed my troops and resisted capture had to be shot.

After the capture of Pretoria, the surrendered burghers returned to their farms, and the Kaffir difficulty ceased; but when the Boers again took up arms and went on commando, the women and children were again exposed to persecution, and no one recognised this more than the burghers themselves.

For instance, on one occasion a commandant, with my permission, sent his father-in-law, his wife, and sister into my lines for protection, but they arrived in a wagon driven by his adjutant; as this man's identity was proved to me, I arrested the adjutant for coming in without my authority and disguised as a driver; for he wanted to return with the wagon to the commando.

The commandant claimed his release, indignantly protesting that he could not let these women travel across the veldt at the mercy of a Kaffir driver.

G. BARTON, M.-G.

APPENDIX P.

PRECIS OF EVIDENCE BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES KNOX, K.C.B., LATE COMMANDING THIRTEENTH BRIGADE, SIXTH DIVISION, SOUTH AFRICAN FIELD FORCE; NOW COMMANDING FOURTH DIVISION, SECOND ARMY CORPS.

(See Questions 17549-17768.)

1. In my opinion, at no time during the war was the strength of the forces employed by us sufficient for the work we had to do, nor was the proportion of mounted men suitable to the country.

My reasons for these statements are:—

At the commencement of the war Lord Methuen on the Orange River Kimberley line had not a force sufficient to relieve Kimberley, principally owing to his lack of mounted men.

At the same period in Natal, it is a well-known fact that Sir George White and Sir Redvers Buller were quite unable to cope with the enemy's forces.

Later on in the war, at the time of Lord Roberts' advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria, and, I might almost say, up to the end of the war, we had at no time a sufficient number of men to make our occupation effective.

After Lord Roberts' first proclamation from Bloemfontein, the whole of the southern part of the Orange River Colony had accepted his terms, and if sufficient protection had been given them by our troops the Boers would have remained loyal. The same applies to the portion of the Orange River Colony west of the railway line as far north as the Vaal.

The universal complaint of the inhabitants was that they were unable to observe neutrality without the protection of our troops.

Putting aside this question, which was, I consider, the chief cause of the prolongation of the war, the proportion of the mounted troops was quite inadequate.

We had to deal with an enemy who were all mounted. We were operating in a country quite unsuited to progression on foot; therefore the infantry soldier was quite out of place, except to guard the lines of communication and occupy the towns.

2. I consider the shooting of the Regulars, compared with that of the Boers, was about equal if they had been shooting at targets on a range. The difference was, the Boer shot with his head, the British soldier by regulation.

With regard to the Auxiliary Forces—

Volunteer, Infantry, same as Regulars.

Militia, fair.

Yeomanry, first batch fair, second batch indifferent to bad.

The marching qualities of both Regulars and Auxiliary Forces was all that could be desired. I do not think that any European nation could put in the field a better body of marching men than our Sixth Division.

Regular Cavalry and Artillery, good.

Mounted Infantry, indifferent; a large body of infantry were mounted at the last minute at Orange River who had no idea of riding nor even of saddling a horse.

Yeomanry, first batch good, second most indifferent.

With regard to horsemanship, with the exception of the Royal Artillery, all branches were indifferent. I attribute this to our training. The system we adopt is to train a man to ride a horse, but to omit altogether to teach him how to keep that horse in such a state of health and strength that the utmost can be got out of him. It is much like teaching a man to ride a bicycle, or to drive a motor-car, without at the same time thoroughly instructing him in the manner of repairing and keeping his mount in order.

The recognised system we have always trained on as regards mounted infantry was that their horses were only means of conveying them from point to point, and the style of horsemanship was nothing, whereas it makes a very great difference to a horse whether his rider sits like a sack of oats or distributes his weight in a proper manner. I consider horsemanship is an art untaught in our Army.

Our training indifferent.

"The Wallace Spade Equipment," which was the

recognised equipment, was useless, and was never even used in training at home. Battalion carts should carry proper intrenching tools.

The infantry soldier was, during his training, generally allotted a field near the barracks in which to dig intrenchments; hence both officers and men had a very small idea how cover should be provided by intrenchments, suitable to the ground on which they were required to operate. They learnt a lot from the Boers on this matter.

These latter remarks equally apply to cover.

Very good in all respects, as was proved by the great amount of work men went through, often under very trying circumstances.

Undoubtedly a marked improvement was shown as time went on—the weaker ones being weeded out by sickness or death.

The Reservists who went out at the beginning of the campaign were far superior to the drafts of young soldiers which arrived from England later on, and with regard to these latter it is not easy to make a comparison, as there was less marching to be done, and their duties were lighter. But this does not apply to cavalry drafts, who were always good.

Artillery.—I consider the artillery should be left alone—no improvement except in guns and harness can be made to a corps whose system is an example to any army.

Cavalry.—The cavalry require a great deal more training, especially the officers. A few brilliant cavalry leaders have no doubt been found during the war, but what a number of failures.

The reason of all this is that it is impossible to train cavalry in England. It is almost impossible to lay down a proper standard of training which can be carried out on the ground available. If it were so, I am convinced that the officers are only too anxious to improve their branch. They have done the best with the facilities at their disposal.

Infantry.—I consider our infantry a splendid body of men. The Boers I know looked upon our artillery and infantry as magnificent. There is no question that there is not much individuality in the infantry soldier—a most desirable quality, no doubt—but not so necessary in infantry, which works in denser formations, as in mounted troops.

The only means of training men to have individuality is by teaching them scouting in its proper sense, i.e., observation, tracking, etc., but a man on foot would seldom be employed for this kind of work. The training of cavalry and mounted infantry should mainly consist of this sort of work.

I would suggest, first, to fix on a standard to which it is desired to train all the troops in their different rôles. In doing so be sure that the ground is in every way suitable and adapted to the instruction. Then I am confident the British officer will loyally carry out his duty.

If there has been any fault in the training of our officers or men, it has not been the fault of the former. Courses of instruction have been laid down, and they have been adhered to; the fault—which we have learnt by experience—has been that our methods and standards of military education have not always been those which are required in warfare.

A great deal of this has been proved by our want of knowledge in the striking difference in tactics brought about by modern arms.

It is the custom to abuse and find fault with the Regular officer, but he has only acted under the directions of the heads of our Army, and I say again, first determine what sort of education is necessary, both for officer and soldier, and then the officers may be relied on to carry it out.

3. My remarks in the previous paragraph will answer the training of regimental officers.

As regards Staff officers, their training is deficient for work in the field; their duties in time of peace confine them too much to their offices.

In matters of routine they are carefully trained, but in the field their ideas are cramped—they are slow, often very bad riders, and worst of all, they are often deficient in common sense, and unable to give an opinion on any strategical or tactical problems. They want more training away from the confined area of the Staff College.

4. (a) During the war the method and sufficiency of supply in the field was admirable.

(b) The quality of the supplies good.

(c) I am not aware of any delay on the part of contractors.

(d) I am quite unable to give the number of horses. Their quality was good, but they were never given a chance of being acclimatised in depôts, as they should have been, and as they were during the latter part of the war. They were taken straight from board ship, and often, within a fortnight, doing 30-mile patrols. Also, there were no depôts into which tired horses could be sent to recuperate—they were ridden to a finish.

The Remount Depôt was bad, and this, taken in conjunction with the indifferent horsemanship of mounted infantry and colonials, was responsible for the enormous wastage in horseflesh during the war.

5. The strength of the Army Service Corps is insufficient. Conductors and drivers of all sorts should be trained. We had to depend on colonial conductors, who were not always a success.

An easy means of expansion of this corps to a war footing—according to nature of the country to be employed in—should be considered.

6. The Medical and Engineer Services were, in my opinion, good, but I think that means of easy expansion of both these services should be considered during peace time.

7. No doubt the Artillery have come to the conclusion that our guns are not all they should be. My own experience has only been with 15-pounder, 12-pounder, and pom-poms. I consider the 12-pounder an absolutely useless gun, but the 15-pounder and pom-pom are decidedly good.

The Lee-Metford is an excellent rifle, and the Boers—who at the end of the war were altogether armed with this rifle—preferred it to the Mauser, but they liked the clip with which the Mauser is loaded better than our magazine system. In this I concur.

With regard to the concluding paragraphs of the Memorandum I cannot say much.

I consider the proportion of mounted troops to dismounted in our Army quite inadequate. Appendix P.

A large force of mounted infantry should be trained, even if not always kept up. It appears to me absolutely certain—under the conditions of modern warfare—that the army which has the largest number of mobile troops and the longest-ranged big guns will have an enormous advantage, and the nation which can first find out means of transporting riflemen quickly will have the same superiority as the Prussians had with the breech-loader against the muzzle-loader in the 1864 campaign against Denmark, and 1866 against Austria.

There is no question that what enabled the Boers to stand against us both at the commencement and at the end of the war was their superior mobility.

My idea is to train an enormous force of mounted infantry, but not necessary during peace, to keep up a mounted establishment.

What struck me most during the war, when I was in charge of a brigade marching through the north-west of the Orange River Colony, was how utterly useless infantry, marching 14 or 15 miles a day, were against an enemy moving at least 30 miles a day.

To summarise the whole, I say train cavalry better in scouting, riding, and shooting, abolish any idea of shock tactics, and, consequently, do away with the lance.

Train masses of mounted infantry in scouting, shooting, and horsemanship.

Give our Artillery better guns, improve the team harness, and increase the number of spare horses.

Improve the equipment of our infantry with a view to lighten the man's burden.

Try and make him more self-reliant, not always depending on his officer for directions.

Improve his shooting in field practices and snap-shooting, and try to teach him to shoot with his brains, and not according to the book.

If it were possible to give infantry a course of deer-stalking it would be the sort of training at which I would aim.

Make the Army Service Corps, Engineers, and all Departmental Corps capable of easy expansion in time of war, suitable to the country in which they would be required to operate.

Finally, and most important of all, establish an Intelligence Corps, in order that every division of the Army on taking the field would have properly-qualified officers attached to them, who would be responsible for obtaining guides and all necessary information from the inhabitants of the country.

The marked failure in this department during the commencement of the South African War was most regrettable.

APPENDIX Q.

PRECIS OF EVIDENCE BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR LESLIE RUNDLE, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.

(See Questions 17,852-17,944.)

The work given me by Lord Roberts up to the fall of Pretoria was to prevent any large body of the enemy being able to invade the south-eastern portion of the Orange Free State, whilst he himself advanced from Bloemfontein on Pretoria. I attach copy of my orders marked A and B.

To accomplish this I took up a line from Ficksburg to Winburg, and carried out these instructions until ordered after Prinsloo's surrender to the north-eastern portion of the Free State.

1. The troops placed at my disposal proved fully adequate, viz. :—

Eighth Division, about 9,000.

Colonial Division, about 1,500.

Yeomanry, about 800.

The work of the Division is recorded in the Diary, of which, I understand, the Commission has copies.

2. My Division was principally composed of Reservists—and their quality was excellent; no finer troops could have been put in the field.

Shooting Capabilities.—Shooting was fair, and improved in the first few months considerably. Want of practice in judging distance, both on the part of officers and men, was, in my opinion, the cause of much of the bad shooting, also the deceptive nature of the country and the clearness of the atmosphere.

Marching.—Excellent. The men responded to every appeal made to them; one battalion marched 45 miles in 48 hours, and fought a successful action at the end.

Horsemanship.—Generally excellent, especially in the first lot of Yeomanry.

Horsemastership.—Indifferent, and up to the end of the war it was almost impossible to get men to get off the horses when halted.

Entrenchment and Cover.—I attach a copy of my views (C) as sent to my C.R.E. on 13th June, 1900, and his views (D), in which I generally concur.

General Physique, Morale, and Intelligence.—All excellent, especially the morale. The physique improved with the open air life. The intelligence was good, but required developing.

3. *Training and Duties.*—Is summed up in the word decentralisation, with delegation of authority to inferiors, and defined responsibility combined with efficient supervision by superiors without unnecessary interference.

4. *Supplies, etc.*—I attach a report (E.) from my D.A.A.G.B., from which it will be seen the Division under my command practically lived on the country and collected its own transport, overcoming certain difficulties in so doing. The men, in many instances, felt the hardship owing to not having been trained to cook their own food and being at the start dependent on the company cooks. Eventually they suffered little or no hardships, and learnt to shift for themselves.

Quality of Supplies.—Excellent.

Ammunition.—I do not think that this most difficult matter can be met in a better way than at present, i.e., by the ammunition carriers bringing up the ammunition in canvas bags from the small arms ammunition cart, and mules.

Equipment.—The equipment was bad, the valises were packed on board ship according to regulation, for active

service. When landed were ordered to be left behind. The pouch system of carrying ammunition was bad, many rounds were lost, and the pouches pressed uncomfortably on the men's stomachs. The great coats were good. The helmets were bad, and men could not shoot with them. The hard felt hat finally issued was good. Water bottles good, haversacks not strong enough. The putties were excellent; in my opinion, far better than any legging. The boots, shirts, and socks were good. The coat (warm British) is excellent, but I look upon it as a luxury, and if it is put in competition with the great coat is not half so good.

Horses.—The Division and Yeomanry remounted itself under arrangements made by me from Basutoland, where a hardy class of pony well suited for mounted infantry was obtained in exchange for captured cattle. We were always well mounted.

5. *Land Transport.*—Both ox and mule of excellent quality and well adapted to the work required of them. There was a considerable deficiency of water-carts and ammunition carts, which at first was much felt.

I had no experience of the railway or traction trains.

6. *Adequacy of Medical Services.*—I was short of a Field Hospital, but, speaking generally, the Medical Corps was overworked and undermanned, thus taking men from the firing line to do the work.

The organisation was good, and the greater the strain the better the medical officers came out of it.

Engineer Services.—Vide attached report of my C.R.E. (D).

7. *The Effectiveness of the Guns, Rifles, and other Armament Used.*—Effective, but the tendency is to expect more from fire than experience teaches us actually takes place. The Boers seldom or never presented a target for Artillery fire; when they did, the result was disastrous for them.

LESLIE RUNDLE,
Major-General.

Dover, 7th March, 1903.

A.

This refers to instructions C in C of 14th April, 1900,
351

sent to Sir Herbert Chermiside, which had following note on it:—

Copy of above is forwarded to Lieut.-General Sir L. Rundle for his information. As I explained to him personally yesterday, Lieut.-General Rundle will have under his orders the Eighth Division and a force of Imperial Yeomanry, of which the strength has not yet been decided. He is intended to operate from De Wets Dorp to the North or North-East, according to circumstances, but he will eventually occupy and control the country from De Wets Dorp and Ladybrand up towards Senekal, or, possibly, to Bethlehem.

(Signed) ROBERTS, Field Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief in South Africa.

Bloemfontein, April, 1900.

True Copy,

G. E. HARLEY, Colonel,
Late C.S.O., Eighth Division.

B.

Strictly Confidential.

Appendix Q

Strictly Confidential.

To Lieut.-General Sir H. M. L. RUNDLE, K.C.B., C.M.G.,
D.S.O.

Brandfort, 4th May, 1900.

Dear Rundle,—

Before I move further, I think it is desirable to place you in possession of my general intentions for our advance north.

It seems clear, from what has happened in the past, that if the enemy get an opportunity, they will again at once invade the south-eastern portion of the Orange Free State. By doing so, they would, strategically speaking, have the best chance of injuring us, and should they succeed in getting a footing there, our lines of communications would be materially threatened. It would cause great consternation in Cape Colony, and it would be necessary for me to send back troops from the front, which would materially interfere with my plan of campaign.

Under these circumstances I look to you to take such measures as you may consider necessary to prevent any large body of the enemy being able once more to invest Wepener, or to move towards Smithfield through the Dewetsdorp-Wepener gap.

As soon as it can be arranged, Chermside, with the headquarters of the Third Division, will proceed to Bloemfontein, and he will have under his especial charge the line of railway from Bethulie and Norval's Pont up to this point.

It will be your duty to exercise a vigilant control to the east of the railway and prevent the enemy from gaining a footing there.

My belief is that, as we move north, the Boers will find it necessary to withdraw the whole of their troops now in front of Thabanchu, and also the small bodies now roving about the country south of Dewetsdorp.

As soon as you are satisfied that they have withdrawn in the manner I anticipate, you should move such a portion of your force as you think necessary to Ladybrand.

With Thabanchu and Ladybrand occupied in sufficient strength, with Dewetsdorp, Wepener, and Smithfield properly garrisoned, with the people disarmed, and their horses taken from them—a measure which is now being thoroughly carried out—the Boers will be quite unable to move down south, and even if they do get there, they will find no armed and mounted burghers to assist them.

I regret to hear that Hamilton has taken on one of your field batteries, but if it can be possibly arranged, the battery shall be returned to you, either before we reach Kroonstadt, or immediately afterwards.

We are now working north on two lines. Hamilton on the east is moving direct to Winberg. He has with him the following force:—

Broadwood's Brigade of Cavalry.
2nd Brigade of Mounted Infantry.
19th Brigade of the 9th Division, and the
21st Brigade.

Following him, and sufficiently near to support him, if necessary, is Colville with the Highland Brigade.

I have with me the 1st Brigade of Mounted Infantry, and the 7th and 11th Divisions, and hope later on to be joined by French and his cavalry.

To-morrow we shall reach the Vet River, and on Sunday Smaldeel Junction, at the same time that Hamilton reaches Winburg. Both forces will then move north towards Kroonstadt. I hope no time will be lost in getting there, but I fear that our progress will necessarily be slow as we must repair the railway as we move along to replenish our supplies.

Please keep me fully informed of what goes on. You have a most important task to perform, and I feel sure I may rely upon you to carry out with energy and ability the responsible duty I have assigned to you.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) ROBERTS, F.M.

True Copy,

G. E. HARLEY, Colonel,
Late C.S.O., Eighth Division.

C.

Memorandum.

Colonel Ryder-Main,
C.R.E. 8th Division,
Commanding at Ficksburg.

According to telegrams I have received from Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny, who has assumed command of all troops he can communicate with, it is quite possible that a crisis has arrived in the present war; it is essential that I should have a portion of my force mobile; this can only be done by making the posts, which I have left, secure and defensible from a modern point of view; for this reason I deputed to you the duty at Ladybrand and Thabanchu of organising the defences of those places.

I take it for granted that Ladybrand and Thabanchu are in a position to stand a siege, that the defences are so constructed that they will give protection against modern guns, and that they are capable of making a prolonged defence. I now wish you to do the same at Ficksburg and Willow Farm, and when these are completed to proceed to Hammonia, and place it in a state of defence in accordance with the instructions issued by the F. M. Commanding-in-Chief (C. of S. Circular Memorandum No. 17, "Instructions for Officers Commanding Posts in the Orange Free State"). After you have done this you will report to me through the C.S.O.

I may add that up to date I have failed to see any intelligent use made of entrenchments by Brigadiers or by the troops under their command; they appear to think that a few stones hastily gathered together or 6 ins. of earth hastily scraped up at haphazard is adequate protection against modern guns and rifle fire; they possess in their commands educated officers, who in passing for promotion, Staff College, and other courses prescribed by the Regulations, must have been taught theoretically very differently from the practical outcome of their work in the field.

I feel sure that the defences you have organised at Ladybrand and Thabanchu will not come under the criticisms I have felt it necessary to make as regards other positions.

I am sending a copy of this Memorandum to Brigadiers with directions that your orders on the subject are to be considered as coming from myself.

(Signed) LESLIE RUNDLE, Lieut.-General,
Commanding Eighth Division.

Klip River Nek,
June 13th, 1900.

Forwarded original to Colonel Ryder-Main, Commanding at Ficksburg, 14th June, 1900.

Forwarded copy to G.O.C. 16th Brigade, 13th June, 1900.

Forwarded copy to G.O.C. 17th Brigade, 14th June, 1900.

True Copy,

G. E. HARLEY, Colonel, C.S.O.,
13th June, 1900.

D.

Confidential.

(2) The quality of the men of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces in respect of entrenchments and cover.

British troops have a curious antipathy to forming entrenchments and cover. Whether this arises from a sense of bravado, or from an idea that the use of the spade is degrading, it is impossible to say, but its presence was very evident in the late war.

This view was undoubtedly to a great extent shared in and fostered by the officers, who though knowing the immense superiority that entrenchments would, at times, have thrown into their hands, would for days occupy a position of doubtful strength without any attempt to entrench themselves, unless they were distinctly ordered to do so. This was true of the Infantry, but specially true of the mounted forces.

(At Ladybrand, in 1900, it was only by strong measures that I could get the officers and men to entrench at all, and again in September, 1900, when I inspected the positions at Harrismith, which had been occupied for a fortnight by the Guards, little or nothing of artificial cover had been attempted.)

British officers quite understand the details of field entrenchments, but seem quite paralysed in considering the "tactical" uses of field works. An officer commanding a regiment would prefer to listen to a young subaltern of Engineers as to the disposition of his troops when once entrenchments entered into the question, rather than depend on his own decisions. The selection of the keypoints of a position, or of mutually defending posts, or the falling back (if driven in) to a final impregnable rallying point seemed never to enter his mind—a question he would at once have solved if he had not been called on to entrench. To entrench troops he looks upon as a Royal Engineer job of a secret and uncanny nature.

My experience was that Infantry officers were very loath to entrench, but when once they commenced they overdid the whole thing, quite forgot the offensive role, bunched their men altogether at one point, and literally dug them into the ground. In fact, they did not understand the "tactical" use of fieldworks.

The men were quite capable of entrenching, but were, as a rule, unskilled in the use of full-sized tools. Neither officers nor men seemed to grasp the immensely increased value of concealment in connection with cover in these days of smokeless powder, and the siting of trenches selected by Infantry officers was often very defective in this respect.

Suggestions.

The field training of Infantry should embrace something beyond the details of fieldworks. A project for the defence of a position should be worked out by the officers, calculated on the men, tools, and time available, and committed to paper, and a portion, if possible, executed.

The regimental tool-cart must be promoted from its usual position in the baggage train and travel with the S.A.A. carts, and commanding officers must be as zealous of the care of the tools, and of their being kept to the front, as they are of the ammunition.

(6) The Adequacy of the Engineer Services.

The 5th Company Royal Engineers was the last Divisional Field Company that went to South Africa. It was formed mainly of recruits and Section "D" Reservists, and had only one officer who had previously served with a Field Company. In these circumstances it was in no way fit to take the field when it landed in South Africa early in April, 1900. After six months in the veldt, however, it was able to give a very good account of itself, but it started at an immense disadvantage.

The Royal Engineer officers were quite up to any work they had to do (except perhaps as horsemasters), and were highly complimented by the Brigadiers and others who came in intimate touch with them. They never shirked responsibility, and with considerable self-confidence carried out their duties faithfully and well. I have received many expressions of thankfulness from commanding officers and others as to the great help the Royal Engineer officers were to them; I do not think you can better them as a class. I think, too, that the men, when once licked into shape, were good field engineers, as good as any European army could turn out. I consider the existing proportion of Engineers to an Infantry Division quite adequate, but I think that a Field Company should be more easily subdivided into half companies, so that each brigade could have a half company working with it, and the sections of the company should also be easily detached, so as to go with small columns.

The 5th Company worked in separate sections under separate subalterns during a great portion of 1900, and many important tools and appliances were only allotted to the Headquarters Section.

As regards material, I do not like the present tool-carts. They are difficult to pack and unpack on the march. Kits and cooking utensils cannot be packed on them without burying the tools, and consequently a separate cart is required for these latter, and with our single carts the poles all broke on the first day out. The pontoons attached to the company were more trouble than they were worth. Pack transport should be provided for carrying tools for work on the line of march and in hilly country. A simple tool with a bent handle suitable for use as a spade or shovel should replace the present universal shovel. The stock of bar and wrought iron carried with a company is too small

for South Africa. Crowbars are of more use than picks and shovels in that country.

The tools belonging to a Field Company should be as sacred as the guns of a Field Battery, and on no account should a Field Company be called upon to carry and issue tools to other units, and so usurp the duties of the A.O.D.

(Signed) T. RYDER-MAIN, Colonel.

1st March, 1903.

True copy.

G. E. Harley, Colonel, late C.S.O. Eighth Division.

E.

Private and Confidential.

Colonel HARLEY,

Late Chief Staff Officer,

Eighth Division.

Sir,—I have the honour to submit, in default of any documentary evidence, with the exception of the appended copy of a telegram from the Chief of Staff, South Africa, a report on the "B" Services of the Eighth Division of the South African Field Force, compiled entirely from memory and my recollections of the official records, which should be in the custody of the officer who has charge of the Eighth Division Office records.

Report.

The position of affairs when the Eighth Division reached Springfontein, and was hurried forward to Edenburg in hot haste to the relief of Wepener, was as follows:—

Our transport consisted of a telegram from the Chief of Staff, informing the General that a transport company would be at his disposal on arrival at Edenburg.

The ambulance consisted of two spring civilian wagons. Many of the regiments had no ammunition carts, whilst almost every unit was deficient in water-carts, and incomplete in 1st Line Transport.

On arrival at Edenburg some battalions had not even a blanket per man.

Of the promised mule and ox transport notified awaiting us at Edenburg only some twenty donkey wagons and some fifty ox, under Captain Courtney, A.S.C., were finally available. The donkey transport, being only a local levy, was entirely inadequate to meet the very smallest requirements of the Force. It was at this crisis, however, that some 100 wagons, ox and mule, under Captain Ward, A.S.C., passing through Springfontein were assigned to the Division, and enabled it to make towards Wepener in accordance with Commander-in-Chief's urgent instructions.

The appropriation of this transport, which, from the Chief of Staff's telegram, was understood to be identical with what was stated to be at the disposal of the G.O.C. Eighth Division, was the subject of a censure, as it subsequently transpired that this particular train was to form part of the personal operations of Lord Roberts, and that, so far, no transport except the donkey wagons was available for the urgent forward movement of the Division of some 10,000 men.

With the transport thus acquired the Division moved on, being joined by General Brabazon and his Division of Imperial Yeomanry, whose plight as regards train was almost as necessitous. On reaching Dewetsdorp the scanty mule transport of the Division was depleted by the Yeomanry, who pushed forward in the direction of Wepener, drawing on the Eighth Division almost to the last mule, as the mobility of the mounted troops could not be hampered with the slow progress of the ox train.

In these early stages of the Seventh Division, when it reached Reddersburg, it was evident to all that with such limited transport but few days' rations could be carried, and, although the rations of meat and flour were not reduced, the grocery rations had for a day or two to be slightly diminished, until the Third Division, who we then met, relieved the pressure of the moment. Whilst, at the same time, our transport made several return trips to Edenburg, and with full wagons enabled us to move on Dewetsdorp.

See attached telegram to C.O.S. from G.O.C., Eighth Division.

I think at or near this town the Division came under the temporary command of General French, whose own necessities and seniority enabled him to put the Eighth Division on half rations and to take the Field Telegraph Section, and I believe the two 5-inch guns which were to accompany General Rundle.

The action of General French was further endorsed by the Chief of Staff whose telegram stating "that the Eighth Division could not be fed," and must live on the country," was filed in the "B" Office, Eighth Division, a copy of which I attach.

This simple solution of supply was thus pursued, and from Thabanchu when General French's Division parted until General Rundle reached Harrismith, with the exception of some hazardous convoys of wagons to Winburg from Senekal and Hammonia, Bloemfontein, Standerton, the Division was almost entirely self-found and supporting.

During this phase of the operations the situation would have, in my opinion, become desperate, had not General Rundle made a move from Eden on the Leew River Mills, the flour from which supplied many weeks full bread rations to the troops. A similar resort at Hammonia Mills furnished fresh supplies, and these again General Rundle augmented by fresh drafts from Winburg, Ficksburg, and drawn from Basutoland by previous arrangements, and the supply supplemented by the formation of parties to requisition the inhabitants. Such measures enabled the Division to be sustained on the full rations of meat and flour, although the grocery ration in many instances was not possible to always issue in full.

Captain Ward, A.S.C., the Senior A.S.C. Officer, had during the initial advance of the Division collected considerable transport, both ox and mule, for which Colonel Wickham, Indian Commissariat Department, whose mission from headquarters was to provide and

organise and report upon, found he had only to fulfil the latter duty, and to receive the thanks of the Director of Transport for his strenuous efforts in accomplishing so much. Appendix

The arrival of the Division at Harrismith after being divorced from a railhead or base for nearly eight months showed, I believe, a less death rate and higher health report than corresponding divisions whose fidelity to a railway had never been destroyed.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) G. I. WALSH,

Captain Leic. Regt.

Late D.A.A.G., Eighth Division, S.A.

28th February, 1903.

18, Kensington Gore, London, S.W.

True copy,

G. E. HARLEY, Colonel.

Late C.S.O. Eighth Division.

True copy,

G. I. Walsh, Captain Leic. Regiment.

To—

G.O.C., Eighth Division.

Bloemfontein, S.T., 1322, 30th April, 1900.—Message commences—"Chief considers you should be able to collect sufficient local produce to feed your Division, and that you should only require groceries. He desires that every effort be made by your Supply Officers to effect this purpose."

From Director of Supplies.

Appendix R.

APPENDIX R.

DESPATCH FROM LIEUT.-COLONEL R. G. KEKEWICH.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF KIMBERLEY, from September 13, 1899, to February 15, 1900.

(Handed in at Question 21853.)

War Office, May 8, 1900.*

The following despatch has been received from Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., G.C.B., etc., Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa:—

Army Headquarters, South Africa,
Government House, Bloemfontein,
20th March, 1900.

My Lord,

I have the honour to submit for your Lordship's information a despatch dated 15th February, 1900, from Lieutenant-Colonel R. G. Kekewich, Commanding in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, describing the military operations in the vicinity of Kimberley, from the 13th September, 1899, to the 15th February, 1900, and the defence of the town up to the latter date, when its relief was effected by the Cavalry Division, under Lieutenant-General French.

2. The casualties during the period above referred to, together with those on the 16th February, appear to have amounted to 2 officers killed and 12 wounded, and 34 non-commissioned officers and men killed and 97 wounded. In addition, 4 Europeans and 1 native of the civil community were killed, and 16 Europeans and 8 natives wounded during the bombardment.

3. I am of opinion that the greatest credit is due to Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich for the able dispositions which he made for the defence of Kimberley, an un-walled town spread over a wide area; for his rapid organisation of an auxiliary force which, in conjunction with the Regular troops, enabled him to keep the enemy in check; and for the tact, judgment and resolution which he displayed throughout the siege. I confidently recommend this officer to the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

4. I am further of opinion that the services of the officers and men of the Regular, Colonial, Volunteer and Irregular forces, and of the Town Guard, whose names Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich has brought to special notice, are deserving of recognition.

5. I would add that the citizens of Kimberley, conspicuous among whom were the Right Honourable C. J. Rhodes, Mr. H. A. Oliver, the Mayor, and Mr. R. H. Henderson, the Ex-Mayor, seem to have rendered most valuable assistance. These gentlemen, in common with the others mentioned by Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich, helped to maintain order among the civil inhabitants, encouraged them to hold out to the last, regulated the issue of food, attended to the sick and wounded, and co-operated generally with the Military Commander. By the active part which he took in raising the Kimberley Light Horse, and in providing horses for all the mounted troops in Kimberley, Mr. Rhodes in particular contributed materially to the successful defence of the place.—I have, etc.,

ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa.

From Lieutenant-Colonel R. G. Kekewich, Commanding Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, to the Chief of Staff, South Africa.

Kimberley,
15th February, 1900.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following report concerning the military operations which have recently taken place in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland.

2. On my arrival in Kimberley on the morning of 13th September, 1899, I met the following Imperial Officers who had been detailed for special services on the western frontier of the Orange Free State, viz.:—

Captain and Brevet Major H. S. Turner, Royal Highlanders, Staff Officer, Kimberley.

Captain W. A. J. O'Meara, Royal Engineers, Intelligence Officer, Kimberley.

Lieutenant D. S. MacInnes, Royal Engineers, detailed for special duties in connection with Royal Engineer services.

3. These Officers had been employed for several weeks in Kimberley and the adjacent country; in consequence many questions relating to the defence of Kimberley and the eastern frontiers of Bechuanaland and Griqualand West had been already investigated by them and were submitted for my consideration. For political and other reasons no immediate steps could be taken by me in connection with the preparations for the defence of Kimberley.

Captain H. V. Gorle, Army Service Corps, arrived in Kimberley on 20th September, 1899, and at once took up all questions relating to supplies and transport.

4. At this time the defence of the Cape Government railway from the Orange River railway bridge northwards was in the hands of the Cape Government, and a certain number of important points on the railway, and also the larger railway bridges north of Kimberley were being guarded by small detachments of the Cape Police.

5. On the date of my arrival in Kimberley, portions of the Burgher forces of the South African Republic were already out on "commando" along the Bechuanaland border. Many reports having been received that not only disloyalists in Cape Colony, but also certain Burghers of the Orange Free State had expressed a determination to destroy the Orange River and Modder River railway bridges, I arranged on 15th September with Commissioner M. B. Robinson, Cape Police, for small Police guards at the two bridges referred to.

6. On the 20th September, the following Imperial troops arrived in Kimberley:—

23rd Company, Royal Garrison Artillery (Western Division) with 6—7-pr. R.M.L. guns (3 officers and 90 non-commissioned officers and men).

One Section, 7th Field Company, Royal Engineers (1 officer and 50 non-commissioned officers and men).

Head-quarters and 4 companies, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (9 officers and 413 non-commissioned officers and men).

Detachment, Army Service Corps (5 non-commissioned officers and men).

Detachment, Royal Army Medical Corps (1 officer and 5 non-commissioned officers and men).

On the 26th September, a detachment of Mounted Infantry, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (1 officer and 21 non-commissioned officers and men), also arrived in Kimberley.

7. The Volunteer force in Vryburg (5 officers and 56 non-commissioned officers and men) was called out on the 24th September, and was subsequently placed under the command of the late Assistant Commissioner H. T. Scott, Cape Police, who was in military command of that town.

The Volunteer force in Kimberley (composed as under) was called out on the 4th October:—

1 Battery Diamond Fields Artillery with 6—7-pr. field guns (3 officers and 90 non-commissioned officers and men).

* Appeared in the "London Gazette" of 8 May 1900.

Diamond Fields Horse (6 officers and 142 non-commissioned officers and men).

Kimberley Regiment (14 officers and 285 non-commissioned officers and men).

Every effort was made to increase the numbers of this Volunteer force and to provide horses for the mounted portion thereof. 84 recruits and nearly all the horses required were obtained in the seven days following the mobilization of this force.

8. As the movement of the Burgher forces of the Orange Free State reported to be taking place opposite the Griqualand West frontier of the Cape Colony indicated that an attack on Kimberley might be made without any warning at an early date, the construction of certain important portions of the defence works of Kimberley was commenced on the 18th September.

9. It was on the 27th September that the earliest reliable information was obtained that the Burghers of the Orange Free State had been ordered out on commando. On this date Captain W. A. J. O'Meara, Royal Engineers, had proceeded to Boshof, Orange Free State, on duty. As soon as he reached that village detachments of the Burgher force of the Orange Free State also commenced to arrive there. As detachments of armed Burghers continued to arrive in the village throughout the night of 27th—28th September, Captain O'Meara left Boshof at 6 a.m. on the 28th September, and immediately returned to Kimberley and reported what he had observed.

10. There being now little doubt as to the intentions of the Government of the Orange Free State, the construction of the defence works required for the protection of Kimberley and Beaconsfield was pushed on with the utmost rapidity under the direction of Lieutenant D. S. MacInnes, Royal Engineers.

11. His Excellency the High Commissioner had authorised the formation of the Kimberley and Beaconsfield Town Guards, and on the 30th September the scheme which had been prepared in Kimberley for these organisations was brought into operation, and by the 7th October 1,156 combatant members had been enrolled. Non-commissioned officers of the 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment were detailed to afford the necessary instruction in the use of the arms issued and to teach a few simple drill movements to the members of these Town Guards.

12. Since the 28th September the Burgher forces of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic had been gradually approaching our borders, and on the 4th October advance bodies of the enemy were within 12 miles of Kimberley.

13. The Cape Police force guarding the railway had been augmented to 446 officers and men, and by the 1st October a concentration of this force at the most important points along the railway between the Vaal River and Mafeking had been effected as follows:—

Kraaipan (70 officers and men).

Vryburg (112 officers and men).

Taungs (89 officers and men).

Fourteen Streams (175 officers and men with 2-7-pr. field guns).

It was not till the 13th October that the Cape Police Force (District No. 2) was placed under my orders for employment in the defence of the Colony.

14. By the 7th October the arrangements for the defence of Kimberley were so advanced that the town was practically safe against any attempt on the part of the enemy to suddenly rush it.

15. On the 10th October, I sanctioned the movement of the Police at Kraaipan to Mafeking. This detachment arrived at the latter place on the morning of Wednesday, the 11th October.

16. The first act of overt-hostility on the part of the enemy occurred at Kraaipan, the railway siding at this point was occupied by the enemy on the 12th October, and at 3 p.m. On that day the Boers interrupted all telegraphic communication north of Kraaipan. During the same evening an armoured train (under the command of Lieutenant Nesbitt) conveying two guns and artillery ammunition from Vryburg to Mafeking was brought to a standstill south of Kraaipan Siding owing to the destruction of the railway at that point. Lieu-

tenant Nesbitt engaged the enemy with the small force at his disposal during the night of 12th October and the following morning. The armoured train was, however, completely wrecked by the enemy's artillery fire. The engine driver of the pilot engine which preceded the armoured train escaped, but of the men composing the British force some fell into the hands of the enemy and others were killed. I have not received any official report (giving details) of what occurred on this occasion.

17. Several attempts were made to communicate with Mafeking by despatch riders from Kimberley. The Europeans employed were, however, captured by the enemy, and the natives similarly employed returned to Kimberley at different times, having failed in their efforts to reach Mafeking.

18. On the evening of the 14th October, the enemy crossed the frontier into Griqualand West and commenced the destruction of the Cape Government railway and telegraph. Telegraphic communication north of Kimberley ceased at 9 p.m. 14th October, and at 10.45 p.m. on the same evening all the telegraph wires south of Kimberley were entirely interrupted. A despatch service was at once inaugurated, and the first messenger left for the Orange River railway bridge the same evening.

19. At 3 a.m., 15th October an armoured train (under the command of 2nd Lieutenant A. McC. Webster, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment) was directed to proceed southwards and locate the spot where our telegraph line had been destroyed. On reaching Spytfontein Railway Station the train was fired upon by the enemy's guns posted in the rocky hills (kopjes) south-east of the station. The enemy's fire was returned by our machine guns, but as the enemy had three guns in position 2nd Lieutenant Webster took the station-master of Spytfontein, his family, and also some railway gangers on board the armoured train, and returned to Kimberley without having sustained any damage or loss.

20. Since direct telegraphic communication with Headquarters, Cape Town, was completely interrupted and could not be restored for some time to come, I proclaimed martial law in Kimberley at noon on the 15th October.

21. On the 16th October I learnt that Fourteen Streams railway bridge had been abandoned on the previous evening by the Police Detachment detailed for its defence, and that this force was retiring on Kimberley. The Police Detachment at Taungs had been ordered to fall back on Fourteen Streams on the 14th October, and was doing so at this time. On the 17th October it was reported that the Police Detachment detailed for the defence of Vryburg had also abandoned that place at 4.30 p.m. on the 15th October, and was also retiring on Kimberley. The members of the Volunteer Force at Vryburg dispersed to their homes on the evening of the 15th October. In fact, on the evening of the 15th October, the Police Detachments, which had been placed along the railway from Vryburg southwards, were all retiring, and by 5 p.m. on the 22nd October they had arrived safely in Kimberley.

22. The want of mounted troops to operate against the enemy investing Kimberley was greatly felt during the first few days of the investment. His Excellency the High Commissioner had given me authority (in a conversation held on the telegraph wire on the 13th October) to raise an irregular mounted corps; in consequence, steps were taken to increase the numbers of the mounted men, and also to increase the mobility of the artillery in Kimberley. The Right Hon. C. J. Rhodes, and also the De Beers Consolidated Mines, Limited, came most generously to my assistance in the matter of providing horses and mules.

23. On the 19th October Captain and Brevet Major H. S. Turner was appointed by me to the command of all the mounted corps in Kimberley, and the raising of the Kimberley Light Horse was also entrusted to him. On this date Lieutenant D. S. MacInnes, Royal Engineers, took over the duties of Staff Officer, Kimberley.

24. The rapid increase in the numbers and the mobility of the mounted troops in Kimberley which now took place made it possible for me to send out reconnoitring parties at frequent intervals in every direction in this neighbourhood. The armoured train was sent out in support of the mounted troops whenever possible. The enemy's fire was drawn on almost every occasion that our troops sallied out beyond the line of our defences.

Appendix R.

25. During the period referred to in the last paragraph small bodies (numbering from 100 to 250 men) of the enemy were busily engaged marching into and demanding the surrender of undefended towns and villages in Griqualand West. In some instances the Government officials, the members of the police force, and even unoffending traders in the towns, villages, etc., occupied by the Boers were made prisoners; on these occasions all Government property and much private property of British subjects was "commandeered" (i.e. forcibly seized) by the Boers. It was further reported to me that proclamations had been issued by Her Majesty's enemies, declaring Bechuanaland a province of the South African Republic, and Griqualand West, similarly, a province of the Orange Free State. On receipt of this information, I issued a counter-proclamation, in order, if possible, to check the spread of a rebellion in the above-named territories.

26. On the 24th October a strong reconnoitring party was sent northwards from Kimberley, with the armoured train in support, and came into collision with a force of the enemy (estimated at 800 men) near Macfarlane Siding, and it became necessary to reinforce the mounted men with guns and infantry. The enemy was repulsed, and the Boer commander himself killed. This engagement has been made the subject of a separate despatch. No authentic information has been obtained of the loss of the enemy's forces suffered in this engagement, but natives report that many Boers were killed and wounded.

27. On the 25th October the enemy began to tighten his line of investment; his position nearest to our defences was on this date about 6,000 yards south of the Premier Mine. This position of the enemy being an isolated one, it was carefully reconnoitred on several occasions, and the fact ascertained that two guns were posted behind some entrenchments thrown up in a naturally strong position. On the 31st October, the enemy opened fire with these guns as well as with rifles on a mounted reconnoitring party sent eastward from the Premier Mine by me; no one was hit.

28. On the 1st November a body of the enemy which was known to be at Riverton Road Station drew nearer to Kimberley and occupied Macfarlane Farm. At 2.5 p.m. on this date an explosion was heard, and a column of smoke was seen ascending near Dronfield Siding (about 7 miles north of Kimberley). It was believed at the time that the enemy had destroyed the whole of the dynamite stored in the magazines in that neighbourhood.

29. Early on the morning of the 3rd November the enemy made a determined attempt to drive off our live stock grazing north of Kenilworth, and opened fire on our mounted troops guarding same both with artillery and rifle. During this engagement, Major W. E. Ayliff, Cape Police, was wounded in the neck with a rifle bullet. Again, on the afternoon of the same day, another body made a second advance on Kimberley from Peddiefontein, a farm $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Kimberley. Both these attacks were driven back by the mounted troops under Brevet-Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) H. S. Turner, assisted by the guns of the Royal Garrison Artillery and the Diamond Fields Artillery. During the afternoon's engagement Private J. Lubbe, Kimberley Light Horse, was killed, and Sergeant F. E. Watermeyer, Cape Police, was wounded. The enemy did not succeed in driving away any cattle from Kenilworth in the morning, but during the afternoon the Boers were more successful, and captured several head of cattle which their owners had allowed to stray too far from our defences on the north-west of Kimberley. The enemy's losses on this day were not ascertained.

30. About noon on the 4th November, Head Commandant C. J. Wessels, of the Burgher forces, Orange Free State, sent in a "parlementaire" demanding the surrender of Kimberley.

31. At 7 p.m., 6th November, the enemy fired two shells at our defences at the Premier Mine; the first regular bombardment of Kimberley, however, did not commence until 5.30 a.m., 7th November. On the latter date, the enemy commenced shelling the section of our defences between the Kimberley Waterworks Reservoir and the Sanatorium (the majority of the shells being apparently intended for the latter building). The enemy appeared to have three guns in position along the ridge south-west of Wimbledon rifle ranges. On the 7th November, the enemy also shelled our position at

the Premier Mine from their position south of the same. Although the enemy's shells fell in close proximity to our defence works south of Kimberley and at the Premier Mine, no one was injured and practically no damage was done. On this date the enemy fired at the extreme limit of range of his artillery.

32. On 8th November I issued a proclamation withdrawing all arms and ammunition in the possession of the civil population. In this manner the possibility of active hostile acts being committed against the enemy by irresponsible non-combatants was prevented, and at the same time many disloyal British subjects in Kimberley, who were reported to be in communication with the enemy, were disarmed.

33. After the bombardment of 7th November it became evident that the enemy was not satisfied with his artillery positions on the ridge west of the Wimbledon rifle range.

During the three following days the enemy's artillery did not fire a single shell against our defences, but there were many indications that new positions were being prepared by the enemy for his guns.

34. My general plan for the defence of Kimberley was based on the principle of always keeping the enemy on the move and constantly in fear of attack from an unexpected quarter.

Later, when the advance of the Relief Column from the Orange River commenced, and I was put in possession of information concerning the probable date of its arrival at Kimberley, I adopted such measures as I hoped would cause the retention of a large force of the enemy in my immediate neighbourhood, and thus enable the Relief Column to deal with the Boer force in detail. It was with these objects that the numerous sorties and demonstrations in force were made by portions of the garrison of Kimberley.

It will be observed that portions of the mounted corps were employed on every occasion. The work which fell on the detachment 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, Cape Police, Diamond Fields Horse and Kimberley Light Horse, and the Diamond Fields Artillery was in consequence very arduous; not only did the corps mentioned respond cheerfully, but nothing can exceed the bravery and dash with which these troops attacked the enemy on several occasions in his entrenched positions.

35. It will be realised that, under the peculiar circumstances in which the defence of the scattered town, containing over 40,000 inhabitants and much valuable machinery, was entrusted in the first instance to a force, consisting of about 570 Imperial troops and 630 Colonial troops, my efforts would have been of no avail had it not been for the valuable assistance and advice which many citizens afforded me in a military as well as a civil capacity. Where so many are concerned, I find it impossible to bring to notice by name every individual who has thus assisted me.

36. On the outbreak of war, with an enemy in numbers superior to those under my command, and also possessing great mobility, it was unfortunately an unavoidable situation that a large portion of British territory should have been overrun by the enemy. I felt great sympathy for those British subjects who were compelled to suffer many indignities at the hands of the enemy in consequence of the undefended state of the neighbourhood in which they were residing. But in the matter of affording protection to these British subjects, as well as in that concerning the defence of the Modder River railway bridge, I was most anxious that no disposition of troops made by me should give the enemy a chance of scoring a first success, even where the smallest body of British troops might be concerned. Taking into consideration that the enemy would probably not regulate his movements in accordance with the dictates of sound strategy, that he was in possession of mobile artillery in my immediate neighbourhood (and of this I had reliable information), I felt convinced that if I had detached a small body of troops (necessarily without artillery) which it was not in my power to support from Kimberley, the enemy would in all probability concentrate very superior numbers, with artillery, against the small British post, and endeavour to destroy the troops composing the same. It was principally for this reason that I determined to concentrate all my available forces, including the Cape Police, who had retired from their defence posts along the railway at the point of greatest

importance in my command, viz., Kimberley. In the case of the Cape Police, I was further influenced by my opinion that only under the leadership of Imperial officers could this body be utilised as a useful defensive force, since the officers of the Cape Police, from the very nature of their ordinary duties in times of peace, could not possess sufficient military experience to be entrusted with independent commands in outlying districts.

37. I wish to record my high appreciation of the conduct and behaviour of the Regular and Colonial forces employed in the defence of Kimberley: but I would more particularly call attention to the great patriotism displayed by the citizens of Kimberley and Beaconsfield, who so willingly and spontaneously undertook obligations of a military nature at a time of great emergency by enrolling themselves in the Kimberley Light Horse and the Town Guards of Kimberley and Beaconsfield. The cheerful spirit in which the members of these forces obeyed all military orders was most commendable.

38. I further wish to place on record the brilliant services of the late Brevet Major (local Lieutenant-Colonel) H. S. Turner. In him the Army has lost a most valuable officer: he was a great organiser, full of energy, and possessed of real ability and courage. A better all round officer I have never met. He was the principal organiser of the Town Guards, and acted as my Staff Officer, carrying out his duties with marked success under great difficulties, until he took over the organisation and command of the Kimberley Light Horse and the mounted troops. He commanded the mounted troops in numerous reconnaissances and sorties in the neighbourhood of Kimberley, and I cannot speak too highly of the manner in which he conducted them and loyally carried out my orders. His horse was shot

under him on the 25th November and he himself was wounded, but continued to perform his duties until killed in action on the 28th November. Appendix R

39. I beg to bring the officers of my Staff most especially to notice, and I trust that their valuable services will be rewarded:—

Captain (local Major) W. A. J. O'Meara, Royal Engineers, my Intelligence Officer, carried out his many duties to my entire satisfaction and was of the greatest assistance to me. He has professional acquirements and ability of a high order, and is, I consider, a most hard-working and capable Staff Officer. The arrangements connected with despatch riders, the careful watching of spies, the censorship of telegrams and the Press, and the collection of information under most difficult circumstances were most carefully and intelligently arranged by him. He also successfully carried out the duties of Director of Army Telegraphs in Kimberley. I cannot praise his good work too highly.

Lieutenant (local Captain) D. S. MacInnes, Royal Engineers, worked out most carefully and constructed with marked ability and success the engineer operations for the defence of Kimberley. He is a real hard worker, full of zeal, energy and resource. Wherever he went he inspired confidence. On Brevet-Major Turner taking over the command of the mounted troops, Captain MacInnes relieved him as my Staff Officer, and I cannot speak too highly of the manner in which he carried out his heavy and very responsible duties, both within the fortress and in connection with sorties, reconnaissances, etc.—I have, etc.,

R. G. KEKEWICH,

(Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding Griqualand West and Bechuanaland.)

Note.—The Report also contained honourable mention of a number of officers which it is not considered necessary reprint here.—*B. H. Holland*, Secretary.

Note.—When a Series of Questions refer to the same Subject the Number of the opening Question only is given.

INDEX ACCORDING TO WITNESSES.

(The INDEX ACCORDING TO SUBJECTS will be found at the end of the Report Volume.)

ADYE, LIEUT.-COL. JOHN, C.B., R.A., late Assistant Adjutant-General for Colonial Forces, South Africa. (See Questions 12,205-12,373.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 12,206, 12,293, 12,298, 12,321, 12,328.

Officers of Colonial Forces :

Commanding Officer and Adjutant, provision from Regular Army advocated, 12,238, 12,299.
Establishment, regulations as to advocated, 12,237.
Handbook of Instructions for, suggestion as to issue of, 12,291.
Inspector - General, appointment advocated, 12,292, 12,315.

Over-sea Colonials :

Disbandment, 12,357.
Discipline, 12,249, 12,367.
Equipment, 12,352.
Horses, 12,353.
Officers, 12,241, 12,360, 12,369.
Pay, 12,317, 12,323, 12,339, 12,365.
Quality of men, 12,303.
Strength of, 12,215.

Pay of Irregular Colonial Forces, suggestions as to :

Appointment of Paymaster, 12,365.
Uniform rate of, 12,265, 12,305, 12,327, 12,343.

Scheme for raising Irregular Corps, desirability of, 12,287.

South African Corps, raising and organisation of, 12,214.

Classification of, 12,222, 12,332.
Disbandment, 12,280.
Discharge of men in the field, 12,256, 12,312, 12,356.
Discipline, 12,249, 12,354, 12,368.
Equipment, 12,223, 12,248.
Establishment, regulations as to, 12,237.
Medical tests, 12,230, 12,314.
Officers, 12,239, 12,368, 12,371.
Pay, 12,262, 12,276, 12,339.
Period of Service, terms of enlistment, 12,232.
Quality of men :
Discipline, 12,249, 12,368.
Horsemastership, 12,254.
Recruiting, system adopted, 12,227.
Riding tests, 12,229.
Strength of Corps, 12,214, 12,320, 12,334.
Training, 12,231, 12,245.
Volunteer Forces in Cape Colony and Natal 12,218.
Disembodiment, 12,281.

ALTHAM, COLONEL E. A., C.M.G., Assistant Quarter-master-General, Intelligence Division. (See Questions 458-689 and 14,688-14,962.)

Service of Witness at home and in South Africa, 458, 544.

Artillery, 614.

Boer military strength and armaments, information as to, 497, 577, 584, 588, 599, 610, 639.

Colonial Forces, proposals for organisation of, 537.
Mounted men, decision as to, 602.

Field Intelligence Department, organisation of, 543.

White, Sir George, organisation under, 545, 682.

Altham, Colonel E. A.—continued.

Intelligence Department :

Cost of estimate of, 630.
Duties of, 486, 616, 635.
Memorandum submitted by, 472, 548, 577, 603, 688.
"Military Notes," preparation of, 491.
Staff of, 558, 562, 581, 603, 630.

Ladysmith :

Reasons for selecting as a station and holding, 654.

Relief Force :

Communications by heliograph between Sir R. Buller and Sir G. White during fights, 14,879.

Line of advance, suggestions as to, 14,867, 14,871.

Offensive operations in aid of General Buller, Field Force Order as to, 14,881.

Lombard's Kop, retreat from, 14,835.

Number of troops which would have been necessary in 1899 to protect British territories in South Africa from invasion, 649.

Schemes of defence :

General schemes of defence and offence, 472, 474, 555, 560, 565, 624.

South Africa, defence in, 472, 483, 525, 591, 649, 673.

Topographical information as to South Africa, 511.

AMERY, MR. L. S. (See Questions 20,416-20,560.)

Sent out by the "Times" to South Africa in August, 1899, 20,416.

Experiences in South Africa, 20,416, 20,429.

Army Organisation :

Army Corps scheme of 1901 :

Staff officers, proposals as to, 20,500, 20,509.

Cavalry, use of, in modern warfare, 20,533.

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 20,536.

Mounted infantry, use of, in modern warfare, 20,524.

Proportion of Army to be trained as mounted infantry, 20,527, 20,530.

Attack and defence, relative advantages of, under modern conditions, 20,535.

Boers :

Horses, 20,518, 20,519.

Numbers in the field, 20,421.

Supplies, equipment, and transport on outbreak of the war, 20,426.

Telegraph system, 20,455, 20,462.

Use of ground, advantages gained by, 20,535.

Cavalry :

Retreat from Lombard's Kop, 20,440.

Use of, in modern warfare, 20,533.

Germany :

Staff officers, training, 20,497, 20,502.

Horses :

Quality of, 20,518.

Training for war, suggestion as to, 20,518, 20,521.

Intelligence Department in the Field :

Inadequacy as to numbers, quality, and expenditure, 20,443.

Information given by, to headquarters, not sufficiently distributed amongst subordinates, 20,453.

Ladysmith, telephone system at, 20,457.

Mapping in South Africa, deficiencies as to, 20,443.

Amery, Mr. L. S.—continued.

Men:

- Comfort in barracks, importance of, 20,523.
- Qualities shown during the war by, 20,555, 20,559.
- Training, suggestions as to, 20,517, 20,555.

Military operations:

- Lombard's Kop, cavalry retreat from, 20,440.
- Mounted Infantry, *see* Army Organisation.

Officers:

- Information supplied to witness by, 20,458.
- Staff officers:
 - Esprit de corps, cultivation of, suggestion as to, 20,494.
 - General Officer Commanding, knowledge as to proper utilisation of staff, importance of, 20,513.
 - Plan of campaign not worked out by staff officers before the war, 20,465, 20,491.
 - Qualities shown during the war by, and suggestions as to training, 20,493.

Preparations for the war:

- Plan of campaign, absence of, 20,465.
- Political considerations affecting, 20,482.
- Troops in South Africa before the war, adequacy of, for defence of the colonies, question as to, 20,465, 20,469, 20,488.
- Scouting, deficiency in, during the war, 20,448.

ARDAGH, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN C., K.C.I.E., C.B., LL.D., R.E. (*See* Questions 4964-5244.)

Director of Military Intelligence from 1896 to 1901, 4964.

- Boer Forces, information given by Intelligence Department as to:
 - Armaments and military strength, 5100, 5163.
 - Shooting, 5241.

Intelligence Department:

- Duties and position of, views of witness as to, 4966, 4974, 5020.
- Expenditure on intelligence, 5126.
 - In South Africa, 5127.
- German General Staff, comparison with, 4972, 4980, 5111, 5188.
- Representations made with regard to South Africa in years 1896 and 1897, 5022, 5168, 5181, 5207, 5216, 5236.
- Schemes of defence and offence, 5027, 5135, 5178, 5219.
- Staff, strength of, 4978.
- Ladysmith, selection of, 5059, 5164, 5211, 5224.
- Maps, 4993, 5173.
- Country round Ladysmith, maps of, 5214.

Mobilisation:

- Army Corps system, opinion of witness as to, 5158, 5231.
- Difficulty of mobilising force of 20,000 men under present system, 5139, 5162.
- Germany, mobilisation in, 5203.

Transport and supplies, advice of Intelligence Department as to, 5085.

War Office organisation:

Commander-in-Chief's position, 5113.

ARMSTRONG, MAJOR O., D.S.O., Chief Financial Adviser to Lord Kitchener from June, 1901. (*See* Questions 22,050-22,200.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 22,050, 22,170.

Colonial Forces, South African, expenditure on arrangement with Cape Government as to, 22,096.

Contracts:

- Broken agreements, 22,174.
- Financial Adviser to Commander-in-Chief, duties and powers of in relation to, 22,058, 22,066.
- Meat contracts, 22,187.
- South Africa, contracts made in, 22,103.
 - Officer responsible for, 22,154.
 - Prices, 22,069, 22,174, 22,185.
 - Supply accounting, 22,155.

Armstrong, Major O.—continued.

Customs duties, charges in respect of, 22,091, 22,165.

Demurrage charges at the Cape, 22,074.

Duties and powers of witness as Chief Financial Adviser to Lord Kitchener in South Africa, 22,055.

Financial Control:

- Auditing staff at the base advocated, 22,123
- Financial advisers to Army Corps:
 - Appointment in peace time advocated, 22,107.
 - Powers of, suggestion as to, 22,113, 22,138.
 - Value of, proved by experience of the war, 22,106, 22,174.
- Regimental paymasters, not suitable as financial advisers as to contracts, 22,185.
- (*See also sub-heading* War Office Organisation.)
- Monthly expenditure by various spending departments, method of dealing with, 22,101.

Officers:

- Contracts and supply duties, inexperience shown in early stages of the war, 22,072, 22,088, 22,174.
- Pay, consolidated, on service, question as to, 22,126.
- Small book system, 22,127, 22,137.
- Purchase of supplies (otherwise than by contract) in South Africa, 22,070, 22,085.
- Railways, Cape and Natal, arrangements with as to charges, 22,077, 22,167.
- Telegraph rates, 22,084.
- War Office Organisation in relation to expenditure:
 - Army Pay Department, question whether officers of could act as Financial Advisers to Generals in the field, 22,176.
 - Commercial Intelligence Branch, formation of, Minute by witness suggesting, 22,113, 22,146, 22,160.
 - Contracts, Department for, duties of, 22,121, 22,151, 22,160.
 - Supply accounting, defects in present system, 22,132.
 - Vote system, amplification of sub-heads advocated, 22,199.

ATKINS, MR. J. B. (*See* Questions 20,775-20,827.)

Sent out to South Africa by "Manchester Guardian," in October 1899, 20,775.

Experience in South Africa and in other campaigns, and during Swiss Manœuvres, 20,776.

Ammunition pouches, quality of 20,782.

Artillery:

- Ammunition:
 - Shrapnel, effect of, 20,797.
- Range and effectiveness of guns, 20,796, 20,827.
- Tactics, 20,802.

Balloons, use of, 20,820.

Bicycles, use of, 20,815.

Boers:

- Artillery:
 - Ammunition, quality of, 20,797, 20,799.
 - Tactics, 20,803.
- Intelligence and initiative, quality as to, 20,803, 20,812.
- Rifles, 20,781.

Colonial troops:

- Officers, relations with Imperial officers, 20,808, 20,822.
- Use of, inadequate in early stages of the war, 20,807, 20,817.

Men:

- Confidence in officers, increased importance of in modern warfare, 20,813.
- Discipline, 20,814.
- Intelligence and initiation, quality as to, and suggestions for training in, 20,803.

Non-commissioned Officers, training and increase of responsibility, suggestions as to, 20,811.

Officers, initiative and responsibility, qualities as to, shown during the war, and suggestions as to training in, 20,804.

Rifles:

- Ammunition, cheap, for shooting practice, use of, advocated, 20,788.
- Quality and pattern of, 20,781.
- Volley firing, system advocated, 20,786.

Atkins, Mr. J. B.—continued.

Swiss Army:

- Horses, provision, arrangements as to, 20,794.
- Shooting practice:
 - Ammunition, cheap, provision, 20,788.
 - Norris Tubes, question as to use of, 20,793.
 - Quality of, 20,794.
 - Rifle ranges, length of, 20,793.
 - Volley firing, system of, 20,786.
- Telescope, use of, importance of, 20,812.

BADEN-POWELL, MAJOR-GENERAL R. S. S., C.B. (*See* Questions 19,820-20,020.)

- Services of witness in South Africa, 19,820, 19,821.

Armoured trains, 19,820 (page 423), 19,976, 19,995.

Army Organisation:

- Imperial Forces, raising or location of in the Colonies advocated, 19,820 (page 424).
- (*See also* Cavalry, Mounted Infantry, etc.)

Artillery:

- Canadian Battery, 20,010.
- Frontier Force, 19,820, 19,864.
- Light mobile guns, provision advocated, 19,820 (page 425), 19,973.
- Pom-poms, 19,976.
- (*See also* Mafeking.)

Boers:

Artillery:

- Fuses, 19,903.
- Information as to, supplied to witness, 19,998, 20,000, 20,015.
- Pom-poms, 19,820 (page 424), 19,907, 19,912, 20,016.
- Range and effect of guns, and quality of gunnery, 19,820 (page 424), 19,902.
- Entrenchments, 19,820 (page 425), 19,969.
- German officer superintending, 19,970.
- Numbers of Boers contained by Frontier Force and siege of Mafeking, 19,820 (page 424), 19,899.
- South African Constabulary, Boers in, 20,003.

Buluwayo:

- Artillery in, 19,820 (page 423).

Supplies:

- Before the war, 19,838.
- Sent up after relief of Mafeking, 19,894.

Cavalry:

- Arms and use of, in modern warfare, 19,820 (page 425), 19,933, 19,943.
- Sharpening and keeping sharp of swords, 19,820 (page 425), 19,956.
- Training in horsemanship, 19,820 (page 425), 19,940.

Colonial Forces, organisation of, in peace time, suggestions as to, 19,820 (page 424).

Absence of organisation before the war, 19,829, 19,834.

Discipline and punishments, 19,820 (page 425), 19,976*.

Equipment, reserves of, 19,820 (page 425), 19,829.

Officers:

- Accounts and supply duties, 19,924.
- Supply of, 19,829.

Recruiting—registration of finger-prints, 19,820 (page 425), 19,983.

Scheme for organisation of, desirability of, 19,931.

Colonial Troops serving under witness:

- Frontier Force, *see that sub-heading*.
- Over-seas Colonials, 20,010.
- South African Constabulary, *see that sub-heading*.

Entrenchments, character advocated, 19,820 (page 425), 19,963.

Loop-holes, length of, 19,965.

Equipment, 19,820 (page 425).

Saddlery, patterns and quality of, 19,820 (page 425), 19,985.

Farriers and shoeing smiths, deficiency in, 19,820 (page 425).

Baden-Powell, Major-General R. S. S.—continued.

Frontier Force, Rhodesia, raising and organisation of, 19,820 (page 423), 19,822.

Artillery, 19,820 (page 423), 19,864.

Ammunition, 19,866.

Constitution and discipline of, 19,820 (page 423), 19,853.

Division of force, and stationing at Tuli and Mafeking, 19,820 (page 423), 19,871.

Equipment, 19,820 (page 423), 19,835.

Extent of frontier, 19,900, 19,901.

Horses, provision, 19,820 (page 423), 19,845.

Intelligence Officers in, 19,820 (page 424), 19,880, 19,887.

Maps prepared and issued to, 19,892.

Medical Services, 19,861.

Men:

Quality and training of, 19,844, 19,858.

Sources from which drawn, 19,840, 19,843.

Terms of enlistment, pay, etc., 19,841.

Officers:

Quality and training, 19,858.

Supply of, 19,820 (page 423), 19,829.

Position of force under General Officer Commanding in South Africa, 19,820 (page 424), 19,827.

Prohibition of raising of force in Cape Colony in peace time, 19,853.

Standing orders as to pay, etc., compiled by witness, 19,935.

Transport and supplies, 19,820 (page 423), 19,837.

Intelligence Department:

- Assistance received from, 19,880, 19,997, 20,015.
- Expenditure on Intelligence, inadequacy of in years preceding the war, 19,997.

Mafeking, Siege of:

Account, summary, of investment, siege, and relief, 19,820 (page 424).

Artillery, 19,820 (pages 423, 424), 19,868, 19,911.

Light and mobile guns, necessity for, 19,820 (page 425).

Worked by police, 19,878.

Attack on Boers immediately after the relief, 19,897.

Boers, investing, *see sub-heading* Boers.

Discipline and punishments, 19,976*, 19,980.

Entrenchments, British, 19,963.

Intelligence Officers, information collected by, 19,820 (page 424), 19,880.

Natives, employment of, for looking after cattle, etc., 19,874.

Preparations for the siege, 19,820 (page 424).

Selection and holding of Mafeking, reasons for, 19,820 (page 424), 19,871.

Signalling lamps and searchlights used during, 19,995.

Supplies in:

Preparations for the siege, 19,820 (page 424).

Rations at time of the relief, 19,820 (page 424), 19,894.

Troops, strength and composition of, 19,820 (page 424), 19,874.

Use of Mafeking as a base previously to outbreak of the war, prohibition of, 19,855.

Men:

Quality as to shooting:

Firing mounted successfully practised in South Africa, 19,820 (page 425).

Training, suggestions as to, 19,820 (page 424), 19,915.

Disposition of men for tactical work, 19,820 (page 425), 19,988.

Mounted Infantry:

Use of, distinct from that of Cavalry, 19,820 (page 425), 19,938.

Officers:

Pay responsibilities, release from, by appointment of Regimental Paymasters, views of witness as to this suggestion, 19,920.

Probationary Officers, promotion from the ranks, suggestion as to, 19,994.

Baden-Powell, Major-General R. S. S. —continued.

Officers—continued.

Training:

Accounts and supply duties, training in, advocated, 19,820 (page 424), 19,918, 19,922.

Responsibility and initiative, cultivation of, 19,820 (page 424), 19,915.

Preparations for the war:

Instructions to witness as to raising of Frontier Force, 19,820 (page 423), 19,822.

Intelligence Department, *see that sub-heading*.

Recruiting, registration of finger-prints advocated, 19,983.

Rifles, 19,820 (page 424), 19,943.

South African Constabulary, raising, organisation, and work of, 19,820 (page 423), 19,916.

Composition of force, 20,003.

Discipline, 20,005.

Entrenchments, practice as to, 19,820 (page 425).

Forts, construction, 19,990.

Men:

Quality of, 20,007.

Training, 19,916, 20,006.

Officers:

Accounts and supply duties, 19,929, 19,934.

Probationary Officers, promotion from the ranks, 19,991.

Recruiting for, registration of finger-prints, 19,983.

Strength of force, 20,004.

Supplies:

"Corners" in local supplies, prevention advocated, 19,820 (page 425).

Mafeking, *see that sub-heading*.

Transport, 19,820 (page 425).

Tuli, column stationed at, 19,820 (page 423), 19,871.

War Office Organisation:

Intelligence Department, *see that sub-heading*.

Remount Department, war establishment at the Cape, 19,849.

BARTON, MAJOR-GENERAL G., C.B., C.M.G. (*See Questions 16,181-16,395.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 16,181.

Army Service Corps, deficiency in officers in early stages of the war, 16,260.

Artillery:

Ammunition:

Common shell and shrapnel, effect of, compared, 16,313.

Mobility and range of guns, 16,308.

Naval guns, 16,308, 16,322.

Auxiliary Corps:

Raising and organisation of local corps, rules in pamphlet form, suggestion as to, 16,370.

Boers:

Artillery, 16,323.

Attack by, rarity of, 16,382.

Bandoliers, 16,364.

Cover, quality as to, 16,219.

Mobility, 16,229.

Rifle, quality of, 16,327.

Shooting, quality as to, 16,215.

Colonial Corps:

Officers, provision, 16,372.

South African corps, raising and organisation of, 16,200.

Engineers:

Duties of Chief Engineer, increase of, since abolition of the Quartermaster-General, 16,305.

Qualities shown during war by, 16,304.

Entrenching Tools:

Wallace spade, objections to, and suggestions as to a substitute, 16,290, 16,389.

Equipment, 16,361.

Horses, 16,275.

Infantry Tactics:

Combined tactics and simultaneous attacks, views as to, 16,224.

Barton, Major-General G. —continued.

Lines of Communication:

Supply of men for, detention of drafts going up country, etc., 16,345.

Medical Services, 16,298.

Men:

Quality of:

Courage in attack, 16,221, 16,382.

Cover, taking, 16,217, 16,223.

Physique, morale, marching and shooting, 16,203.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,231, 16,257.

Shooting, training in, abolition of figure of merit advocated, 16,355.

Military Operations:

Colenso, battle of, 16,221, 16,227.

Ladysmith, retention of cavalry in, 16,196.

Troops, number which would have been necessary to prevent invasion of the colonies in 1899, 16,193.

Militia Reserve, abolition advocated, 16,342.

Mounted Infantry:

Deficiency in mounted men in early stages of the war, 16,193.

Future organisation and use of, suggestions as to, 16,331.

Non-commissioned Officers, supply of, for mounted infantry, 16,338.

Officers:

Commanding Officers and Company Leaders, increased authority advocated, 16,235, 16,257.

Horses, keeping, by infantry officers, suggestion as to, 16,349.

Pay responsibilities and accounts, relief from advocated, 16,245, 16,376.

Staff Officers:

Duties, 16,236.

Qualities shown by officers serving with witness in South Africa, 16,243.

Training, 16,244.

Railways (Orange Free State and Transvaal):

Difficulties caused by Dutch officials, 16,277, 16,384.

Reservists:

Qualities shown during the war, 16,207, 16,213.

Training, annual, in shooting, suggestion as to, 16,209.

Rifles:

Quality of, 16,327.

Sighting, 16,328.

Supplies, 16,260.

Transport:

Load tables, increase of allowance advocated, 16,287.

Regimental and general transport compared, 16,285.

Troops in South Africa:

6th Infantry Brigade, composition and quality of, 16,182, 16,203, 16,204.

Strength of, adequacy of, views of witness 16,188, 16,193.

Uniform, khaki, advantages of and suggestions as to patterns, etc., 16,365.

BORRETT, MAJOR-GENERAL H. C. (*See Questions 5245-5443.*)

Inspector-General of Recruiting, and from 9th October, 1899, to 26th March, 1900, Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces, 5245.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

Enlistment, terms of, 5294.

Pay, difference of, as compared with Volunteers, 5401.

Quality, 5385.

Militia:

Age of Militia for South African service, 5255

Artillery, 5278.

Calling up of Militia battalions to replace home battalions of Regulars, 5254.

Officers in Militia, method of appointing for the war, 5258, 5299, 5312, 5336.

Quality of Militiamen, 5302.

Selection of Militia battalions to go to South Africa, 5255.

Borrett, Major-General, H. C.—continued.

Recruiting:

- Areas, 5352.
- Changes in standards, 5381.
- Conditions of service, improvement in, 5369.
- Dislocation of recruiting system by war, 5354.
- Increase of recruits after outbreak of war, 5361.
- Infantry, difficulty in recruiting for, 5362.
- New terms of recruiting, 5368, 5409.
- Quality of recruits hitherto, 5374, 5404, 5431.
- Skilled artificers, 5386.
- Staff at headquarters, 5349.
- Total recruits raised during war, 5402.
- South African Constabulary, 5399, 5423.

Volunteers:

- City Imperial Volunteers, embodiment of, 5287, 5292.
- Quality, 5414.
- Service Companies of Volunteers, 5290, 5320, 5401.

BRABAZON, MAJOR-GENERAL J. P., C.B. (See Questions 6836-7001.)

Commanded the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa, 6836.

Cavalry, use of, 6905, 6960, 6969.

Equipment:

Arms, 6861, 6898, 6915, 6978.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

- Equipment, arms, 6843, 6861.
- Horsemanship, 6885, 6907, 6975.
- Officers, 6888, 6910.

Qualities of:

First Contingent, 6841, 6981.

Second Contingent, 6848, 6980, 6995.

Shooting compared with Boers, 6859.

Transport—land, 6964, 6991.

Yeomanry, Home, questions as to future organisation, 6872.

BRACKENBURY, GENERAL SIR HENRY, G.C.B., K.C.S.I. (See Questions 1553-1834.)

Director-General of Ordnance since February, 1899; 1553.

Ammunition, 1599, 1613, 1666, 1780.

Artillery, 1599, 1671, 1739, 1752, 1784, 1811.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 1717.

Equipment:

- Arms, 1600.
- Boots, 1622, 1666, 1788.
- Camp equipment, 1600, 1666.
- Clothing, 1604, 1619, 1644, 1703, 1789.
- Harness and saddlers, 1599, 1630, 1666.
- Horseshoes, 1603, 1666, 1782.
- Hospital equipment, 1602, 1663.
- Infantry accoutrements, 1599.
- Lee-Enfield rifles, sighting, 1777.
- Reserves of equipment, 1597, 1665.
- War equipment on mobilisation, 1593.

Intelligence Department, Memoranda submitted by, 1728.

Ordnance (Army) Department, duties and powers of Director-General, 1555, 1733, 1765.

Estimates by, 1586.

Ordnance factories, control of, 1555.

Ordnance services, outside the department and in the field, 1584.

Preparations for the war, expenditure in connection with, 1630, 1714, 1728, 1761, 1792, 1812.

Reserves of stores:

- Mowatt Committee, 1616, 1732, 1748.
- Representations by witness as to, 1615.

Transport (land), 1630, 1638.

War Office organisation, 1555, 1709, 1722, 1819:

Army Board, 1825.

War Office Council, 1819.

BRODRICK, THE RIGHT HON. ST. JOHN, M.P., Secretary of State for War, 21,591-21,852.

Appointed Secretary of State for War in November, 190, 21,591.

Financial Secretary at the War Office from August, 1886, to August, 1892; Under-Secretary of State for War from July, 1895, to October, 1898, 21,592.

Admiralty:

- Commands taken up by members of Board of Admiralty after retirement, question as to, 21,656.

Brodrick, The Right Hon. St. John—continued.

Admiralty—continued.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, representation on, 21,732, 21,740.

Organisation of, comparison with War Office Organisation, 21,684.

Army Organisation:

Army Corps scheme of 1901:

Assistant Quartermaster-Generals, appointment, 21,710, 21,722.

General Officers Commanding, authority of, increase of, 21,691.

Reserves of stores, regulations as to, 21,669.

Battalions, number of men in, increase of, 21,596.

Strength of the Army (in May, 1903), 21,793.

Auxiliary Forces:

Officers, provision, 21,787.

Organisation of in time of war, 21,813.

(See also Militia, Volunteers, and Yeomanry).

Coaling Ports, defence of, 21,742.

Colonial Forces, 21,816, 21,818.

Contracts, decentralisation of, 21,823.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 21,627, 21,629.

Commander-in-Chief, seat on, 21,658, 21,664.

Constitution of, and subjects discussed by, detailed account of, and of points of difference between old and new Defence Committee, 21,732.

Director-General of Military Intelligence, seat on, 21,629, 21,705.

Minutes of, 21,746.

Discipline, questions relating to, 21,767.

Financial Control in the field, appointment of Financial Adviser or Staff with General Officer Commanding, views as to this suggestion, 21,824.

Horses:

Indian Remount Department, purchases from large contractors, 21,837.

Registration of, 21,836.

Reorganisation of Remount Department, 21,831.

India:

Quartermaster-General's Department in, 21,712, 21,714.

Intelligence in the Field:

Expenditure on, 21,729.

Staff, provision, 21,716.

Manœuvring Areas and ranges, provision, 21,839.

Maps, expenditure as to, 21,731.

Men:

Class from which recruited, probable effect on, of increased pay, etc., 21,797, 21,804.

Pensions, 21,806.

Training and employment in civilian duties, 21,596.

Military Operations:

General Schemes of Defence and Offence:

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, position with regard to discussion of schemes, 21,735.

Instructions to Generals, opportunities for discussion, etc., 21,849.

Responsibility for, 21,627, 21,735.

Militia:

Compulsory service in, views as to, 21,804.

Foreign service, 21,811.

Officers, provision, 21,787.

Reserve, 21,804, 21,807.

Officers:

Quality, training, education and promotion of, 21,786.

Contracts, training as to, 21,823.

Promotion from the ranks, 21,801.

Supply of, suggestion as to formation of reserve of officers having one year's training, 21,787, 21,796.

Preparations for the War:

Buller, General, his opportunities of discussing plan of campaign before he went out, 21,847.

Expenditure in connection with mobilisation, views as to modes of facilitating, 21,842.

Reservists, pensions, 21,808.

Supplies, reserves of, regulations as to, under Army Corps Scheme of 1901, 21,669.

Brodrick, The Right Hon. St. John—continued.

Treasury, relations with the War Office, 21,751.

Volunteers :

Foreign service, 21,811.

Officers, provision, 21,787.

War Office Organisation :

Advisory boards :

Education, 21,757, 21,786.

Medical services, 21,757, 21,758.

Army board :

Changes introduced by witness, 21,595.

Future utility of, 21,595, 21,603.

Clerks, military, employment of, 21,616, 21,623.

Commander-in-Chief, position of, 21,595, 21,607, 21,687, 21,769.

Appointment of Commander-in-Chief, 21,645.

Cabinet, position with regard to :

Opportunities of expressing his views before the Cabinet, 21,658.

Suggestion that Commander-in-Chief should be a member of the Cabinet, views as to, 21,638.

Certificate, annual, as to efficiency, etc., of the army, views of witness as to this suggestion, 21,665.

Changes in position since 1900, 21,627.

Heads of departments, relations with, 21,627, 21,678.

Schemes of Defence and Offence, responsibility for, 21,627, 21,735.

Decentralisation, steps taken to effect, 21,750, 21,757, 21,823.

Questions in Parliament, difficulties of decentralisation increased by, 21,750, 21,769.

Expenditure, organisation in relation to, 21,732, 21,751.

Mobilisation and Intelligence Department :

Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence, position and duties of, 21,627, 21,628, 21,629, 21,705, 21,707.

Duties of Department, 21,627.

Staff, increase, 21,705.

Ordinance, Director-General of, position of, 21,680.

Pay Department, 21,820.

Quartermaster-General's Department, 21,707.

Remount Department, reorganisation of, 21,831.

Secretary of State, position of, 21,595, 21,611, 21,615, 21,669, 21,752.

Expert knowledge, questions of, method of dealing with, 21,683.

Heads of departments, relations with, 21,678.

Military Secretary of State for War, views of witness as to this suggestion, 21,534.

Officers returning from active service, interviews with, 21,686.

Work of, 21,762.

War Office Council :

Changes introduced in 1900 and subsequently, 21,595.

Constitution and duties of, 21,596.

Initiative of each individual member, 21,611.

List of subjects discussed by, 21,600.

Notice of matters for discussion :

Regulations as to, 21,611, 21,616.

Urgent matters, discussion of, 21,614, 21,618.

Reference to, of questions in which Secretary of State differs from military authorities, 21,615.

Value of consultative boards, 21,626.

Yeomanry, Home, present organisation :

Foreign service, 21,811.

Strength of, 21,810.

Training school on Salisbury Plain, 21,789.

BULLER, GENERAL THE RIGHT HON. SIR REDVERS,
V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G. (See Questions 14,963-15,651.)

Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, appointment as, 14,963. 14,964.

Buller, Sir Redvers—continued

Army Organisation :

Difficulty of despatching and organising expedition of 5,000 or 10,000 men without dislocating arrangements, 15,072.

Artillery :

Ammunition, 15,472.

Naval guns, 15,472.

Range of guns, 15,471.

Boers :

Artillery, 15,471.

Numbers in the field, estimates of, 14,963 (pages 171, 172, 173, 175, 177, 180, 183, 184).

Orange Free State, attitude of :

Conviction of witness as to, and its effect on Plan of Campaign, 14,963 (pages 169, 170, 171), 15,005, 15,036, 15,041, 15,088.

Minute of 24th September 1899, 14,963 (page 170), 15,005.

Schreiner, Mr., views as to, 14,963 (page 171), 15,272.

Political parties in the Transvaal, 14,963 (page 171).

Shooting, quality as to, 15,483.

Botha, General Chris., negotiations with as to surrender, 14,963 (page 185), 15,467.

Character of the country and people, effect of upon military situation, 14,963 (page 170).

Colonial Forces :

Mounted men, decision of Government as to in early stages of the war, 15,277.

Quality of men, 15,247, 15,485.

South African Corps, 14,963 (pages 173, 176, 177), 15,487.

Strathcona's Horse :

Officers, 15,579.

Quality of men, 15,489.

Horses, quality of, 15,551.

Instructions to witness, etc., see sub-heading Preparations for the War—Interviews of witness with Lord Lansdowne and Lord Wolseley.

Intelligence Department, help received from, 15,047.

Manœuvring Areas, 15,592.

Maps, 15,257, 15,333.

Martial Law, 14,963 (page 171), 15,124.

Medical Services, 15,562.

Equipment—number of beds, 15,562.

Department supplying beds, difficulty as to at Kimberley, 15,578.

Nurses, quality and training, 15,563.

Men :

Quality of, 15,249, 15,482.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 15,494.

Intelligence, morale, and physique, 15,495.

Marching, 15,493.

Shooting, 15,482.

Training, present system, and suggestions for improvements, 15,498, 15,539, 15,544, 15,592, 15,599.

Entrenching, 15,600.

Shooting, 15,616.

Troops in South Africa, see that sub-heading.

Military Operations :

Bridges :

Defence and occupation of, 14,963 (pages 171, 172).

Non-destruction of Orange River bridges, 15,164.

Repairs, provision for, 15,170.

Cape Colony :

East London, despatch of troops to ordered by Lord Roberts, 14,963 (pages 183, 184).

Kimberley Relief Operations, 14,963 (pages 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 181), 15,112, 15,119, 15,314.

De Beers directors, Mr. Cecil Rhodes and Colonel Kekewich, telegrams from, 14,963 (page 171), 15,104, 15,108, 15,176.

Magersfontein, Battle of, 14,963 (pages 173, 174), 15,184, 15,207.

Retirement in event of successful accomplishment of relief, question as to, 15,115.

Roberts', Lord, telegram of 24th December as to holding of Kimberley, 15,393. 15,408.

Buller, Sir Redvers—continued.

Military Operations—continued.

Cape Colony—continued.

Stormberg, action at, 14,963 (page 173), 15,207.

Delagoa Bay, discussion as to, 14,963 (page 173), 15,186.

Minute by witness of 24th September 1899 as to proposed line of advance, 14,963 (page 170), 15,006.

Natal:

Advance through Orange Free State, plan of, postponed in consequence of events in Natal, 14,963 (page 172), 15,099, 15,160.
Colenso Bridge, troops sent to guard by Sir George White, 14,963 (page 171), 15,126, 15,292.

Supplies in:

Glencoe, food supplies at, 15,294.

Ladysmith:

Attempts to relieve:

- (1) Movements ending in Battle of Colenso, 14,963 (pages 173, 174, 175, 176), 15,191, 15,207, 15,301.
- (2) Movements ending in Battle of Spion Kop, 14,963 (pages 177, 178, 180, 181), 15,255, 15,264, 15,416.

- (3) Movement on Vaal Krantz, 14,963 (pages 179, 180), 15,255, 15,422.

- (4) Movements ending in relief of Ladysmith, 14,963 (pages 180, 181, 182), 15,254.

Cavalry, retention in Ladysmith, 14,963 (page 172), 15,135, 15,162.

Condition of garrison on relief, 14,963 (page 183).

Messages to and from Sir G. White:

Before the investment, 14,963 (pages 171, 172, 173), 15,027, 15,125, 15,131, 15,285.

During the siege, 14,963 (pages 173, 175, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182), 15,142, 15,191, 15,336, 15,367, 15,381.

Heliogram of 16th December to Sir George White, reasons of witness for sending, 14,963 (page 175), 15,336, 15,339, 15,368, 15,376.

Pursuit of Boers after relief of Ladysmith, question as to, 14,963 (page 182).

Roberts, Lord, views of, as to holding Ladysmith in event of the relief, expressed in telegram of 23rd December 1899, 14,963 (page 176), 15,407.

Supplies in:

Messages from Sir George White as to supplies and period they would last, 14,963 (pages 176, 178, 179, 180, 182), 15,142, 15,146, 15,151, 15,345.

Orders by witness as to stores before his arrival in South Africa, 15,294.

Situation as to supplies on entrance of Relief Force, 14,963 (page 183).

Wagon Hill and Caesar's Camp, attack on, 14,963 (page 177).

Lombard's Kop, Battle of, 15,196, 15,291.

Orange Free State:

Advance of British troops through, views of witness as to advisability of, 14,963 (pages 169, 170, 171, 176, 177), 15,005, 15,036, 15,041, 15,088, 15,401.

Memorandum by witness of 24th September 1899, as to, 14,963 (page 170), 15,006.

Roberts, Lord, advance on Bloemfontein, 14,963 (pages 178, 179, 181), 15,256, 15,393.

Buller, Sir Redvers—continued.

Military Operations—continued.

Orange Free State—continued.

Scheme of witness in December 1899, for future operations in the Orange Free State, 14,963 (pages 176, 177).

Supply depôt at Harrismith, suggestion by Lord Roberts as to, 14,963 (page 184), 15,457.

Roberts, Lord:

Appointment as Commander-in-Chief, 14,963 (page 176), 15,373.

Arrival in South Africa, military situation at time of, 15,410.

Effect on situation in Natal, of advance of Lord Roberts in the Orange Free State, 14,963 (pages 181, 182), 15,256, 15,393.

Telegrams from and to, 14,963 (pages 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182).

Appeal to troops, telegram of February 6th, referring to, 14,963 (page 180), 15,422.

Future policy, after relief of Ladysmith, correspondence as to, 14,963 (pages 183, 184, 185), 15,439.

Secretary of State, telegrams to and from, 14,963 (pages 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178), 15,207, 15,311, 15,315, 15,373.

Telegram from witness to, on 15th December, 1899, reasons stated for sending, 14,963 (page 175), 15,213, 15,311.

Transvaal:

Advance on, 14,963 (pages 184, 185), 15,439, 15,464.

Movements in, 14,963 (page 185), 15,464.

Troops in South Africa, *see sub-heading* Troops.
Wolseley, Lord, telegrams from and to, 14,963 (page 171), 15,291.

Military situation in October, November, and December, 1899:

October, 14,963 (page 171).

November, 14,963 (pages 171, 172, 173).

December, 14,963 (pages 173, 174).

Milner, Sir A., communications with, 14,963 (pages 171, 176, 177), 15,107, 15,314.

Mounted Men, deficiency in, in early stages of the war, 14,963 (pages 172, 173), 15,095, 15,275.

Officers:

Qualities shown during the war, 15,544.

Staff Officers:

Selection of his staff by General in Command, views of witness as to, 15,621.

Supply of, 15,626.

Training, Staff College system, etc., 15,540, 15,627.

Training, 15,498, 15,502, 15,543, 15,587, 15,604.
Pay in the Field, Small Book system advocated, 15,597.

Preparations for the War:

Defence:

Local schemes of, for Natal and Cape Colony, 14,974.

Number of troops necessary for defence of Colonies, estimate of, 14,980.

Expenditure, sanction of, 14,963 (page 170), 14,993, 15,006.

Interviews of witness with Lord Lansdowne and Lord Wolseley in June and July 1899, 14,963 (page 169), 15,056, 15,187.

Plan of campaign:

No instructions given to witness as to any plan, 15,030, 15,044, 15,401.

Suggested by witness; 6th July 1899, 14,963 (page 170), 15,398.

View of witness that Commander-in-Chief designate should have had better opportunities of expressing his views as to the campaign before it began, 15,019.

Minute by witness of 6th July 1899, to Commander-in-Chief, 14,963 (page 170), 14,986.

Minute by witness of 5th September 1899, to Lord Salisbury, 14,963 (page 170).

Ports of debarkation, decision as to, 15,401.

Supplies, equipment, transport, etc., state of, on arrival of witness at Cape Town, 15,009.

Troops, *see that sub-heading*.

Witness not officially cognisant of, 14,967.

Buller, Sir Redvers—continued.

Rhodes, Mr. Cecil, *see* Military Operations, Cape Colony.

Supplies :

Adequacy of, 15,545.
Amalgamation of Services of Transport and Supply, views as to, 15,546.
Arrival of Sir R. Buller at Cape Town, situation as to supplies, 15,009.
Small luxuries, supply of, in the field, 15,550.

Transport (land) :

Contract for additional mules countermanded in September, 1899, 14,963 (page 170).
Deficiency in, on outbreak of the war, 15,017.
Disposition of transport in South Africa on arrival of Lord Roberts, 15,396, 15,403, 15,561.
Re-organisation by Lord Roberts, 15,561 (pages 216, 217, 218).
Regimental and general transport compared, 15,556.
System adopted by War Office previously to re-organisation of transport by Lord Roberts, 15,561.

Troops in South Africa :

Colonial Forces, *see that subheading*.
Condition of General Buller's Force early in December 1899, unfitness for bush fighting, 14,963 (page 174), 15,225.
Disposition of forces in South Africa in October, November, and December 1899, 14,963 (pages 170, 171, 172, 173), 15,027.
Mounted men, *see that subheading*.
Preparations for the war, provision of troops 14,963 (pages 169, 170), 14,968, 14,979, 15,078.
Minute by Witness, of 6th July, 1899, to Lord Wolseley, 14,963 (page 170), 14,986.
Minute by Witness, of 5th September, 1899, to Lord Salisbury, 14,963 (page 170).
Reserves, calling out, 15,004.
Strength of force, decision as to, 14,963 (page 169), 14,968.
Qualities shown by during the war, *see sub-heading* Men—Quality.
Reinforcements, 14,963 (pages 175, 176), 15,272.
Volunteers, 15,492.

War Office Organisation :

Army Board, 15,641, 15,646.
Commander-in-Chief, position of, 15,502, 15,526, 15,637.
Commander-in-Chief's Committee, 15,645.
Mobilisation Committee, 15,645, 15,648.
Secretary of State, position of, 15,502, 15,526, 15,638.
Suggestions for reform of, 15,500, 15,587, 15,636.
Advisory Board, 15,638.
Amalgamation of Departments of Supply and Transport advocated, 15,546, 15,550.

BUTLER, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM F., K.C.B. (*See* Questions 13,381-13,635.)

Services of Witness in South Africa as General Officer Commanding and, for some time, Acting High Commissioner and Governor of Cape Colony, 13,381.

Lieutenant-General, Western District, 13,628.

Advanced positions, question as to policy of holding, 13,416, 13,425.

Artillery in South Africa before the war, 13,533, 13,546, 13,592.

Boers :

Absence of Standing Army, 13,389.
Attitude of, views of Witness as to, 13,499, 13,505, 13,508, 13,564, 13,573, 13,585, 13,586, 13,589, 13,599, 13,610.
Bond and Boers, question as to combination between, 13,576.
Extreme Dopper party, 13,603.
Franchise Question at Bloemfontein Conference, 13,631.
Military preparations by, 13,428, 13,557, 13,581, 13,586.

Butler, Sir William F.—continued.

Bridges :

Holding of, advocated by War Office, 13,416.
Non-destruction of, 13,523.
Civil War in South Africa, anticipations of Witness as to, 13,388, 13,427, 13,613.
Colonial Office, correspondence with, 13,383, 13,396.
Command of Western District given to Witness, 13,628.
Confidential Documents, destruction of, 13,425, 13,468.
Defence, Scheme of, preparation of by Witness, 13,402, 13,416, 13,431, 13,532.
Bridges across Orange River, defence of, 13,545, 13,553.
Question whether they should have been destroyed to impede Boer invasion, 13,525.
Cape Town, Durban, and Maritzburg, view of Witness that they could have been protected under the scheme till arrival of reinforcements, 13,456, 13,465, 13,513, 13,550.
Correspondence with War Office as to, 13,402, 13,414, 13,450, 13,457, 13,469, 13,486, 13,496, 13,506, 13,514, 13,520, 13,532, 13,585.
Date at which scheme was submitted to War Office, 13,406.
Estcourt the base of scheme, 13,440, 13,443, 13,448, 13,520.
Glencoe, advanced position in scheme, 13,443.
Intelligence and Mobilisation Authorities, correspondence with as to, 13,424.
Ladysmith, holding, 13,440.
Line of advance by enemy contemplated in, 13,543.
Number of troops available, 13,431, 13,456, 13,458, 13,465, 13,485, 13,513, 13,546, 13,605.
Stores, place of accumulation of, under scheme, question as to, 13,449, 13,597.

Intelligence Department :

Correspondence with, 13,424.
Information from, conveyed through Witness, 13,580.
Ladysmith, Artillery and stores at, and strength of garrison before the war, 13,592.
Laing's Nek, question of occupying in August 1899, 13,425, 13,586.
Mafeking, raising of regiment at before the war, 13,585, 13,586, 13,589, 13,633.
Milner, Sir Alfred :
Correspondence of Witness with in June 1899, 13,520 ; in July, 13,623.
Return to South Africa in February 1899, 13,405.

Natal :

Anxiety of inhabitants as to invasion, 13,600.
Armoured trains, preparation as to, before the war, 13,585.
Number of troops necessary for military operations in South Africa, *see sub-heading* Troops.
Political situation in relation to preparations for the war, 13,388, 13,394, 13,405, 13,424, 13,450, 13,483, 13,488, 13,499, 13,505, 13,508, 13,512, 13,514, 13,569, 13,573, 13,585, 13,591, 13,599, 13,610.
Boers, *see that sub-heading*.
South African League, 13,491, 13,500, 13,569, 13,601.
Telegram of June 23rd. 1899, from Witness to War Office, 13,490, 13,617.
Comments on by Sir A. Milner, 13,520.
Reply from Secretary of State, 13,497.
Proposals by Witness as to preparations for war previously to June 1899, 13,408, 13,488, 13,500, 13,518.
Questions as to whether Witness had stated that any specific number of troops would be required, 13,506, 13,575, 13,585.
Resignation of Witness and return to England, 13,520, 13,589, 13,620.
Rhodes, Mr. Cecil, 13,493, 13,601.
Rhodesia, arms and ammunition for, 13,585.
Rifles, reserve of, in South Africa, before outbreak of the war, 13,425, 13,542.
South African League, 13,494.
Staff of Witness in South Africa, 13,537.
Stores, accumulation of, 13,518, 13,593.
Transport, contract for horses and mules for, 13,469, 13,487.

Butler, Sir William F.—continued.

Troops:

Adequacy of forces in South Africa before the war, 13,465, 13,483, 13,546, 13,592, 13,605.
 Defence scheme, troops available for, *see sub-heading* Defence Scheme—Number of Troops.
 Number of troops necessary for military operations in South Africa, estimates of, 13,506, 13,520, 13,575, 13,585, 13,589.
 Tuli, proposed movement from, into the Transvaal, 13,586, 13,589, 13,591, 13,623.
 Van Reenen's Pass, question as to occupying, 13,416.

War Office:

Allegation that war was not thought immediately impending by War Office in December 1898, or June 1899, 13,424, 13,425.
 Confusion alleged, in May 1899, 13,424.
 Correspondence with, as to the action of
 Witness:

In November 1899, 13,416, and page 98.
 In 1901, 13,410, and page 98.

CARR, COLONEL E. E., C.B., Commanding 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers. (*See* Questions 19,145-19,298.)
 Services of witness in South Africa, 19,145 (page 392).

Army Organisation:

Mounted Infantry:

Supersession of infantry by cavalry or mounted infantry, impossibility of, 19,265.
 Training, 19,266, 19,295.

Artillery:

Ammunition, supply of, 19,146 (page 394), 19,256.
 Officers, training, 19,146 (page 393), 19,180

Boers:

Ambushes, skill in, 19,204.
 Individuality, 19,146 (page 394).
 Shooting, quality as to, 19,197.

Colonial Troops, Equipment:

Boots, 19,232.
 Caps, 19,213.

Entrenching tools:

Transport of tools in carts advocated, 19,255.
 Wallace spade, 19,146 (page 394), 19,254.

Equipment:

Ammunition pouches and bandoliers, 19,145 (page 394), 19,215.
 Boots, 19,146 (page 394), 19,219.
 Clothing, quality of, suggestions as to patterns, etc., 19,146 (page 394), 19,206.

India, drafts from, 19,146 (page 393), 19,157.

Manœuvring areas, provision of, necessity for, 19,175, 19,185.

Men:

Classes from which recruited, 19,163.
 Qualities of, 19,146 (pages 393, 394).
 Cover, 19,146 (page 393), 19,167.
 Entrenching, 19,146 (page 393).
 Intelligence, 19,146 (page 393), 19,163.
 Morale, 19,146 (page 393), 19,160.
 Physique, 19,146 (page 393), 19,153.
 Teeth, difficulties as to, 19,146 (page 393), 19,158.
 Shooting, quality as to, 19,197.
 Training, present system and suggestions as to improvements, 19,146 (pages 393, 394), 19,186, 19,188, 19,204, 19,266, 19,286*.
 Shooting at moveable objects advocated, 19,146 (page 394), 19,195.
 Telescopes and field glasses, training in use of, 19,205.

Mounted Infantry, *see sub-heading* Army Organisation.

Non-commissioned Officers:

Qualities of, 19,191.
 Supply of, difficulties as to, and suggestion as to enlistment of boys, 19,191.
 Training, 19,146 (page 394), 19,189.

Carr, Colonel, E. E.—continued.

Officers:

Detachment of young officers from battalions for staff purposes in earlier stages of service, drawback attending, 19,263.
 Pay responsibilities, relief from, advocated, 19,278, 19,288.
 Quality, 19,146 (page 393), 19,173.
 Sections, command of, 19,181.
 Lieutenants and sub-lieutenants, 19,271.
 Training, 19,146 (page 393), 19,175, 19,186.
 Pay system, 19,278.
 Regimental Paymaster, appointment advocated, 19,288.

Reservists:

Number of, in 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, 19,149, 19,293, 19,294.
 Quality of, 19,151.

Rifles:

Quality and pattern of, 19,146 (page 394), 19,257.

Scouts, training of men as, advocated, 19,146 (page 394), 19,204, 19,295.

Supplies:

Food, 19,146 (page 394), 19,250.
 Tinned meat, 19,246.

Transport, Regimental:

Advantages of, 19,146 (page 394), 19,240.
 Officers in charge of, regulations as to, 19,243.

Troops in South Africa:

2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, 19,146 (pages 392, 393), 19,147, 19,157, 19,277.
 Quality of men, *see sub-heading* Men.
 Strength of, 19,293.
 Water, sanitation of, 19,251.

CHESHAM, MAJOR-GENERAL, LORD, K.C.B. (*See* Questions 6717-6835).
 Inspector-General of Imperial Yeomanry, 6762.

Artillery, 6829.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

First Contingent:

Quality of, 6768.
 Raising and organisation, 6717.
 Training, 6731.

Second Contingent:

Raising and organisation of, 6731.
 Training in South Africa, 6744.

Age standards, 6758.

Arms, equipment, 6780, 6825.

Drafts to maintain Imperial Yeomanry not allowed, 6725.

Horses, provision of, 6730.

Medical tests of fitness, 6750.

Mounted Infantry, organisation as, 6777.

Numbers eliminated in South Africa, 6732.

Officers:

Difficulty in obtaining, 6722, 6815.
 Numbers eliminated in South Africa, 6732.
 Reserve of, suggested, 6818.
 Selection of, for second contingent, 6731.
 Raising by special agencies, 6799.

Yeomanry, Home:

Future organisation, suggestions as to, 6787.
 Officers of, who served in South Africa, 6793.
 Strength in 1899, 6783.

CHICHESTER, REAR-ADMIRAL SIR E., BART., C.B., C.M.G., R.N. (*See* Questions 9885-10,017.)

Principal Transport officer in South Africa from October, 1899; 9885.

Services in Egypt and during First Boer War, 9958.

Transport by sea:

Admiralty, arrangements as to, satisfactory working of system, 9954.
 Ammunition, landing of, at Cape Town by Boers, reports as to, 10,009.
 Discipline on board transports, 9945.
 Disembarkation, 9891.
 Cape Town, 9891, 9954, 9965, 9971, 9994.
 Demurrage, 9916, 9965.
 Port dues, 9982, 10,002.

Chichester, Rear-Admiral Sir E.—continued.

Transport by sea—continued.

Durban, 9891, 9919.
East London, 9891.
Port Elizabeth, 9891, 9925.
Store ships, and especially hay stores, delay as to, 9909, 9930, 9965.
Horses, 9968.
Hospital ships, fitting up at Durban, 10,014.
Local transport, 9940, 9985.
Prisoners of war on board transports, 9948.
Vessels best suited for transport, 9968.

CLARKE, SIR CHARLES MANSFIELD, BART., C.L.,
Quartermaster-General to the Forces. (See Questions 2342-2594, 2807-2816, and 12,908-13,015.)

Army Service Corps, 2358.

Committees on Remounts, 2357, 12,908, 12,976, 12,980.

Documents handed in by witness :

(1) Numbers and cost of horses, mules, and donkeys procured from all sources for the South African War 1899-1902. Cost and numbers of animals lost. (2) Returns of horses and mules purchased by the Army Remount Department for South Africa from October, 1899, to June, 1902, 12,919, 12,926, 12,990, 12,999, 13,003.

Horses :

Australian contingent, 12,999.
Estimate of number required in time of war, 12,985.
Foreign sources of supply, information as to, 12,919, 12,976, 12,978.
Purchase of, by Remount Department :
Argentinians, 12,952.
Transport, small percentage of loss during, 12,990.
Date of authorisation of provisional expenditure, 12,945.
Direct dealing with foreign landowners and horse-breeders, difficulty as to, 12,965, 12,973.
Hungarian, 12,955, 12,964.
Prices paid, 13,003.
Quality of horses, 12,952, 13,000.
Returns as to purchases, losses, etc., 12,919, 12,926, 12,990, 12,999, 13,003.
Russian, 12,959.

Wastage during the war, 12,928, 12,951, 12,995.

Mules and donkeys, purchase of, 12,919, 12,926, 13,003.

Preparations for the war, 2356, 2363.

Expenditure sanctioned, 2366, 2464, 2475, 2488, 2543.

Supplies :

Adequacy of, 2390.
Purchases in South Africa, 2519.
Reserves at outbreak of war, 2381, 2472.
Sources of supplies of food, 2520, 2568.

Transport (land), 2418, 2534.

Conversion to mule transport, 2418.
Provision of wagons, 2421, 2433.
Re-organisation under Lord Roberts, 2430.

Transport (sea), 2356, 2395.

Dock accommodation in South Africa, 2404, 2498, 2530.
Horse fittings on ships, 2525, 2807.
Relations with Admiralty as to, 2588.

War Office Organisation, 2578 :

Army Board and War Office Council, 2440, 2538.
Clerks, Military, employment of, 2442, 2453, 2482, 2573.
Pay Department, 2358.
Quartermaster-General, duties of, 2349.
Remount Department, 12,910.
Reorganisation, proposals for, 12,919, 12,975, 12,981, 12,988, 13,014.
Veterinary Department, 2358.

CLAYTON, COLONEL F. T., C.B. (See Questions 2595-2806.)

Assistant Quartermaster-General at Headquarters since April, 1902 ; 2595.
Services in South Africa, 2597.

Army Service Corps :

Expenditure, sanction of, 2636.
Personnel in peace, 2703.
Strength taken out 6th October, 2602, 2728.
Subsequent reinforcements, 2603.
Witness in command of personnel in South Africa, 2599.

Reserves of transport material, 2779.

Transport (Land) :

Commandeering of, 2718, 2738, 2794.
Contracts for wagons and oxen, 2709.
Methuen, Lord, advance of, transport in connection with, 2752.
Natal, provision in, 2648, 2691, 2790.
Ox and mule transport compared, 2758.
Preparation in South Africa before arrival of the Army Corps, 2611.
Reorganisation under Lord Roberts, 2655, 2748, 2766, 2800.
Sufficiency of, 2698, 2726, 2768, 2775, 2788.
Traction engines, 2743, 2784.
Wagons and carts, supply of, 2625, 2709, 2729, 2776.

COKE, MAJOR-GENERAL J. TALBOT. (See Questions 20,197-20,273.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 20,197.
Chief Staff Officer before the war at the Curragh Camp of Instruction, and at Aldershot, 20,212. Present at German and French Manœuvres in 1897, 20,213.

Artillery, employment of, at manœuvres, 20,215.

Boer Entrenchments, 20,215.

Cavalry Training, 20,215.

Colonial Forces—South African Colonials :

Imperial Light Infantry :

Command of by witness, 20,202.
Composition and quality of, and behaviour at Spion Kop, 20,252, 20,268.
Officers, 20,252, 20,261.
Terms of enlistment, pay, etc., 20,265.
South African Light Horse—Byng's, 20,262.

Entrenching Tools :

Transport in cars or on mules advocated, 20,215, 20,222.
Wallace spade, 20,215, 20,221.

Entrenchments :

Depth and width of, 20,215.
Training of men in entrenching, 20,215.

Foreign Armies :

Entrenching tools, 20,215, 20,216.
Manœuvres, 20,215, 20,234.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, 20,228, 20,247.

Men :

Training, 20,211, 20,226.

Military Operations—Spion Kop, 20,209.

Entrenchments, defective construction, 20,210, 20,215.

Imperial Light Infantry at, 20,252.

Ammunition expended by, comparison with amount expended by 2nd Battalion Middlesex, 20,255.

Signal messages to Sir C. Warren during, 20,210.

Statement by Major-General Talbot Coke as to, 20,208, 20,270.

Officers :

Staff Officers with witness during operations terminating in Battle of Spion Kop, 20,210.
Training, 20,214, 20,225.

Troops commanded by witness in South Africa, 20,198.

Colonial Forces. (See that sub-heading.)

COLLEN, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDWIN, G.C.I.E. (*See Questions 20,954-21,072.*)

Military Member of Council at the time that the Indian Contingent was sent to South Africa, 20,955.

Indian Army Administration :

Account, detailed, of administration, 21,013.
Army Board, no institution exactly analogous to, in Indian Army administration, 21,070.
Controllers, 21,020.

Position of, 21,021.

Finance Department, 21,016, 21,044.

Intelligence and Mobilisation Department, 21,019, 21,037.

Medical Department, 21,015.

Mobilisation, arrangements as to and period occupied in, 20,972, 21,054.

Officers—Staff officers, provision and training of, 21,062.

Transport, land, 20,995, 21,054.

Uniformity of system with that of England, difficulties arising from lack of, 21,020, 21,032.

Indian contingent for service in South Africa, 20,956.

Additional troops sent out during the war, 20,979.

Composition of force, 20,959.

Dates of warning troops for active service, and of mobilisation, 20,964, 20,967, 20,971, 20,976.

Diminution of Indian garrison resulting from despatch of force, 20,961.

Numbers by which garrison were diminished, 20,984.

Replacement of troops, question as to, 20,978, 20,980.

Horses, mules, and ponies, 20,986, 21,007.

Non-combatants and natives, 20,985.

Officers—Staff officers, 21,061.

Preparations for despatch of force in August 1899, 20,956.

Strength of force, 20,977, 20,980, 20,985.

Supplies, equipment, etc., 21,009.

Boots, 21,009, 21,056.

Transport (Land) :

Regimental transports, 20,992.

Transport (Sea)—arrangements as to, 20,957, 20,966, 21,058.

COLVILLE, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR HENRY E., K.C.M.G., C.B. (*See Questions 16,970-17,126.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 16,970.

Army Organisation, 16,974 (page 288), 17,061.

Army Corps system, disadvantages of, 16,974 (page 289), 17,077.

Artillery :

Ammunition, supply of, and conveyance to the firing line, 16,974 (page 287).

Battery attached to each brigade, suggestion as to, 16,974 (page 289).

Field artillery drill, reform advocated, 16,974 (page 288).

Range, quality and effectiveness of guns, 16,974 (page 288), 17,043.

Machine guns, 16,974 (page 288), 17,057.

Naval guns, 16,974 (page 288), 17,046, 17,090.

Vickers-Maxims (Pom-poms), 16,974 (page 288), 17,058.

Tactics, 16,974 (page 288).

Boers :

Artillery, 16,974 (page 288), 17,043, 17,047.

Discipline, absence of, and weakness in attack, 16,974 (page 288).

Mobility, 16,974 (page 288).

Rifle, 16,974 (page 288).

Shooting, quality as to, 16,988.

Canadian Troops, quality of, 17,117.

Cavalry, deficiency in, at certain stages of the campaign, 16,974 (page 285), 16,975, 16,981, 16,985.

Document—correspondence relative to the recall of Major-General Sir H. E. Colville, K.C.M.G., C.B. (page 296).

Engineer Services, efficiency of, 16,974 (page 288), 17,002.

Colville, Sir H. E.—continued.

Equipment, 16,974 (page 288).

Boots, 16,974 (pages 286, 288), 16,987, 17,113.

Canadian troops, 17,119.

Infantry Tactics, 16,974 (page 288).

Medical Services, 16,974 (page 287).

Deficiency in personnel or equipment, 16,974 (pages 287, 288), 17,041.

Stretchers, light awnings for, advocated, 16,974 (page 288).

Men :

Discipline, importance of, 14,963 (page 285).

Esprit de corps, effect on, of uniforms, regimental names, etc., 17,003.

Pay, increase of, question as to possible effect of, on class of man recruited, 17,001.

Quality of, 16,974 (page 286), 16,987.

Entrenching and cover, 16,974 (page 286), 16,997.

Marching, 16,974 (page 286), 16,987.

Shooting, 16,974 (page 286), 16,988.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,974 (page 286), 16,991, 16,998.

Crawling, training in, 16,974 (page 288), 17,075.

Military Operations :

Belmont, 16,974 (page 285), 16,976.

Graspan, 16,976.

Magersfontein, 16,974 (page 285), 16,978.

Modder River, 16,974 (pages 285, 288), 16,976.

Paardeberg, 16,974 (page 285), 16,983.

Poplar Grove, 16,974 (pages 285, 289).

Sannah's Post and Lindley, 16,974 (pages 285, 289), 17,085, 17,103.

Correspondence relative to the recall of witness, page 296.

Ventersberg and Heilbron, minor operations between, 16,974 (pages 285, 286).

Non-commissioned Officers, selection and duties, 16,974 (page 286), 17,009.

Officers :

Duties of, 16,974 (page 287).

Education of candidates, 16,974 (page 287), 17,013.

Number allotted to a Company, views of witness as to, 16,974 (page 289).

Pay, 16,974 (page 286), 17,011.

Promotion, 16,974 (page 286), 17,015.

Relations with men, 17,003.

Qualities, and suggestions as to training, 16,974 (pages 286, 287), 17,010, 17,023.

Staff officers :

Supply and training, 16,974 (page 287), 17,026.

Reservists, quality of, 16,974 (page 285), 16,994.

Rifles, quality of, 16,974 (page 288), 17,056.

Signallers, Mounted, suggestion as to, 16,974 (page 289), 17,084.

Supplies, 16,974 (page 287).

Emergency ration, defects in, 16,974 (page 287), 17,031, 17,121.

Transport, Land :

Insufficiency of, and over-loading of wagons, 16,974 (page 287), 17,037.

Ox and mule transport compared, 16,964 (page 287), 17,037.

Regimental and general transport compared, 17,061.

Troops in South Africa :

Strength of, at different stages of the war, views as to adequacy of, 16,974 (pages 285, 289), 16,975.

COWANS, LIEUT.-COLONEL J. S., M.V.O. (*See Questions 2817-2930.*)

Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, 2817.

Service in connection with transport embarkations and disembarkations, 2820.

Documents—Returns of the numbers of troops embarked and disembarked, 2890.

Transport by sea :

Admiralty and War Office, arrangements between, 2822.

Australia, transport from, 2898, 2903.

Disembarkations in South Africa, 2885, 2917.

Embarkations of troops and stores, 2851.

Fittings for ships, 2827, 2901, 2922.

India, transport from, 2895.

CRABBE, COLONEL E. M. S., C.B., Commanding 3rd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards. (See Questions 19,735-19,819.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 19,735, 19,738, 19,739.

Boers:

Cover, quality as to, 19,761.
Shooting, quality as to, 19,762.

Equipment:

Clothing, supply and quality of, 19,737, 19,774.
Imperial Yeomanry, serving under witness in South Africa, quality of, 19,785.
Kimberley relief operations, Boer shooting at Battles of Magersfontein, Modder River, and Belmont, 19,765.

Men:

Quality of, 19,737, 19,740.
Cover, 19,737, 19,761.
Drafts sent out to 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, quality of, 19,737, 19,744, 19,798, 19,811.
Shooting, quality as to, 19,763.
Training, 19,756, 19,807.
Discipline, importance of, 19,737, 19,754.
Period necessary, 19,761.

Officers:

Qualities, duties, and training of, 19,737, 19,756, 19,807.
Pay system, Guards Brigade, 19,803.
Reservists, quality of, 19,737, 19,740, 19,813.
Rifles, quality of, 19,737, 19,772.
Supplies, Food, adequacy of, 19,737.
Transport:
Ox and mule compared, 19,737.
Re-organisation under Lord Kitchener, and comparison of Regimental and General Transport, 19,737, 19,776.
Troops commanded by witness in South Africa:
3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, 19,735, 19,738.
Conditions of service, 19,781, 19,816.
(See also sub-heading Men, Officers, etc.)
Columns, command of, 19,737.
Imperial Yeomanry, 19,785.

CRUTCHLEY, COLONEL C., M.V.O., Assistant Adjutant-General for Recruiting. (See Questions 5245 and 5433-5443.)

Imperial Yeomanry, quality of, 5433.
Recruiting, dislocation of system by the war, 5438.
Reserve, of skilled artificers needed, 5440.

DAVIDSON, COLONEL J., C.B. (See Question 6710-6716.)

Work in connection with Imperial Yeomanry Committee, 6710.

DAVIDSON, COLONEL W. L., C.B., Colonel on Staff, Royal Artillery, South Africa. (See Questions 18,620-18,721.)

Services of Witness in South Africa, 18,620.

Ammunition:

Supplies, 18,628.
Classes, range, and effectiveness of guns, 18,628, 18,629.
Heavy battery guns, 18,628, 18,646.
Horse Artillery, 18,628, 18,638.
Abolition of Horse Artillery and use of mobile field guns, views of witness as to this suggestion, 18,643.
Howitzers, 18,628.
Discipline in the field, powers of summary punishment advocated, 18,713.
Field-firing at home, difficulties as to ranges, 18,628, 18,647, 18,693.

Horses:

Quality, supply, and wastage of in South Africa, 18,628, 18,630, 18,654.
Marching with cavalry, wastage of Artillery horses owing to insufficient halts, 18,628, 18,660, 18,698.

Davidson, W. E.—continued.

Paardeberg and Poplar Grove, Artillery at, 18,628, 18,698, 18,702.

Personnel, Artillery:

Men:

Quality and training, 18,628, 18,678.
Classes from which recruited, 18,683.
Period required for training, 18,690.
Standing at ease and marching easy, general Army signal for, advocated 18,712.

Officers:

Position with regard to Divisional Staff, 18,628, 18,666, 18,698.
Quality, training, promotion, and prospects, 18,628, 18,676.
Reservists, 18,689.

Supplies, 18,628.

Tactics, Artillery, 18,628, 18,698, 18,702.
Signals for concentration of fire, 18,628, 18,705.

DAWSON, LIEUTENANT ARTHUR TREVOR, R.N., Director and Superintendent of Artillery with Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, Limited. (See Questions 20,905-20,953.)

Ammunition:

Quick-firing guns, supply of ammunition for, in the field, 20,948.
Supply of, by Messrs. Vickers, Sons and Maxim:
Powers of production of, 20,932 (page 494).
Statement as to supply of, during the war (page 495).

Artillery:

Pom-poms, 20,939.
Quick-firing field guns:
Effectiveness of, 20,941.
Heating of guns, 20,951.
Ranges for proving guns, 20,933.
Supply of, by Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim:
Arrangements with Government to enable firm to keep up plant and staff in time of peace, suggestion as to, 20,907, 20,922, 20,938 (page 494).
Expenditure on account of additional demands during Boer War, 20,915, 20,920 (page 494).
Letter referring to (page 494).
List of Army materials supplied by firm to War Office during the war (page 495).
Losses incurred by firm owing to diversion of part of their trade to Germany during the war, 20,938.
Powers of production of firm of Vickers, Sons, and Maxim (page 494).
Prices charged during the war, 20,929, 20,946.
Comparison with prices—cost of production in Government Ordnance factories, 20,945.

Boers—Artillery, effectiveness of, 20,939, 20,942*, 20,943.

France, artillery in, 20,942, 20,950.

Germany, artillery in:

Fuses for heavy guns, 20,943.
Ranges for proving guns, 20,936.
Supply of artillery, arrangements with manufacturers, 20,937.

DEANE, COLONEL T., C.B., Late Director of the Army Remount Department, India; Chief Staff Officer, Imperial Yeomanry, Home; and Special Service Imperial Yeomanry, South Africa. (See Questions 6673-6709 and 13,043-13,125.)

Committees on Remounts, 13,079, 13,080.

Document handed in by Witness,—Statement on Remount Question, 13,087.

Deane, T—continued.

Horses:

- Advance depôts in South Africa, 13,071.
- Australian, purchase of, 13,052, 13,056, 13,065, 13,094.
- Chicago, supply available from, 13,113.
- Contractors, large, dealing with, recommended in preference to dealing with small contractors or horse-owners, 13,051, 13,088, 13,101, 13,121.
- Hungarian, purchase of, 13,113.
- Indian Remount Department, administration of, 13,045.
- Contracts, system of, *see sub-heading* Contractors.
- Foreign sources of supply, table of information as to, 13,045, 13,077, 13,094.
- Instructions to purchasing officers, 13,077.
- Mobilisation Manuals, 13,045.
- Officers at ports of embarkation and disembarkation, 13,052.
- Prices paid in India, 13,066, 13,121.
- Reserve of horses, 13,079.
- Wastage of horses in India in event of war, estimate of, 13,098.
- Officers of Remount Department in South Africa during the war, 13,069.
- Prices, estimate, in event of purchasing from large contractors only, 13,121.
- Quality of horses, reports on, 13,066.
- Reserves of, necessity for:
 - During the war, 13,071.
 - Future supply, proposals as to, 13,079.
- Sending to the front, defects in railway transport, 13,073.
- South Africa, record of available supply of horses and mules in, Indian system, 13,045, 13,051, 13,094.
- Wastage during the war, 13,071, 13,082, 13,117.
- Imperial Yeomanry:
 - Number of men eliminated from the second contingent, 6682.
 - Officers:
 - Reserve of, suggestion as to, 6677, 6698.
 - Selection of, 6675, 6692.
 - Raising and organisation of the several contingents, 6675.
 - Work of witness in connection with the Imperial Yeomanry Committee, 6673.
- War Office Organisation:
 - Remount Department:
 - Inspector-General of Remounts, authority of, increase advocated, 13,069, 13,071.
 - Staff, increase advocated, 13,080.

DOUGLAS, SIR ARTHUR PERCY, BART., Under Secretary for Defence in the Government of New Zealand. (*See Questions 10,018-10,181.*) 10,181.)

- Compulsory service, law as to, in New Zealand, 10,095, 10,150.
- Contingents sent from New Zealand for service in South Africa, 10,019.
- Casualties, 10,170.
- Character and composition of force, 10,034, 10,161.
- Equipment, 10,020, 10,067.
- Ammunition, 10,032.
- Expenses, how defrayed, 10,021.
- Details of expenditure by Government of New Zealand, 10,165.
- Officers, 10,047.
- Pay:
 - Amount of, 10,040.
 - Difficulties as to, 10,076, 10,117.
- Quality of men, and reports as to conduct in South Africa, 10,074.
- Return of, 10,076, 10,091.
- Spirit animating men, 10,040, 10,044, 10,088, 10,120.
- Strength, total, 10,158.
- Transports, accommodation on, 10,131.
- Document, "Sacrifices made by New Zealand in connection with the war in South Africa," 10,180.
- Equipment, reserves of, 10,029, 10,067.
- Fortified positions in New Zealand, 10,122.
- Cost of, 10,123.
- Garrisoning of, 10,100, 10,126.
- Militia, 10,095, 10,150.

Douglas, Sir Arthur Percy—continued.

- Officers, training, 10,050, 10,096.
- School of Military Instruction, 10,051, 10,145.
- Permanent force, strength of, 10,093.
- Rifle clubs, 10,142, 10,157.
- Volunteers:
 - Capitation allowance, 10,110.
 - Cost of force, 10,062.
 - Equipment, 10,029.
 - Men drawn from, for service in South Africa, 10,020, 10,034.
 - Mounted Infantry, 10,098, 10,112.
 - Officers, training and provision of, 10,050.
 - Period of service, 10,151.
 - Quality of men, and classes from which drawn, 10,035.
 - Training, 10,098.

DOYLE, SIR ARTHUR CONAN, Head Physician in one of the Private Hospitals in South Africa; went through the great epidemic at Bloemfontein. (*See Questions 20,561-20,629.*)

Experiences of witness in South Africa, 20,561, 20,569, 20,603.

Army Medical Service:

- Efficiency of, general observations as to, 20,565, 20,578.
- Equipment, 20,579, 20,617.
- Personnel, strength of, 20,577.

Army Organisation:

- Auxiliary forces, *see that sub-heading*.
- Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 20,605.
- Universal military training, question as to, 20,611.

Auxiliary Forces:

- Extension of, and future use of, 20,598, 20,610.
- Quality of, 20,594, 20,604.

Boers:

- Shooting, quality as to, 20,609.
- Water supply at Bloemfontein cut by, 20,565.

Civilian Surgeons, employment of:

- Qualities shown during the war by, 20,584.
- Reserve of, suggestion as to, 20,585, 20,625.

Colonial Doctors, rule as to passing examinations in United Kingdom before admission to the Army, 20,591.

Enteric outbreak at Bloemfontein, 20,562, 20,564.

Cause of, 20,565.

Men, quality of, 20,594, 20,596, 20,613.

Physique, 20,600.

Shooting, 20,608, 20,614.

Nurses, female, quality of, 20,620.

Private hospitals:

- Excellence of work done by, during the war, 20,568.
- Langman's Hospital, 20,570.

Reservists, quality of, 20,601.

Sanitation:

- Lectures on, in barracks, suggestion as to, 20,622.
- Punishment of breach of sanitary laws as a military offence, suggestion as to, 20,620.

War Office Organisation:

- Advisory Medical Board, 20,590.

DUCK, VETERINARY COLONEL F., C.B. (*See Questions 3147-3366.*)

Director-General of the Army Veterinary Department from 1897 till 1902, 3147; duties of department, 3155, 3354.

Equipment, veterinary, 3201, 3260.

Horses:

- Class best suited to South Africa, 3217, 3277.
- Diseases in South Africa, 3354.

Preparations for the war, 3266, 3343.

Veterinary Department:

- Complement to an Army Corps, 3185.
- Duties of, 3155, 3354.
- Grievances in Department, 3177, 3325.
- Personnel in South Africa, 3165, 3275, 3338.
- Relations with Remount Department, 3225.
- Strength of, 3162, 3246, 3321, 3332.
- Training of veterinary officers, 3169.

DUNNE, COLONEL W. A., C.B. (*See Questions 2931-3146.*)

Assistant Quartermaster-General at Headquarters since January 1900; 2931; duties, in supplying food, forage, medical comforts, fuel, etc., for the Army, 2933.

Contracts, method of making in peace and in war, 2948, 3031, 3107, 3127.

Supplies:

Food stuffs sent out previous to beginning of the war, 2938.

Inspection, method of, 3073, 3112, 3118.

FORESTIER-WALKER, GENERAL SIR F. W., K.C.B., G.C.M.G. (*See Questions 13,636-13,838.*)

Services of Witness in South Africa, 13,636, 13,677, 13,687, 13,688, 13,704, 13,726, 13,729, 13,762, 13,766, 13,774.

Advanced positions, proposals for occupation of, 13,675, 13,681.

Army Corps, despatch of, disembarkation, and send-up country of troops, 13,704, 13,726.

Army Service Corps, 13,709, 13,750.

Artillery in South Africa before the war, 13,640, 13,688, 13,692.

Boers, attitude of, 13,692:

Probable disinclination for war, if large force had been stationed in South Africa in June, 1899, 13,789.

Bridges:

Non-destruction of, 13,800.

Occupation of, 13,689, 13,697, 13,711.

Colonial Forces:

Correspondence as to casualties, embarkation, etc., 13,774.

South African Corps, levy of in Cape Colony and Natal, 13,701.

Commandeering, correspondence with Attorney-General and Lord Milner as to, 13,812.

Defence Schemes and Military Movements in South Africa:

Advance, probable line of, question as to, 13,670, 13,706.

Butler, Sir W., scheme prepared by, 13,661, 13,678, 13,784.

Cape Colony, 13,688.

Troops:

Irregular corps, levy of, 13,701.

Number available at outbreak of war, 13,640, 13,689.

Natal, 13,678:

Troops:

Disposition of, before the war, 13,681, 13,687.

Irregular Corps, levy of, 13,701.

Number available, 13,640, 13,679.

Documents—Reports sent by Witness to Secretary of State, 13,743, and page 95.

Dundee, question as to occupation of, 13,682.

Glencoe, occupation of, 13,683, 13,687.

Green Point Camp, 13,722, 13,823.

Horses:

Glanders outbreak at Green Point Camp, 13,826.

Officers in charge of, during transport, 13,783.

Purchase of, 13,642, 13,698.

Wastage of, 13,770.

Hospital and Ambulance preparations, 13,722.

Instructions to Witness, questions as to, 13,657, 13,796.

Intelligence officers, reports by on bases, depôts, etc., 13,663.

Invalids, sending home, duties of Witness in connection with, 13,766.

Kimberley:

Artillery and troops at, 13,688, 13,697.

Scheme for defence of, 13,664.

Ladysmith, defence of, 13,681, 13,685.

Laine's Nek, proposal made to occupy, 13,675, 13,683.

Forestier-Walker, Sir F. W.—continued.

Lines of Communication:

Command of, given to witness, 13,638, 13,706. Manual on, suggested, 13,753, 13,781, 13,794.

Officers:

Chief Staff Officer to General Commanding Lines of Communication, suggestion as to, 13,758.

General Commanding Lines of Communication, suggestion that he should be supreme in his command, 13,758.

Selection of in future campaigns, suggestions as to, 13,781.

Supply of, difficulty of, 13,750, 13,764.

Mafeking, defence of, 13,688.

Maps of South Africa, 13,785.

Milner, Sir A., communications of witness with, 13,638, 13,683, 13,688, 13,720, 13,813, 13,829.

Orange Free State and Cape Colony, relations between, 13,692.

Political situation, effect of, on preparations for the war, 13,688, 13,692, 13,720, 13,724.

Prisoners, control of, 13,762.

Reports sent by witness to Secretary of State, and to Lord Roberts, 13,743, 13,756.

Stormberg, Naaupoort, and de Aar, occupation of, 13,689, 13,691, 13,710.

Supplies and Stores:

Meetings of officers to discuss sending on of supplies, etc., 13,759.

Requisitioned from England, 13,737.

Transport (Land):

Adequacy of, 13,817.

Horses and mules, purchase of, 13,642.

Ox wagons, contract for, 13,653.

Transport (Sea):

Disembarkations, 13,710, 13,731, 13,740.

Delay, alleged, as to store ships, views of witness as to, 13,792, 13,820.

Satisfactory working of, by Admiralty, 13,734, 13,819, 13,822.

Troops:

Army Corps, *see that sub-heading.*

Drafts for regiments up country, 13,770.

India and Mediterranean, despatch of troops from, 13,667, 13,673.

Strength of:

Estimate of numbers required for military operations in South Africa, 13,676.

In South Africa in September 1899, 13,640, 13,656.

FRENCH, MAJOR-GENERAL, SIR GEORGE A., K.C.M.G. (*See Questions 8017-8342.*)

Services in the Colonies, 8017, 8160, 8305.

Arms and Ammunition, Stores of, for Australia, how obtained, 8104, 8169, 8289.

Artillery sent to South Africa from New South Wales, 8217.

Canada:

Acceptance by Home Authorities of offers of contingents, 8039.

Horses, suitability for military purposes, 8335.

Mounted Police, 1873 to 1876, organisation of, 8308.

Quality of men as to riding and horse-mastership, 8327.

China, Australian Contingent for service in, 8210.

Contingents, Australian, for service in South Africa, 8019.

First Contingent, raising and organisation of, 8028.

Decision of Imperial Authorities as to character of force, pay, transport, etc., 8033, 8297.

Second Contingent, raising and organisation of, 8058.

Third Contingent, raising and organisation of, 8089.

Artillery, 8217.

Composition of contingents, 8076, 8080, 8082.

Cost of contingents, 8257.

Dates of sailing of contingents, 8043, 8059, 8063, 8090, 8097.

French, Sir G. A.—continued.

Contingents—continued.

- Drafts sent out as reinforcements, 8106.
- Equipment, 8040, 8044, 8047, 8067, 8094.
- Arms and Ammunition, 8071.
- Horses, provision, 8019, 8030, 8204, 8218, 8236, 8297.
- Medical Examination of men, 8182.
- Medical Unit, 8235.
- New South Wales Lancers, 8043, 8195.
- Officers, 8071, 8238.
- Regular Army, Officers who had served in, 8088.
- Training, previous to war, 8085.
- Pay, 8021, 8033, 8142, 8166.
- Quality of men, and classes from which drawn, 8188, 8208.
- Riding and horse-mastership, 8301, 8327.
- Strength of, 8030, 8044, 8061, 8065, 8090.
- Total for whole war, 8048.
- Suggestions as to Colonial Contingents made in 1899, and replies of Imperial Authorities thereto, 8019.
- Telegram from Secretary of State for War, 8033, 8297.
- Transport, 8033, 8062, 8091.
- Federal Parliament, Military Estimates cut down by, in 1902, 8255.
- Officers of Regular Army and Reservists, entering Colonial Service, position of, 8121, 8276, 8294.
- Regulars, Militia, and Volunteers, existing forces of, in Australia, 8273, 8282.
- Scheme for providing Colonial Reserve for Imperial Service, 8129.
- Cost per man, estimate of, 8136.
- Horses, provision, 8177.
- Imperial Government and Commonwealth Government, respective rights of, and obligations as to expenses, 8259, 8286.
- Number of men available, estimate of, 8176.
- Officers, 8174, 8239.
- Pay, 8137, 8173, 8258, 8263, 8287.
- Selection of officers and men, 8174.

FRENCH, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL, Sir J. D., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., General Officer Commanding First Army Corps, Aldershot. (See Questions 17,127-17,447.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 17,127.

Army Organisation, 17,129 (page 302), 17,284, 17,363.

(See also sub-headings Cavalry and Mounted Infantry.)

Artillery:

- Despatch before infantry in over-sea campaign advocated, 17,166.
- Horses and equipment, 17,129 (page 301).
- Machine guns, method of carrying, 17,129 (page 302).
- Range and quality of guns, 17,129 (page 302), 17,371.
- Auxiliary Forces, qualities shown during the war by, 17,129 (page 300).

Boers:

- Number in the field, and mobility of, 17,366.

Cavalry:

- Arms, 17,129 (page 300), 17,222, 17,230, 17,377.
- Artillery with, question as to, 17,375.
- Despatch before infantry in over-sea expeditions advocated, 17,129 (page 300), 17,164.
- Equipment, weight of, 17,129 (page 301).
- European warfare of the future, importance of cavalry in, 17,240.
- Qualities shown during the war by, 17,129 (pages 300, 301), 17,205.

Reserve:

- Organisation and despatch to base overseas simultaneously with mobilisation of regiment, suggestion as to, 17,129 (page 300).
- Weight of reservists, 17,129 (page 301), 17,253.
- Transport—light regimental transport, provision with cavalry advocated, 17,129 (page 301), 17,194.
- Training, 17,129 (page 301), 17,236.

French, Sir J. D. —continued.

Colonial Forces:

- Ambulance wagons, 17,129 (page 302).
- Australian, 17,379.
- Canadians, quality as to scouting, 17,245.
- Qualities shown during the war by, 17,129 (pages 300, 301).
- South African Colonials, 17,259.
- Training as cavalry, question as to, 17,242.

Engineers:

- Mounted engineers with Cavalry Brigades, 17,129 (page 302), 17,352.

Farriers, shortage of, 17,129 (page 302).

Horses:

- Aldershot—provision of horses for Cavalry, Dragoons, and Mounted Infantry, 17,335.
- Re-organisation of present system, and establishment of reserve dépôts advocated, 17,312, 17,325, 17,330.
- Supply, quality, and wastage of, during the war, 17,129 (pages 300, 302), 17,178, 17,312.
- Reserve, insufficiency of, 17,129 (page 300), 17,178, 17,323.
- Veterinary report for month ending 31st May 1900, 17,129 (page 318), 17,348.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, 17,439.

Medical Services, adequacy of, 17,129 (page 302).

Men:

- Qualities shown during the war by, 17,129 (pages 300, 301).
- Training, suggestions as to, 17,129 (pages 300, 301), 17,214, 17,259, 17,262.

Military Operations:

Cape Colony and Orange Free State:

- Colesberg, operations at, troops available for, 17,129 (page 300), 17,161, 17,170.
- Kimberley Relief Operations and operations culminating in the capture of Bloemfontein:
- Horses, wastage during, 17,129 (page 302), 17,186.
- Supplies during, 17,129 (page 302).
- Troops, strength of, 17,129 (pages 300, 302), 17,177, 17,186.

Natal:

- Boers opposed to British at Ladysmith, numbers in earlier part of campaign, 17,366.
- Dundee, occupation of, 17,141.
- Lombard's Kop, retirement of cavalry from, 17,150.
- Operations proposed by witness on 27th October 1889, 17,130.
- Troops with Sir George White, strength of, adequacy of, views of witness as to, 17,129 (page 300), 17,130.
- Question as to number which would have been necessary to drive Boers behind the Biggarsberg, and hold them in check, 17,143.

Orange Free State and Transvaal, operations culminating in capture of Pretoria:

- Horses, casualties in, 17,129 (page 318), 17,186.
- Supplies during, 17,129 (page 317).
- Troops, strength of, 17,129 (page 300).

Mounted Infantry:

- Aldershot, proposed mounted infantry camp at, 17,339, 17,397.
- Organisation of, question as to, 17,378.
- Qualities shown during the war by, 17,129 (page 301), 17,171, 17,211, 17,223.
- Training and use of, 17,214, 17,240, 17,398.
- Mounted Rifles, training and use of, 17,220, 17,226.
- Non-commissioned Officers, duties of, 17,129 (page 301).

Officers:

- Qualities shown during the war by, and suggestion as to training, 17,129 (page 301), 17,209, 17,297, 17,391, 17,392.

Staff Officers:

- Training, selection, and duties of, 17,129 (page 301), 17,268.
- With witness in South Africa, 17,270.
- Rifles, quality of, 17,129 (pages 300, 302).
- Signallers, mounted, 17,384.

French, Sir J. D.—continued.

Supplies—Food and Forage :

Quantity and quality of, 17,129 (pages 301, 302), 17,183.

Tinned meat, 7lb. tins, objection to, 17,129 (page 302), 17,349.

Transport :

Cavalry, provision of light regimental transport for, suggested, 17,129 (page 301), 17,194.

Ox and mule compared, 17,129 (page 302).

Regimental and general transport compared, 17,201.

Troops in South Africa :

Strength of, adequacy of at different stages of the war, views as to, 17,129 (pages 300, 302), 17,130, 17,162, 17,170, 17,178, 17,186.

War Office Organisation :

Decentralisation as to financial matters and discipline, extent of, 17,401.

Yeomanry :

Organisation as mounted infantry, question as to, 17,227.

FRIPP, DR. ALFRED DOWNING, C.V.O., C.B., M.S., M.B., F.R.C.S. (See Questions 11,813-11,965.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 11,813.

Advisory Board, Medical, *see* sub-heading "War Office."

Civilian Physicians and Surgeons serving during the war, 11,866, 11,874.

Director-General, improved status of, 11,827.

Enteric, 11,864, 11,869.

Hospitals :

Civil Hospitals, provision of Field Hospitals by, in time of peace, views as to, 11,874.

Regular Military Hospitals :

Civil population, treating in, views as to, 11,882.

Convalescent Camps, advocated, 11,852, 11,916.

Improvements and expenditure advocated, 11,889, 11,949.

Management of, in South Africa, 11,820.

Private soldiers, view of as to, 11,882, 11,912.

Yeomanry Hospitals :

Book on, by Lady Howe, 11,956.

Comparison with Regular Military Hospitals, 11,820.

Convalescent Camps, organisation of, 11,852.

Personnel, 11,846, 11,856, 11,869, 11,919.

Size of, 11,816.

Royal Army Medical Corps :

Equipment, 11,860, 11,870.

Personnel :

Dental Surgeons and Masseurs advocated, 11,919.

Nurses, female, employment of, 11,875, 11,963.

Officers :

Candidates, increase in number of, 11,935.

Colonel-in-Command, duties of, purely administrative, 11,835.

Promotions, 11,828, 11,830, 11,909.

Quality, 11,831, 11,840, 11,899.

Officers and privates of Regular Army, views as to Army Medical Corps, 11,882, 11,899.

Raising of standard, means advocated, 11,826, 11,935.

Reserve :

Civilians as, views as to, 11,873.

Quality of existing Reserve, 11,938.

Status, 11,827, 11,844.

Training and opportunities for practice, 11,827, 11,893, 11,915, 11,930.

Orderlies, 11,846.

Sanitary officer, appointment advocated, 11,923.

Sanitation, importance of, 11,863, 11,891, 11,896, 11,930, 11,965.

Frupp, Dr Alfred Downing—continued.

War Office Organisation :

Advisory Board, Medical :

Constitution of, 11,824.

Procedure, form of, 11,924, 11,945.

Reforms instituted and proposed by, 11,826, 11,838, 11,878, 11,891, 11,933, 11,952.

Director-General, Army Medical Service, status of, 11,827.

GATACRE, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR W. F., K.C.B., D.S.O.

Commanded a Force in North-East Cape Colony ;

Commanded a Force in Southern Orange River Colony. (See Questions 16,771-16,917.)

Army Organisation :

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 16,820.

Universal military training of boys of 18 for six months, question as to, 16,858.

Artillery :

Ammunition :

Lyddite, effect of, 16,772, 16,835.

Shrapnel, effect of, 16,831.

Range and quality of guns, 16,772, 16,830, 16,845.

Borders :

Ammunition, 16,797.

Artillery, 16,772, 16,831.

Entrenchments, 16,772.

Ruses to mislead enemy's fire, 16,772, 16,795.

Shooting, quality as to, 16,772, 16,794.

Colonial Troops—South African Corps, 16,875.

Horses :

Quality of, and wastage in South Africa, 16,772, 16,824.

Transport by sea, 16,825, 16,887.

Infantry Tactics :

Attack and advance, 16,772, 16,813.

Manœuvring Areas :

Provision of, 16,772, 16,806, 16,811, 16,846, 16,890.

South Africa, suitability of country for training purposes, 16,814.

Men :

Class from which recruited, 16,818.

Qualities shown in the war by, 16,772.

Entrenching and cover, 16,772, 16,806.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 16,772, 16,823.

Intelligence, physique, and morale, 16,772, 16,807.

Marching, 16,772, 16,804.

Shooting, 16,772, 16,794.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,772, 16,790, 16,806, 16,811, 16,815.

Military Operations :

Reddersberg, 16,843, 16,898.

Stormberg, 16,779, 16,786, 16,892.

Militia :

Quality of, and suggestions as to training, 16,772, 16,799, 16,808.

Manœuvring area, annual change of views of witness as to, 16,890.

Mounted Infantry :

Importance of mounted infantry, or of cavalry working as mounted infantry in future warfare, 16,772.

Organisation, suggestion as to, 16,789, 16,792.

Troops trained by witness in South Africa, 16,778, 16,868.

Non-commissioned Officers :

Initiative, importance of, and suggestions as to training in, 16,772, 16,815, 16,848.

Officers :

Initiative, importance of, and suggestions as to training in, 16,815, 16,848.

Staff Officers :

Training, 16,842.

With witness in South Africa, 16,839.

Reservists, qualities shown during the war by, 16,809.

Rifles :

Quality of, and suggestion as to safe button-pressing rifle, 16,772, 16,836.

Catacre, Sir W. F.—continue

Troops with witness in South Africa :

- Colonial troops—South Africa Corps, 16,875.
- Militia, 16,798.
- Mounted infantry, trained by witness and subsequently transferred to other forces, 16,778, 16,868.
- Strength of, inadequacy of, 16,771, 16,772, 16,773, 16,866, 16,896.
- Yeomanry, manœuvring areas, advantages of changing, 16,890.

GODLEY, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL A. J., Irish Guards.
(See Questions 20,021-20,196.)

- Services of witness in South Africa, 20,022.
- Commanding Mounted Infantry of the First Army Corps at Aldershot, 20,023.

- Arms for Mounted Infantry, 20,028.
- Artillery with Mounted Infantry, 20,021.
- Certificates granted to men, 20,062.
- Colonial Mounted Infantry :
 - Horses, 20,141.
 - Officers, number of, 20,176.
 - Services of witness with, 20,166, 20,170.
- Drafts of Mounted Infantry to supply casualties in time of war, 20,121, 20,139.
- Equipment, 20,021, 20,040, 20,178.
- Farriers and saddlers, training, 20,021.
- Horses, provision of, for mounted infantry, 20,021, 20,140, 20,152, 20,180.
- Led horses, disposal of, 20,021.
- Infantry Regiments :
 - Complement on war strength, 20,135.
 - Weakening of, during the war, by organisation of mounted infantry, 20,124, 20,139.
- Manœuvres, use of Mounted Infantry at, 20,111, 20,138.
- Manœuvring Areas, provision, 20,021.
- Men, Mounted Infantry :
 - Qualities shown during the war by, 20,067, 20,167.
 - Selection, 20,021.
 - Training, *see that sub-heading*.
 - Weight for mounted infantry, 20,046.
- Mobilisation of Mounted Infantry, 20,021, 20,120.
- Non-commissioned officers, number of, 20,185.
- Officers, Mounted Infantry :
 - Adjutant, provision of, discussion as to, 20,161.
 - Number of, 20,172, 20,181.
 - Quality as to horsemastership shown during the war by, 20,070.
 - Supervision of training of men, 20,068, 20,157.
 - Training, *see that sub-heading*.
- Organisation of Mounted Infantry, various systems of, 20,021, 20,098.
- System advocated by witness, 20,104.
- Reservists, Mounted Infantry, 20,021, 20,052, 20,120, 20,137.
- Strength of Mounted Infantry, 20,021, 20,140.
- Complement of Mounted Infantry regiment, 20,136.
- Proportion of whole Army, 20,021, 20,114.
- War establishment, 20,021, 20,119, 20,181.
- Training of Officers and Men, 20,021, 20,043, 20,104.
- Cavalry training undesirable for mounted infantry, 20,029, 20,037.
- Horsemanship, horsemastership, and veterinary knowledge, 20,021, 20,051, 20,054, 20,071.
- Shoeing of horses, 20,079.
- Number of battalions broken up to secure 1,100 men for training, 20,171.
- Number of men to be trained in 1903, 20,147.
- Period and duration of training, 20,021, 20,043.
- Provisional Handbook published in 1899, 20,089.
- Reservists, *see that sub-heading*.
- Schools for Training, 20,024, 20,071, 20,092.
- Horses, provision at, 20,144, 20,152.
- Number of men to be trained at in 1903, 20,147, 20,150.
- Staff of instructors, 20,155.
- Shooting, training in, 20,021, 20,057.
- Mounted men, shooting from saddle, 20,059.
- Uniformity of system advocated, 20,021, 20,084.
- Use of Mounted Infantry in modern warfare, 20,021, 20,027, 20,041.

GRAFF, MR. STEPHEN J., C.B. (See Questions 9519-9781.)

Assistant Director of Transports, 9519.

Transport (Sea) :

- Accommodation of troops, victualling, etc. general arrangements as to, 9602, 9678, 9738.
- Admiralty :
 - Arrangements with, general statement as to, 9521.
 - Cost of transport charged to Army, 9522.
 - Preparations on outbreak of war, 9529, 9532, 9687.
 - Expenditure, authorisation, 9540.
 - Notice as to preparations, date of, 9536.
 - Staff of Transport Department, increase of, 9545.
 - Working of system, 9683.
- Cargo not carried by troop transports, 9583.
- City Imperial Volunteers, arrangements as to, 9684.
- Coaling of vessels, 9562, 9585, 9710.
- Colonial contingents, arrangements as to, 9668, 9672.
- Demurrage, cost of, 9665, 9707, 9744.
- Detention of ships at the Cape, 9660, 9747.
- Embarkation of troops :
 - Date of, 9545.
 - Number of troops, horses, and mules to be conveyed, 9537, 9540, 9545.
- Engagement of transports from shipowners, 9540.
- Charges made by owners, 9548, 9697, 9714.
- Foreign countries, vessels with horses, mules, and stores from, 9732.
- Period of engagement, 9715.
- Standing engagements impracticable, 9546, 9693, 9699.
- Fittings for ships, 9548, 9551.
- Cost of refitting ships, estimate of, 9781.
- Horse fittings :
 - New fittings, purchase of, delay as to, 9524, 9534, 9540.
 - Regulations as to, 9761.
- Reserve stores of, 9534.
- Freight ships, distinction from store ships and transports, 9644, 9651.
- Hospital ships, number provided, 9536.
- Imperial Yeomanry, arrangements as to, 9684.
- India, transport from, 9736.
- Losses, and delays caused by accidents, 9618, 9772, 9781.
- Number, total, of transports, 9552.
- Prisoners, transports used as depôts for, 9772.
- Size and speed of vessels, 9552, 9554, 9562, 9774.
- Stores, engagements and sending out on freight, 9640.

GRANT, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL S. C. N., C.M.G., R.E.
(See Questions 721-867.)

Services in Intelligence Division and in South Africa, 721, 853.

Maps in South Africa :

- Cape Colony, 783.
- Difficulties with regard to mapping, 761, 817, 865.
- General mapping, 808, 860.
- Ladysmith :
 - Natal north of, preparation of map, in 1896, 728, 769, 781, 800, 839, 848.
 - Natal south of, 736, 776.
- Orange Free State and Transvaal maps and reconnaissance sketches, 753, 821, 836, 840.
- Use of maps in practice, 854.

GROVE, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR COLERIDGE, K.C.B.,
9376-9518.

Military Secretary from 1895 to 1901, 9376.
Duties as Military Secretary, 9378.

- Army organisation, need of a principle, 9470, 9505.
- Colonies, employment of officers in, 9457.
- Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 9470, 9483.
- Militia, supply of officers, 9382.
- Mobilisation, working of the scheme, 9467.

Grove, Sir Coleridge—continued.

Officers :

- Appointment of, 9414.
- Colonial appointments, supply of officers for, 9457.
- Education of candidates for the Army, 9401.
- Promotion, 9418, 9497.
- Reserve of, to serve with Militia, etc., suggestion as to, 9383.

Staff Officers :

- Appointments for South Africa, 9438.
- Rotation of Staff and regimental employments suggested, 9451.
- Selection of, 9437.
- Training, Staff College system, 9448.
- Supply of officers in relation to the demands of the war, 9381.
- Means of supplementing supply, 9382.

War Office Organisation :

- Centralisation of business, effect on, of questions asked in Parliament, 9487.
- Commander-in-Chief, position of, 9470, 9515.
- Comparison of War Office with business institutions, 9470, 9515.
- Duties of Military Secretary, 9378.
- Secretary of State, position of, 9470, 9487.

GUBBINS, COLONEL W. L., A.M.S., M.V.O. (*See Questions 3900-4023.*)

Assistant Director of the Army Medical Service Corps from March, 1895, to December, 1899, 3900. Service in South Africa, 3901.

Ambulance wagons, 3957 :

- Purchase in open market, views as to, 3885.
- Civilian surgeons, employment of, 3913.
- Convalescent camps, 3951, 3954, 3956.

Equipment, medical, 3917.

- Beds, 3943, 3949, 3980.
- Clothing—Pyjamas, 3946.
- Contracts, regulations as to, 3991.
- Departments responsible for supply of, 3992.
- Drugs and medical supplies, 3947.
- Hospital tents, 3946, 3994.
- Revision in 1897, 3962.
- Supplies, general observations as to, 3917, 3926, 3928, 3943, 3997.
- X Rays, 3979.

Establishment, basis of and provision for expansion of, 3927, 3931, 3942.

Foreign armies, equipment of, 3980.

Hospitals, additional advocated, 3954.

Mobilisation, medical, 3937.

Personnel, medical, 3908.

Nurses, 3955.

Officers, training and opportunities for practice, 4002.

Orderlies :

- Supply of, 3920, 3963.
- Training, 4019.
- Sanitary officer, appointment advocated, 3962.
- Strength of personnel, 3919, 3932, 3937, 3943, 3969.

Preparations for the war (medical), 3907, 3956, 3969, 3976.

Supplies (medical), 3947, 3991.

Food for hospitals, 3951.

Transport for medical purposes, 3961.

Hospital trains, 3961.

Voluntary aid :

- Red Cross Central Committee, 3963.
- St. John's Brigade, 3924, 3963, 3985.

HAIG, COLONEL D., C.B., A.D.C. (*See Questions 19,299-19,554.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 19,299 (page 401), 19,300.

Army Organisation :

Army Corps system :

- Cavalry, organisation under, 19,361.
- Staffs, organisation under, 19,311.

(*See also Cavalry, Mounted Infantry, and Infantry.*)

Artillery Tactics, 19,299 (page 403).

Bloemfontein :

- Delay at, 19,377.
- March on, deficiency in supply of horses during, 19,299 (page 402), 19,374.

Haig, Colonel D.—continued.

Boers :

Horses, 19,419, 19,428.

Cavalry :

- Arms, and use of, in modern warfare, 19,299 (page 403), 19,468, 19,502, 19,536.
- Efficiency of Cavalry impaired in South Africa by appropriation of horses for Mounted Infantry, 19,299 (page 402), 19,375, 19,38.

Organisation :

- Absence of previously to, and in earlier stages of the war, 19,299 (page 402), 19,342.
- Suggestion as to future organisation, and provision of a Cavalry Reserve, 19,299 (page 402).

(*See also sub-headings Men, Officers, etc.*)

Colonial Troops :

Australian troops.

- Ambulance, 19,533, 19,537.
- Officers, provision, 19,299 (page 403), 19,545.
- Medical services, 19,299 (page 403).
- Officers, provision, 19,299 (page 403), 19,545.
- Quality as to horsemanship and horsemastership, 19,299 (page 403).
- South African Corps :
 - Kitchener's Horse and Roberts' Horse 19,299 (page 402), 19,388
 - Town Guards, 19,302.

Diamond Hill, action at, 19,539.

Engineer Services :

Mounted Engineers, necessity for, 19,299 (page 403).

Equipment—Cavalry :

- Weight of, reduction advocated, 19,299 (pages 403, 404, 405), 19,445.
- Farriers, deficiency in, 19,299 (pages 402, 403).
- German Cavalry, period of training, 19,486.

Horses :

- Price of cavalry horses, 19,443.
- Quality of, 19,299 (page 403), 19,460, 19,493.
- Size of cavalry horse, 19,463.
- Supply of, 19,299 (pages 402, 403), 19,367.
- Remounts during rapid cavalry movements, 19,400.
- Led horses with troops, suggestion as to, 19,408.
- Wastage of, in South Africa, 19,299 (page 403), 19,374, 19,406.

Infantry :

- Expenditure on, importance of, as compared with expenditure on other arms, 19,299 (page 404).
- Tactics, 19,299 (page 404).

Kimberley, march on :

- Cavalry, organisation, 19,343.
- Horses, supply and wastage of, 19,374, 19,401, 19,406.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, 19,481.

Medical Services, 19,299 (page 403), 19,533.

Men—Cavalry Division :

- Quality of, 19,299 (page 402).
- Esprit de corps and the territorial system, 19,299 (page 402), 19,436, 19,549.
- Physique and intelligence, 19,299 (page 402), 19,430.
- Training, suggestions as to, 19,299 (page 404), 19,340, 19,468, 19,481.
- Horsemanship and horsemastership, 19,299 (page 404), 19,488.
- Period necessary, 19,484.
- Scouts, *see that sub-heading.*
- Shooting, 19,299 (page 404).
- Weight of cavalry man, 19,299 (page 405), 19,452.

Men—Infantry, training as Mounted Infantry, 19,502.

Mounted Infantry :

- Arms and use of, in modern warfare, 19,299 (page 402), 19,468, 19,502.
- Efficiency of Cavalry affected by organisation of Mounted Infantry in South Africa, 19,299 (page 402), 19,375, 19,387.
- Quality of, 19,299 (page 402), 19,388.

Haig, Colonel D.—continued.

Non-commissioned Officers :

Duties of, 19,299 (page 404).

Sergeant, period taken in reaching efficiency, 19,491.

Officers :

Staff Officers :

Organisation :

Absence of, previously to the war, 19,299 (page 402), 19,305.

Suggestion as to organisation in time of peace, 19,359, 19,364.

Selection of his staff by General, views of witness as to, 19,299 (pages 402, 404), 19,315.

Training, 19,299 (page 404), 19,305, 19,321.

Training of Cavalry Officers, suggestions as to, 19,299 (pages 404, 405), 19,334.

Reservists :

Esprit de corps, effect on, of transferring men from one regiment to another, 19,299 (page 402), 19,436.

Quality, 19,433.

Weight of Reservists, 19,299 (pages 402, 405), 19,430.

Rhodes, Mr. Cecil, and De Beers directors, horses provided by, 19,377.

Rifles, patterns of, 19,476.

Scouts, organisation and training of, suggestions as to, 19,299 (page 405), 19,485, 19,510, 19,519.

Arms and pay, 19,299 (pages 405, 406).

Signallers' Corps, formation of, 19,299 (page 402), 19,497.

Supplies of food and forage, 19,299 (page 403), 19,459.

Transport :

Light regimental transport with cavalry, provision advocated, 19,299 (pages 403, 404), 19,444, 19,456.

Supplies, transport for, adequacy of, 19,459.

Troops commanded by witness in South Africa, 19,299 (pages 401, 402), 19,301.

War Office Organisation :

Remount Department, 19,299 (page 403).

Supply services, 19,299 (page 403).

HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR BRUCE, K.C.B.
(See Questions, 17,448-17,548.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 17,448.

Artillery :

Officers, training, 17,527.

Range, quality and mobility of guns, 17,537.

Naval guns, 17,540.

Boers :

Artillery, 17,537, 17,544.

Intelligence, 17,468, 17,469.

Shooting, 17,477.

Colonial Troops :

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 17,466.

Intelligence, 17,469.

Engineer Services, 17,532.

Equipment :

Boots, 17,462.

Horses :

Supply, quality of, and wastage in South Africa, 17,532.

Imperial Yeomanry, second contingent :

Shooting, capacity as to, 17,462.

Training, 17,483.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, 17,530.

Men :

Quality of, 17,462.

Entrenching and cover, 17,468.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 17,466.

Marching, 17,462.

Physique, morale, and intelligence, 17,468.

Shooting, 17,462, 17,477.

Training :

Shooting practice, short ranges near barracks advocated, 17,473.

Strength of companies, increase of, probable effect of upon training, 17,483.

Hamilton, Sir Bruce—continued.

Mounted Infantry :

Composition of columns commanded by witness in South Africa, 17,459.

Deficiency in numbers of mounted men with Ladysmith Relief Force, 17,453, 17,460.

Future organisation of, suggestions as to, 17,532, 17,534.

Qualities shown during the war by, and suggestions as to training, 17,466, 17,532, 17,535.

Non-commissioned Officers :

Duties of, 17,527.

Training, schools of instruction, 17,484.

Officers :

Promotion, 17,484.

Qualities, and suggestions as to training, 17,484, 17,514, 17,527.

Staff Officers :

Training and selection of, 17,527.

With witness in South Africa, 17,528.

Supply of higher grade officers during the war, deficiency of, 17,516.

Supplies, adequacy of, 17,532.

Troops in South Africa, strength of, views as to adequacy of, 17,453, 17,460.

HAMILTON, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR IAN, K.C.B.,
D.S.O. (See Questions 10,857-10,940 and 13,839-14-134.)

Services in South Africa, 13,840, 13,849, 13,888, 13,903, 13,923, 13,938, 14,051, 14,057, 14,068.

Military Secretary at the War Office, 10,855, 13,848.

Army Organisation :

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 13,941 (page 107), 13,953, 14,024, 14,075, 14,114.

Q.M.G. work, see sub-heading Officers—Staff Officers.

Artillery :

Field Artillery :

Comparison with Horse Artillery, 13,941 (page 111), 13,984, 13,986.

Range of field guns, 13,941 (page 111), 14,083.

Qualities shown during war by officers and men, and suggestions as to future artillery tactics, 13,941 (page 111).

Boers :

Attack and pursuit, their absence of vigour in, in earlier part of campaign, 13,869, 13,886, 13,941 (page 109).

Artillery, range of, 14,084.

Cavalry :

Arms, 13,941 (page 110).

Officers, selection, 13,941 (page 110).

Qualities, 13,941 (page 110).

Training, suggestions as to, 13,941 (page 110), 13,957.

South Africa or Canada, training in, suggested, 13,953, 14,025, 14,032, 14,078.

City Imperial Volunteers, quality of, 13,904, 13,952

Colonial Troops, quality of, 13,941 (pages 110, 111), 14,038, 14,049.

Commandeering, question as to payments, 14,017.

Compulsory service, and conscription :

Esprit de corps, probable effect on, 13,941 (page 108), 14,073.

Training, period necessary in event of, 14,100.

Engineers :

Qualities shown during the war, duties of Engineers, and suggestions as to future organisation, 13,941 (page 111).

Telegraphs, increase of stores of field telegraphs advocated, 14,052.

India :

Preparation of schemes in, 13,899.

Staff work, organisation in, 13,936, 14,087.

Transport, Punjaub Frontier Force, 14,045.

Manœuvring Areas in South Africa or Canada, views as to this suggestion, 13,958, 14,025, 14,032, 14,078.

Hamilton, Sir Ian--continued.

- Medical services, 13,941 (page 112), 13,990, 14,011, 14,129.
- Men, qualities shown during war by, and suggestions as to future training, and as to necessity for better selected, trained and educated class of soldier, under modern conditions, 13,941 (pages 107, 108, 109, 112), 13,942, 13,952, 13,978, 14,095.
- Discipline, 13,941 (page 108).
- Manœuvring Areas, *see that sub-heading*.

Military Operations :

- Alternative schemes of action in Natal, absence of, 13,888.
 - Attack and defence, advantages of, under modern conditions, compared, 13,941 (page 108), 13,945.
 - Ladysmith, defence of, 13,941 (page 109).
 - Action before Ladysmith, 30th October, effect of, 13,863, 13,867.
 - Section allotted to Witness, 13,853.
 - Wagon Hill, attack on, 13,874, 13,947.
 - Withdrawal to position behind the Tugela, questions as to possibility and advisability, 13,856.
 - Tactics, changes produced by modern conditions, 13,941 (page 107), 13,942.
 - Troops, strength of, *see sub-heading Troops*.
- Mounted Infantry :
- Command of by witness during the war, 13,842, 13,845, 13,903.
 - Qualities shown during the war, and suggestions as to future training, equipment and use of, 13,881, 13,903, 13,941 (page 111), 14,043.

Officers .

- Cavalry, 13,941 (page 110).
 - Education of candidates, 10,893.
 - Engineers, 13,941 (page 111).
 - Militia and Volunteers. supply of officers for, 10,883.
 - Reserve, suggestion as to, 10,892.
 - Mounted Infantry, 13,941 (page 111).
 - Promotions :
 - Outside influences, 10,919.
 - Procedure as to, 10,876, 10,930.
 - Reserve of officers, 10,883.
 - Staff officers :
 - Appointments, 10,925.
 - Qualities shown in the war, by, and suggestions as to training and Staff College. 13,932, 14,068, 14,087, 14,104, 14,122.
 - Quartermaster-General's work, 13,933, 14,087, 14,122.
 - Services of Witness as chief staff officer - to Lord Kitchener, 13,923.
- Ordnance Department, organisation of, views of Witness as to, 14,016.
- Pay, increase in, as inducement to recruiting. views as to advisability of. 13,941 (page 108), 13,954, 14,076.

Preparations for the war :

- Defence, schemes of, previously to the war, 13,889.

Rifle, pattern of, 14,086.

Supplies :

- Department for, views of Witness as to organisation of, 14,016.
- During march to Heilbron, 13,911.
- Surrenders, 13,941 (page 109), 13,972.

Transport (Land) :

- Advantages of regimental as compared with general transport, 13,941 (page 112), 14,008, 14,045, 14,047, 14,066.
- Department for, views of witness as to organisation of, 14,016.
- Troops in South Africa, strength of, views of witness as to adequacy of, 13,941 (page 109), 13,965.
- Uniforms, distinctions in, effect of on esprit de corps, 13,941 (page 110), 13,979.

War Office Organisation :

- Army Board, 10,864.
- Centralisation of work, excess of, 10,864.
- Military Secretary, duties of, 10,858.
- Ordnance Department, 14,016.
- Supplies, department for, views as to organisation of, 14,016.

HARRIS, VICE-ADMIRAL SIR R., K.C.B. (*See Questions* 18,956-19,095.

Admiral in Command at the Cape from 1899 to 1901, 18,956.

Admiralty :

- Instructions received from, 18,961, 18,997, 19,042, 19,071.
- Supplies of guns sent out by, adequacy of, 19,007.
- Transport system, satisfactory working of, 19,068, 19,092.

Artillery—Naval Guns :

Ammunition :

- Common shell and shrapnel, effectiveness of, compared, 17,065.
- Cordite, 19,058, 19,080, 19,082.
- Lyddite, 19,065.
- Effectiveness of guns and quality of gunnery, 19,056, 19,079.
- Erosion of old guns, and replacement by new guns, 19,057.
- Fuses, 19,064.
- List of guns and ammunition supplied to military authorities and Naval Brigade in South Africa during the war, 19,014.
- List of small guns and stores sent by witness to General Officer Commanding at the Cape, 18,983.
- Loss of seven-pounder muzzle-loading gun, 19,015.
- Telescopic sights, 19,067.
- Assistance offered by Naval Authorities, rejection, and subsequent request for, 18,978, 18,986.

Boers :

- Contraband of war, *see that sub-heading*.
- Preparations for the war, 18,962.
- Prisoners on board transports, 19,016.

Cape Colony, despatch of Naval Brigade and guns to: Cape Town, arrangements for protection of, 18,995.

Kimberley Relief Force, 18,992.

Stormberg, 18,986.

Coal supplies for ships during the war, 19,010.

Contraband of war—Stoppage of food and stores, extent of, 19,022.

Ammunition and artillery, 19,030, 19,086.

Gold, 19,045.

"Herzog" and "Bundesrath" cases, 19,044.

Manœuvring Areas in South Africa, provision of transports in event of formation of, 19,048.

Maputa River, expedition by witness to, previously to the war, 18,962, 18,965.

Marines, increase of, and use for small seaboard expeditions, views of witness as to this suggestion, 19,053.

Men of Naval Brigade :

Despatch of, to Natal and Cape Colony, 18,986, 18,995, 19,000, 19,008.

Reinforcements from home, 19,009.

Total number of men landed, 19,013.

Milner, Sir A., communication with, 18,960, 18,962, 18,965, 18,966, 18,967, 18,996.

Natal, despatch of naval guns and men to .

Buller, General, despatch to, 19,006.

Durban, protection of, 18,995, 19,001.

Ladysmith, 19,003.

Effectiveness of guns and gunnery, 19,060.

Pietermaritzburg, protection of, 19,001, 19,015.

Preparations for the war—Naval preparations at the Cape, 18,959, 19,071.

Privateers, untrue reports as to, 19,035.

Ships :

Disposition of, at the Cape, on outbreak of the war, 18,978.

Repair of, in preparation for the war, 18,966.

Strength of force at the Cape during the war. 18,974.

Stores, list of, sent by witness to General Officer Commanding at the Cape, 18,983.

Transport (Sea) :

Control of, by witness, extent of, 19,089, 19,095.

Detention of ships at the Cape as a military necessity, witness not cognisant of, 19,095.

Harris, Sir R.—continued.

Transport (Sea)—continued

- Disembarkations—accumulation of stores at Cape Town, 19,069, 19,077.
- Dry dock accommodation in South Africa, 19,073.
- Losses, delays, and demurrage charges, insignificance of, 19,093.
- Satisfactory working of system, 19,068, 19,091.

HARRISON, GENERAL SIR RICHARD, K.C.B., C.M.G.
(See Questions 1835-2059.)

Inspector-General of Fortifications since 1898, 1835.

- Boers, preparations by, for war, 1933, 2003.
- Commanding Royal Engineer, duties of, 1849.
- Equipment, Engineer, generally, 1846.
- Classification of, 1853.
- Pontoons, 1856, 1920, 1927, 1950, 1975, 1992, 2000, 2015, 2020, 2040, 2055.
- Officers responsible for, 1846.
- Purchase of, authority for, 1964.
- Railway plant, 1875, 1877, 1887, 1995, 2030.
- Search lights, 1902.
- Supply in the field, 1971.
- Telegraph stores, 1875, 2000.
- Inspector-General of Fortifications Department, duties as defined by Orders in Council, 1839.
- Ladysmith, defence of, 2035.
- Maps and surveys of rivers, 1975.
- Personnel:
 - Pontoon troops, 1994.
 - Steam Road Transport Company, 1903.
 - Units sent out, 1904.
- Preparations for the war, 1849, 1930, 2003.
- Expenditure in connection with preparations, 2040.
- Natal, defence of, 2033.
- Reserve stores, 1869, 1873, 1877, 1891, 1919, 1923, 1968, 2000.
- War Office Organisation, 1935, 1971, 2014.
- Army Board, 1936.
- Commander-in-Chief's Committee, 1935.
- Inspector General of Fortifications, duties of, 1839.
- Railway Army Department, suggested creation of, 2051.

HILDYARD, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR H. J. T., K.C.B.
(See Questions 15,965-16,180.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 15,965, 16,180.

Army Organisation:

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 16,019.

Artillery:

- Ammunition, 16,130.
- Cordite, 16,111.
- Lyddite, 15,972 (page 240), 16,109, 16,134.
- Range and pattern of guns, 15,972 (page 240), 16,103, 16,129.
- Tactics, 15,972 (page 240).

Auxiliary forces, qualities shown during the war by, 15,972 (page 238).

Boers:

- Entrenching:
 - Kaffirs employed in, 16,008.
 - Tools, 16,004.
- Shooting, quality as to, 15,982.

Cavalry:

- Arms, equipment, and use of, 15,972 (page 240), 16,116.

Colonial forces:

- South African Corps, 15,972 (page 238), 15,993.

Engineer Services, adequacy of, 15,972 (page 240).

Entrenching:

- Kaffirs, employment of, 16,009.
- Tools, 15,972, 16,002.
- (See also sub-headings Boers, and Men, quality of.)

- Equipment, 15,972 (page 239).
- Great coats, difficulties as to, 15,972 (page 239), 15,987.

Hildyard, Sir H. J. T.—continued.

Horses, qualities of, and wastage in South Africa, 15,972 (page 239), 15,995.

Manœuvring areas, provision, 15,977.

Medical services, adequacy of, 15,972 (page 240).

Men:

Pay, increase of, possible effect of, on quality of men, 16,021.

Qualities shown in the war, 15,972 (page 238).

Discipline, 16,017.

Entrenchments and cover, 15,972 (page 238), 16,002.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 15,972 (page 238).

Marching, 15,972 (page 238), 15,986.

Physique, morale, and intelligence, 15,972 (page 239), 16,017.

Shooting, 15,972 (page 238), 15,982.

Training, 15,972 (page 240), 15,982, 16,007, 16,019, 16,121.

Employment in civil duties, effect of, upon training, 15,972 (page 239).

Second Infantry Brigade, training at Aldershot, 15,972 (page 238), 15,973.

Military operations in Natal:

- Colenso, battle of, loss of guns at, 16,143.
- Willow Grange, action at, 16,180.

Mounted Infantry, 15,972 (page 240), 16,116.

Non-commissioned Officers, supply and training of, 15,972 (page 239), 16,018, 16,032.

Officers:

Languages, qualification in, 16,087.

Promotion of young officers, 16,126.

Qualities shown during the war by, and suggestions as to training, 15,972 (page 239), 16,025, 16,127, 16,128.

Staff officers, qualities shown during the war, duties, and training—Staff College system, etc., 15,972 (page 239), 16,029.

Railways, control and repair of, 15,972 (page 240).

Reservists, quality of, 15,972 (page 239).

Supplies, general observations as to, 15,972 (page 239).

Transport (land), 15,972 (page 240).

Regimental and general transport compared, 16,099.

Troops in South Africa:

Quality of troops. (See sub-heading Men.)

Second Infantry Brigade, composition, strength, training, etc., 15,972 (page 238).

HILLS, MAJOR E. H., R.E. (See Questions 868-930.)

Service in Mapping Section of Intelligence Division, 868.

Maps issued to the troops in Natal, 922.

Survey and mapping work:

Comparison of that done in British possessions with that done in Colonial possessions by other Powers, 871, 893.

Staff engaged in, comparison of, 874, 875.

Cost of adequate survey in Colonial possessions, 874, 881, 905.

Staff suggested, 888, 891, 897.

With special regard to South Africa, 874.

HIPPISLEY, BREVET-COLONEL R. L., C.B., R.E. (See Questions 18,722—18,833.)

Director of Telegraphs throughout the campaign, 18,722, 18,728.

Attached to Home District for Telegraph purposes, and member of the Committee on the Telegraphic Organisation, 18,775.

Boers:

Damage done to telegraph system by, 18,727.

Telegraph material found in Transvaal and Orange Free State, value of, 18,764.

Hippisley, R. L.—continued.

- Cost of telegraphic messages sent during the war, 18,727, 18,762.
- Field Cable Lines, 18,727, 18,751.
- Allowance of field cable for an Army Corps, 18,831.
- Comparison of cable lines and aerial lines, 18,805.
- Cost of, per mile, 18,808.
- Extent of in South Africa, 18,727, 18,827, 18,804.
- Weight of, 18,832.
- (See also sub-heading, Supplies.)
- Financial arrangements, concentration at Bloemfontein and Pretoria, 18,727, 18,788.
- Foreign Telegraph Systems, collection of information as to, advocated, 18,778.
- Headquarters of Director of Telegraphs, 18,726.
- Lines of Communication Telegraphs, 18,727.
- Absence of satisfactory organisation for, before the war, and consequent withdrawal of men from field telegraph work, 18,727, 18,737.
- Organisation of telegraphs, present system, and suggestions for improvement, 18,727, 18,769, 18,787, 18,800.
- Telegraph divisions allotted to Army Corps, 18,727, 18,737 18,771, 18,800.
- Personnel :
 - Officers :
 - Assistant-Directors of Telegraphs, appointment, 18,727.
 - Commanding Officer, Telegraph Battalion, suggestion as to appointment and duties of, 18,727, 18,770, 18,800.
 - Director of Telegraphs, duties of witness as, during the war, 18,728, 18,743.
 - Divisions, command of, present system, 18,774.
 - Number of officers in South Africa, 18,786.
 - Strength of :
 - Before the war, 18,732.
 - During the war, strength in South Africa, 18,727, 18,731.
 - Drafts, 18,727, 18,736, 18,785.
- Preparations for the war—information as to Telegraph System in South Africa, question as to, 18,781.
- Railway Companies, wires belonging to, 18,743.
- Spion Kop, question as to whether cable might have been laid down, 18,816.
- Statement as to nature of Army telegraphs used during the war, number of messages sent, and extent of wire laid, 18,727, 18,802, 18,827.
- Supplies, 18,727, 18,791, 18,821.
- Material found in Transvaal and Orange River Colony, value of, 18,764.
- Material handed over to Colonial Governments at end of the war, value of, 18,767.
- Purchases in South Africa, 18,727, 18,792.
- Telephones, 18,727, 18,757.
- Blockhouses, provision for, 18,727, 18,761, 18,795.

HUNTER, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD,
Lieutenant-General Scottish District, K.C.B.,
D.S.O. (See Questions 14,470-14,687.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 14,470.

Army Organisation :

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 14,685.

Artillery :

Naval guns, 14,656.

Range and quality of guns, and moving of heavy guns, 14,654.

Motor cars for moving heavy guns, views of witness as to, 14,676.

Auxiliary Forces, qualities shown during war by, 14,570, 14,617.

Boers :

Artillery, use of by, 14,654, 14,659, 14,674.

Shooting, quality as to, 14,585.

Hunter, Sir Archibald—continued.

Engineer Services, 14,653.

Manœuvring Areas, provision of, 14,610.

Medical Services, 14,653.

Men :

Pay :

Increase in, as inducement to better class of men, 14,599, 14,666, 14,680.

Value of man, payment according to, suggestion as to, 14,605.

Qualities shown during the war, 14,567.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 14,588.

Intelligence, 14,597.

Marching, 14,587.

Physique and morale, 14,594.

Shooting, 14,583.

Training, suggestions as to, 14,610.

Military Operations :

Mafeking Relief Force, strength and transport, 14,564.

Natal, operations in :

Advanced positions, occupation of, views as to, 14,504.

Dundee :

Occupation of, question as to, 14,488, 14,498, 14,514.

Retreat from, 14,555.

Estcourt or other position south of the Tugela, question as to concentration at, 14,526.

Ladysmith :

Artillery :

Naval guns, 14,656

Range and patterns of guns, 14,654.

Fortifications and entrenchments, and general scheme of defence, 14,540, 14,547.

Maps and reconnaissance sketches, difficulty of making before the war, owing to political situation, 14,534.

Selection as a base and holding, 14,488, 14,554, 14,517, 14,531.

Stores, accumulation at, 14,488, 14,532, 14,551.

Wagon Hill and Cæsar's Camp, attack on, 14,545.

Lombard's Kop, battle and retreat, 14,559.

Troops in Natal :

Disposition of forces in Natal, 14,488.

Reasons for decision against withdrawing troops from Glencoe, 14,519, 14,552.

India, troops from, 14,483.

Quality of, see men.

Strength of, adequacy of, for defence of Colony, views as to, 14,504.

Motor Cars, military use of, views as to, 14,676.

Non-commissioned Officers, training, suggestion as to, 14,616.

Officers :

Pay, 14,646.

Promotions, 14,627, 14,669.

From the ranks, 14,620.

Supply of, deficiency in, and suggestions for remedying that deficiency, 14,637.

Training, 14,618.

Horsemastership, training in, 14,592

Preparations for the War :

Defence scheme for Natal, 14,490.

Transport, 14,649.

Regimental and general transport, compared, 14,651.

Troops in South Africa, strength of, 14,564.

(See also Military Operations—Natal.)

JAMESON, SURGEON-GENERAL J., C.B., formerly
Director-General of the Army Medical Service. (See Questions 11,472-11,812.)

Civilian surgeons, 11,526.
Enteric, 11,713, 11,723, 11,738.

Equipment:

Bacteriological, 11,706, 11,710.
Disinfectants, 11,812.
Drugs and medical stores, 11,624, 11,636, 11,799.
Instruments, 11,610, 11,731, 11,805.
Officers responsible for, 11,607.
Storage and packing of stores, 11,631, 11,734, 11,807.

Establishment, basis of, 11,476.

Foreign armies, sickness in, 11,549, 11,569, 11,713.

Personnel:

Civilians, employment of, 11,526.

Nurses, female:

Appointment, 11,671.
Duties, training, qualities, etc., 11,649, 11,671, 11,714, 11,721.
Reorganisation of nursing service, 11,675.
Reserve, 11,676.

Officers, medical:

Arrangements as to, previous to constitution of Army Medical Corps in 1857, 11,687.
Promotions, 11,793.
Quality of, 11,746, 11,750.
Reserve of, 11,795.
Age standard during the war, 11,797.
Status and remuneration, 11,753.
Supply of, 11,531.
Deficiency in, 11,514.
Number attached to each brigade or regiment, 11,689.
Number, total, fixed in 1888, 11,476, 11,526.
Training, 11,570, 11,699, 11,738, 11,7-3, 11,783.

Orderlies:

Arrangements previous to constitution of Army Medical Corps in 1857, 11,681.
Private soldiers as, for home establishments when depleted by war, 11,523.
Quality of men, 11,720.
Supply of, 11,521, 11,534.
Increase, necessity for, 11,494, 11,661.
Applications for increase, 11,498.
Training, 11,647, 11,714, 11,780.

Sanitary officer, appointment advocated, 11,703.

Strength of Personnel:

At different stages of the war, 11,531, 11,535, 11,539, 11,564.
Before the war, 11,480, 11,500, 11,514.
Numbers required for an Army Corps, 11,539.

Sanitation, 11,728.

Sick and wounded, percentage of, 11,547, 11,558.

War Office:

Advisory Board, Medical, composition of, 11,744.
Army Board, applications for expenditure, reception of, 11,503, 11,632, 11,664.

JARVIS, LIEUT.-COLONEL A. WESTON, C.M.G., M.V.O.
(See Questions 7244-7274.)

Services at home and in South Africa, 7244, 7249.

Imperial Yeomanry:

First Contingent:

Equipment and stores, 7248.
Quality of men, 7246.

Second Contingent:

Mixing of county contingents, 7258.
Raising and organisation of, 7250.
Sharpshooters, raising and organisation of, 7251.
Age standards, 7253.
Elimination of men in South Africa, 7262.

Jarvis, A. Weston—continued.

Imperial Yeomanry—continued.

Second Contingent—continued.

Officers, selection of, 7251, 7261.
Quality of men, 7261.
Service as complete unit, 7257.
Shooting and riding test, 7253.
Training, 7260.

Yeomanry, Home:

Future organisation, suggestions as to, 7267.
Horses, provision, 7273.
Number of Yeomanry regiments, 7271.
Officers, 7272.

War Office Organisation:

Yeomanry Department suggested, 7273.

JOHNSTON, COLONEL W., A.M.S. (See Questions 4024-4068.)

Assistant Director of the Army Medical Service until May 31st 1901, 4024; services in connection with the war, 4028.

Mobilisation, medical, 4028, 4039.

Personnel, medical, 4030, 4044.

Civilians, proportion of, 4058.

Nurses, 4036, 4066.

Training of medical officers, 4049.

KEKEWICH, MAJOR-GENERAL R. G., C.B. (See Questions 21,853-22,049.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 21,853, 21,929.

Ammunition pouches and bandoliers, 21,853.

Boers:

Artillery, siege of Kimberley, 21,853, 21,909, 21,912.

Fuses, 21,915.

No serious attack on Kimberley made by, 21,890, 22,024.

Shooting, quality as to, 21,853, 21,948.

Colonial contingents, quality as to shooting, 21,946.
Horses, supply of, and wastage in South Africa, 21,853, 22,003.

Kimberley, Siege of, 21,853, 21,854.

Artillery, British, 21,853, 21,883, 21,917.

Range of guns, 21,919.

Bridge, Orange River, protection of, 21,864.

Casualties and deaths during:

Medical officer's report, 21,853, 21,920.

Roberts, Lord, despatch by, of 20th March, 1900, 21,907.

Medical personnel, 22,045.

Officer in command previously to appointment of Colonel Kekewich, 21,853, 21,856, 21,865.
Population during the siege, 21,853, 21,909.

Natives, population of, 21,910.

Preparations for the siege, secrecy of, 21,853, 21,857, 21,875, 21,895.

Rhodes, Mr. Cecil, relations with the military authorities, 22,028.

Scheme of defence, 21,853, 21,858, 21,887.

Trotter, Colonel, scheme prepared by, 21,858.

Supplies during, 21,853, 21,894, 21,900.

Troops comprising garrison, 21,853, 21,863, 21,866, 21,871, 22,041.

Cape Police, 21,866, 21,883.

Dutch included in, 21,869.

Statement showing total of officers and men on 26th November 1899, 21,853, 21,882.

Town Guard, 21,878.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, importance of, 21,853, 21,970, 22,021, 22,025.

Men:

Esprit de Corps and discipline, importance of, 21,853, 22,019.

Pay, increase advocated, 21,853, 21,957.

Quality:

Marching, 21,853, 21,954, 21,959.

Physique, 21,853, 21,955.

Shooting, 21,853, 21,938, 21,945.

Training, suggestion as to, 21,853, 21,953, 21,997, 22,021, 22,028.

Kekewich, Major-General—continued.

Mounted Infantry :

Organisation, system advocated, 21,994.
Training of men as advocated, 21,853, 21,991, 21,997.

Non-commissioned Officers for irregular corps, 21,853.

Officers :

Irregular corps, appointment of officers of regular Army advocated, 21,853, 22,013.
Pay, junior ranks, increase advocated, 21,853, 22,018.
Staff officers, quality of, and value of Staff College training, 21,853, 21,965, 22,038.
Supply of, shortage in South Africa, 21,853, 21,974, 22,016.
Training, 21,964, 21,967, 22,026.

Supplies :

Adequacy of 21,853, 21,990.
Kimberley (*See that subheading*).

Troops in South Africa :

Kimberley (*See that subheading*).
Western Transvaal, inadequacy of troops for operations in, 21,853, 21,932, 21,936, 21,943.

Yeomanry, Imperial :

Quality of, 21,946.

Second contingent :

Officers, 22,014.
Quality, 21,853, 21,961.

KELLY-KENNY, LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR THOMAS, K.C.B. (*See Questions 4472-4963 and 16,918-16,969.*)

Adjutant-General to the Forces since 1901, 4472. Services in South Africa and elsewhere, 4474.

Army organisation, 16,927.

Compulsory service, views as to, 4697, 4700, 4745, 4785, 4819, 4892, 4953.
Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 4855.
Mounted Infantry, importance of in future warfare, and suggestions as to provision of officers, 16,927.

Reservists, *see that title*.

Auxiliary Forces, qualities shown during the war by, 16,923.

Boers, quality as to entrenching and cover, 16,923.

Colonial troops, 4754, 4925, 4931.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 4712.

Engineer services, adequacy of, 16,927.

Horses, supply and quality of, 4607, 16,927.

Registration of, 4732, 4947.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa, quality and conduct of men, 4665, 4761, 4924.

Men :

Drafts sent out in 1902, 4612, 4834.
Employment of soldiers in non-military duties, 4563, 4726, 4851, 4956.
Engineers, 4883.
Memoranda by Witness as to, in 1898, 4545.
Pay and other inducements to recruits, 4545, 4700, 4810, 4877, 4884.
Personnel of Army in October, 1902, 4620.
Quality of men, 4559, 4694, 4788, 16,923.
Supply and quality of recruits, 4543, 4616, 4720, 4752, 4809, 4882, 4898.
Training, 4561, 16,924.

Militia, 4614, 4624, 4637, 4847, 4870, 16,024, 16,937.

Mobilisation in October 1899, success of, 4594, 4838.

Mounted Infantry, 16,927.

Officers :

Cavalry officers, shortage of, in 1899, 4594.
Expenses of, 4916.
Physique of, superiority to that of men, 4737.
Promotion from the ranks, 4942.
Reserve, 4781, 16,932.
Staff officers, qualities and training, 16,924.
Supply of, 16,927.
Training of, 4708, 4774.

Pay, 4700, 4810, 4822, 4877, 4884.

Kelly-Kenny, Sir Thomas—continued.

Reservists :

Employment of, 4580, 4833, 4957.
Proportion allotted to a battalion, 16,946.
Qualities shown during the war by, 16,940.
Strength of Reserve at different periods, 4622
Training, 4730, 16,924, 16,950.

Supplies, adequacy of, 16,927.

Transport, insufficiency of, in earlier stages of the campaign, 16,927.

Troops in South Africa, adequacy of, question as to, 16,923.

Volunteers, transport, equipment, and training of officers, 4865.

War Office organisation :

Adjutant-General's Department, 4482, 4498, 4511, 4578, 4713.
Army Board, 4571, 4641, 4796.
Commander-in-Chief, position of, 4482, 4513, 4521, 4706, 4719, 4766, 4792, 4902.
Expenditure, 4518, 4704.
General organisation, 4535.
Schemes, initiation and consideration of procedure, as to, 16,953.

Secretary of State :

Position of, 4520.

Reference of questions to, 4676, 4710, 4778.

War Office Council, 4491, 4577, 4803.

Yeomanry, Home :

Cost of force, 4651, 4845.
Organisation, conditions of service, etc., 4652.
Strength, total, 4844.
Value of force, views as to, 4665, 4874.

KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM, GENERAL VISCOUNT, Commander-in-Chief in India, G.C.B., G.C.M.G. (*See Questions 159-263.*)

Ammunition, and artillery equipment, 186.

Boers in the field, number of, 256.

Contracts made in South Africa for supply of food and forage, 191.

Food and Forage, 190.

Horses, sources whence derived, qualities, treatment, most suitable size, recommendations as to future provisions, 204, 262.

Maps of South Africa, 160.

Medical service, 185, 244.

Men :

Qualities of, as to general training, shooting, marching, horsemanship, entrenchments, and cover, 173.

Supply of, 171.

Military operations up to the occupation of Pretoria ; witness prefers that this head of the reference should be dealt with by Lord Roberts, 231.

Military preparations for the war ; witness not cognisant of these, 160.

Number of troops which would have been necessary in 1899 to protect British territories in South Africa from invasion, 252.

Officers :

Colonial, 258.

Higher grades, difficulty of finding sufficient number of capable officers in, 174, 249.

Qualities, and opinion as to training, 174.

Staff work, training for, 175, 234.

Supply services :

Amalgamation suggested, 186.

No delay by War Office in sending supplies, 239.

Transport :

Distinct department, suggestion as to formation as, 186.

Railways, 219, 226.

Reorganisation in January 1900 ; 186, 219.

Steam road trains and motors, 219.

Sufficiency of transport, 240, 250.

War Office Organisation :

Pay Department, 218.

Railways, Department for suggested, 219.

Supply services, amalgamation suggested, 186.

KNIGHT, MAJOR WYNDHAM C., C.S.I., D.S.O.,
Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General for Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa. (*See* Questions 7089-7243.)

Services at home and in South Africa, 7089.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

First contingent, raising and organisation of, 7092.

Age standards, 7108.

Equipment, 7095.

Officers, 7163.

Physique, 7112.

Quality of men as to shooting, riding, etc., 7103, 7151.

Second contingent:

Documents as to numbers, pay certificates, etc., not sent out with force, 7186.

Elimination of men in South Africa, 7122, 7238.

Numbers eliminated, 7123.

Experience of witness as to force in South Africa, 7114.

Mixing of county contingents, 7159.

Officers:

Elimination of, in South Africa, 7163.

Numbers eliminated, 7163, 7179.

Number of, 7163.

Quality of, 7163.

Selection of, 7163, 7165.

Quality of men, 7117, 7145, 7211.

Shooting and riding, quality as to, 7122.

Training in South Africa, 7134.

Third contingent:

Officers, selection of, 7184.

Quality of, as to shooting and riding, 7149.

Casualties in 7th Battalion, 7213.

Colonial Reserves of Imperial Yeomanry suggested, 7205, 7215.

Drafts to maintain Yeomanry not allowed, 7153, 7206.

Employment of force in South Africa, 7186.

Horses, provision of, 7101, 7230.

Officers, 7195.

Pay system, 7186.

Period of service, terms of enlistment as to, 7223.

Quality of men, 7213, 7235.

Yeomanry, Home:

Future organisation, suggestions as to, 7098, 7193.

Officers:

Appointment of, 7197.

Registration of those who have served in South Africa suggested, 7194.

Pay system, 7193.

KNOX, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES, K.C.B. (*See* Questions 17,549-17,768.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 17,549.

Army Organisation:

Strength of regiments at present time, 17,691.

(*See also sub-headings Cavalry and Mounted Infantry.*)

Army Service Corps:

Strengthening of corps, necessity for, 17,635.

Artillery:

Horses for, increased number advocated, 17,617.

Personnel, quality of, 17,616.

Horsemastership, 17,599.

Range, classes, and quality of guns, 17,643.

Boers:

Mobility, 17,564, 17,585.

Orange Free State Boers, rejoining commandoes after surrender, 17,557.

Shooting, quality as to, 17,572, 17,582, 17,747.

Cavalry:

Arms and use of, 17,580.

Equipment, lightening advocated, 17,612.

Officers, quality of, as to horsemastership, 17,599.

Knox Sir Charles—continued.

Colonial Troops serving under witness in South Africa, 17,586.

Quality of, 17,590, 17,681, 17,708, 17,729.

Compulsory Universal Military Training for period of six months, question as to, 17,724.

Engineer Services, 17,640.

Entrenching Tools, carrying in carts advocated, 17,648, 17,651.

Equipment:

Lightening of, and carrying portions of, in company carts advocated, 17,646.

Horses:

Quality, supply, and wastage of, in South Africa, 17,633.

Imperial Yeomanry serving under witness in South Africa, 17,586.

Quality of, 17,587, 17,715.

Second contingent, 17,588.

Intelligence Corps to be attached to each column, suggestion as to organisation of, 17,658, 17,665, 17,745.

Manœuvring Areas, provision, 17,607.

Maps, 17,664.

Medical Services, 17,640, 17,766.

Men:

Qualities shown in the war by, 17,616, 17,710.

Cover, 17,622.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 17,578.

Initiative, individuality, and intelligence, 17,574, 17,619.

Marching, 17,564, 17,565.

Shooting, 17,572, 17,747.

Training:

Employment in civilian duties, effect of, on training, 17,695.

Period required for infantry, 17,718.

Suggestions as to, 17,579, 17,596, 17,597, 17,656.

Militia:

Quality of, 17,716.

Mounted Infantry:

Arms, training, and future organisation of, suggestions as to, 17,579, 17,580, 17,596, 17,669.

Deficiency in numbers of mounted men during the war, 17,560.

India, training of native troops, 17,677.

Organisation during the war, 17,576.

Qualities shown during the war, 17,574, 17,578.

Training on Salisbury Plain, new regulations, 17,673.

Non-commissioned Officers, duties and supply of, 17,703, 17,763.

Officers:

Adjutant, duties of, 17,764.

Pay responsibilities and clerical work, relief from advocated, 17,703, 17,762.

Quality, and suggestions as to training, 17,599, 17,602, 17,623.

Staff officers:

Quality, duties, and training of, 17,625, 17,751.

With witness in South Africa, 17,630.

Reservists:

Employment in civilian duties in barracks, suggestion as to, 17,699.

Qualities shown during the war by, 17,566, 17,710.

Rifles, quality of, 17,645.

Scouting:

Organisation of special corps for scouting, question as to, 17,615, 17,735.

Training, suggestions as to, 17,610.

Troops:

Casualties in 6th Division, 17,567, 17,569.

Colonial troops, *see that sub-heading.*

Composition of forces serving with witness in South Africa, 17,549.

Strength of, adequacy of, views of witness as to, 17,557.

KNOX, SIR RALPH H., K.C.B. (*See Questions 1122-1429.*)
 Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War
 till January 1901, 1122.

Ammunition, 1329, 1332, 1389.
 Artillery, 1254, 1341, 1385.
 Documents, telegrams and despatches, 1284, 1315.
 Intelligence Department, memoranda submitted by, 1334, 1342, 1374.
 Ladysmith, stores at, 1354, 1366.
 Mobilisation, expenditure in connection with, 1210, 1228, 1398.
 Ordnance Factories, control of 1133, 1160, 1394.
 Preparations for the war, 1210, 1231, 1265, 1316, 1327.
 Transport (sea), 1381.
 Treasury, relations with War Office and method of discussing demands for expenditure, 1412.
 War Office Organisation, 1124, 1318.
 Army Board, 1139, 1147, 1170, 1209, 1234, 1281.
 Buildings of War Office, 1259, 1427.
 Changes under Order in Council of, 1888, 1129; Order in Council of, 1895, 1135; Order in Council of, 1899, 1160.
 Commander-in-chief, position of, 1130, 1301, 1409.
 Mobilisation Committee, 1162, 1210, 1401.
 Secretary of State, position of, 1131, 1136, 1208, 1294, 1307.
 Selections of heads of departments, 1424.
 War Office Council, 1139, 1151, 1189, 1209, 1244.

LAKE, COLONEL P. H. N. (*See Questions 1065-1121.*)
 Assistant Quartermaster-General, Mobilisation Division, 1065.

Mobilisation:
 Auxiliary Forces, 1082.
 Colonial troops, 1086, 1120.
 General scheme of mobilisation, 1089, 1099, 1105.
 Steps taken to mobilise for the war in South Africa, 1094, 1103.
 Working in practice on occasion of the war, 1070.
 Transport, sea, arrangements as to, 1103.

War Office organisation:
 Army Board, 1110.
 Mobilisation Division, strength of staff, 1087.

LAMBTON, REAR-ADMIRAL THE HON. HEDWORTH, C.V.O., C.B., A.D.C., Commanded Naval Brigade in Ladysmith during the Siege. (*See Questions 19,096-19,144.*)

Boers:
 Artillery, effectiveness of, and moral effect upon, besieged in Ladysmith, 19,102, 19,123.
 White Flag, use of, 19,113, 19,127.
 Bulwana, decision of Sir George White not to occupy, 19,138.
 Hunter, Sir Archibald, 19,117, 19,122, 19,123, 19,124.

Ladysmith:
 Arrival of Naval Brigade at Ladysmith during battle of Lombard's Kop, 19,098.

Artillery:
 Naval Guns:
 Ammunition, 19,130.
 Cordite, effect of atmospheric conditions on, 19,119, 19,128.
 Supply of, and regulations as to amount to be expended, 19,113.
 Effectiveness of guns, and quality of gunnery, 19,112.
 Hunter, Sir A., comments on, 19,124.
 Opinion of correspondents, 19,122, 19,126.
 Number, classes, and range of guns, 19,099, 19,111.

Lambton, The Hon. Hedworth.

Ladysmith—continued.

Artillery—continued.

Royal Artillery guns:

Effectiveness of, and quality of gunnery, 19,125, 19,134.

Cavalry, retention of, policy of, 19,138.

Men of Naval Brigade:

Composition of brigade, 19,140.

Qualities, 19,134.

Strength of force, 19,099.

Officers of Naval Brigade:

Engineer, officers, services rendered by, 19,135.

Number of, 19,099.

Position of Naval Brigade with regard to military garrison, 19,117.

Qualities, 19,134.

Training of, 19,138.

Selection and defence of Ladysmith by Sir G. White, 19,138.

Troops in, morale after battle of Lombard's Kop, 19,101.

Preparations before the war, for landing of Naval detachments, 19,097.

Principle of landing a Naval Brigade for Military Service, views of witness as to, 19,136.

Stormberg, despatch of naval men and guns to, 19,097, 19,140.

White, Sir George, 19,098, 19,102, 19,103, 19,113, 19,117, 19,123, 19,138.

LANSDOWNE, THE RIGHT HON. THE MARQUIS OF, K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (*See Questions 21,073-21,590.*)

Secretary of State for War from 1895 to 1900, 21,073.

Army Organisation:

Army Corps:

Expenditure incidental to calling out an Army Corps, or portion of an Army Corps, provision for, 21,343.

Stanhope, Mr., minute of, 21,419, 21,423.

Compulsory universal military training, question as to, 21,339.

Expeditionary forces, organisation of, 21,341.

Linked battalions, system of, 21,313.

Militia, calling out of, Act of 1898 as to, 21,341.

Reserves:

Calling out of, powers as to desirable, 21,341, 21,379.

Value of, proved by experiences of the war, 21,334.

Short Service System:

Opposition to introduction of, 21,505.

Value of, as proved by experiences of the war, 21,334.

Strength and efficiency of the Army:

Steps taken to increase, between 1895 and 1899, 21,505.

Wolseley, Lord, proposals by:

Minute of 22nd February 1896, and minutes by Lord Lansdowne of 10th July and 5th December 1896, 21,305, 21,306, 21,307.

Minute of 3rd November 1897, and minutes by Lord Lansdowne of 12th November, 2nd December, and 15th December, 21,311.

Minute of 7th January 1899, 21,320.

Troops in South Africa, *see sub-headings* Preparations for the War and Troops.

Artillery:

Increase of field artillery and provision of quick-firing guns, 21,505.

Reserves of:

Facilities for making on emergency any type of guns, question whether preferable to holding large reserves of guns, 21,590.

(*See also* Supplies, reserves of.)

Auxiliary Forces:

Imperial Yeomanry, *see that sub-heading.*

Scheme for raising, formulation of, desirability of, 21,553.

Lansdowne, The Right Hon. The Marquis of—continued.

Barracks, provision of, difficulties as to, 21,323.

Boers:

Agents in England and on the Continent, 21,196.

Fighting value of, under-estimate of, 21,108, 21,347.

Military preparations by, 21,079, 21,104, 21,198, 21,215, 21,291, 21,356, 21,364, 21,365.

Numbers in the field, variations in estimates of, 21,104.

Orange Free State Boers, attitude of, and its effect on British military preparations, 21,118, 21,122, 21,201.

Buller, Sir R.:

Disposition of troops in South Africa, non-interference by Government as to, 21,255.

Mobilisation, minute of 6th July 1899 as to, 21,158.

Preparations for the war, *see that sub-heading*. Staff officers, appointment of, 21,252.

Warren, Sir C., appointment of, 21,253, 21,259.

Butler, Sir William, resignation of, 21,264.

Colonial Office, correspondence with War Office as to Boer military preparations, 21,289, 21,290.

Colonial Troops, decision of Government as to mounted men, in early stages of the war, 21,137.

Contracts, system of, 21,537.

South Africa, contracts made in, 21,540.

Documents handed in by Witness:

Army Organisation—Proposals for increase of strength and efficiency of the Army:

Minutes of 10th July and 5th December 1896, 21,305, 21,306.

Minutes of 12th November 2nd December, and 15th December 1897, 21,311.

Mobilisation, Minute of 12th August 1899, as to, 21,147, 21,207.

Supplies.—Reserves of Armament and Military stores, Minutes of 21st May and 4th October, 1900, as to, 21,280, 21,415.

Troops for South Africa, strength of:

Letters to Lord Wolseley of 20th and 27th August 1899, 21,201.

Minute of 3rd October 1899, 21,111.

War Office Reorganisation, Minutes of 31st October, 1895, and 8th May 1899, 21,425.

Equipment—Clothing:

Khaki serge substituted for khaki drill, 21,455.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

Quality of 1st and 2nd Contingents, 21,556.

Value of the force, 21,551.

War Office, relations with, 21,543.

India:

Schemes of military operations in, 21,242.

Supplies, reserves of, 21,280, 21,404.

Troops from, for service in South Africa, 21,161, 21,163, 21,201, 21,207.

Wolseley, Lord, minute of August 24th 1899 as to, 21,163.

Intelligence Department:

Expenditure, 21,350, 21,358.

Information as to Boer military preparations, 21,079, 21,119, 21,215, 21,289.

Cabinet, date at which information was laid before, question as to, 21,100.

Commander-in-Chief cognisant of, 21,389.

Fighting value of Boers, under-estimate of, 21,347.

Ladysmith, selection of, as a station, 21,265.

Maps, preparation of, difficulties as to, in South Africa, 21,360.

Mobilisation:

Period which would probably elapse between mobilisation of the Field Force and concentration in South Africa:

Minute by Lord Lansdowne of 12th August 1899 as to, 21,147.

Minute by Sir R. Buller of 6th July 1899 as to, 21,158.

Statutory regulations as to mobilisation of an Army Corps, 21,378.

Working in practice on occasion of the war, minute by Lord Wolseley of 13th January 1900, 21,208.

Lansdowne, The Right Hon. The Marquis of—continued

Officers:

Staff officers with Sir R. Buller; selection of, 21,252.

Warren, Sir Charles, appointment of, 21,253, 21,259.

Ordnance Factories—Buildings, store rooms, etc., inadequacy of, 21,280.

Pay, increase of, and abolition of stoppages, 21,322, 21,507.

Preparations for the War:

Buller, Sir R.:

Interviews with Lord Lansdowne before the war, 21,076, 21,121, 21,124, 21,139.

Minutes of 5th September 1899 to Lord Salisbury and to Lord Wolseley, 21,202, 21,210, 21,249.

Opportunities of expressing his views as to the campaign before it began, and of acquiring knowledge of political situation, 21,202, 21,234, 21,247, 21,406.

Consultations between Secretary of State, Commander-in-Chief, Heads of Departments, and Sir R. Buller as to, 21,076, 21,387.

Defence, local schemes of, in South Africa, 21,266.

Expenditure:

Date of authorisation of, 21,223, 21,300.

Estimate of, in minute of 12th August 1899, 21,147, 21,150.

Suggestion as to reserve fund for preparations, 21,373, 21,534.

Jameson Raid:

Effect of, in making preparations difficult, 21,352, 21,354, 21,363.

Question as to whether adequate preparations should not have been commenced immediately after the Raid, 21,215.

Mobilisation, *see that sub-heading*.

Plan of Campaign—No formal plan drawn up in the War Office, 21,234.

Political situation in relation to preparations, 21,148, 21,156, 21,159, 21,179, 21,210, 21,223, 21,300, 21,351, 21,368.

Relations between Military and the Government in period before the war, 21,207.

Responsibility for non-preparation, question as to, 21,417.

Supplies:

Importance of preparations, as to, 21,147.

Wolseley, Lord, minute of 1st September as to, 21,202.

Transport (Land):

Contract for purchase of mules, cancelling of, 21,210.

Importance of preparations as to, 21,147, 21,150, 21,204.

Transport (Sea):

Horse-fittings for ships, intimation from Admiralty as to, 21,147.

Troops for South Africa:

Before the war, increase of garrison in South Africa between 1896 and outbreak of the war, 21,099, 21,161, 21,163, 21,289, 21,394.

Buller, Sir R.:

Minutes of 6th July and 5th September, 1899, 21,113, 21,167, 21,199.

Minute of 12th August, 21,207.

Estimates of numbers necessary, 21,204, 21,212.

Lansdowne, Lord:

Letters of 20th and 27th August, 1899, to Lord Wolseley, 21,201.

Minutes of 12th August, 1899, 21,207.

No joint representation as to necessity for increase of garrison made to Secretary of State by his military advisers between 1896 and 1899, 21,387.

Lansdowne, The Right Hon. The Marquis of—continued.

Preparations for the War—continued

Troops for South Africa—continued.

Before the war, etc.—continued.

Wolseley, Lord :

Minute of 22nd February, 1896,
21,221, 21,289.

Minute of 12th August, 1899,
21,207.

Minute of 17th August, 1899,
21,165, 21,167, 21,200.

Minute of 5th September, 1899,
21,207.

Minute of 13th January, 1900,
21,208.

No proposals made by, between
Minute of 22nd February,
1896, and Minute of June, 1899,
21,289, 21,388

Field Force for South Africa :

Composition of Force, Minute by
Lord Wolseley of 8th June, 1899,
21,132.

Estimates of strength necessary,
21,108.

Butler, Sir W., estimate given in
letter of 10th May, 1899, 21,129.

Wood, Sir Evelyn, estimate by,
21,117.

Lansdowne, Lord :

Minute of 3rd October, 1899,
21,111.

Minute of 13th September, 1899,
21,113.

Wolseley, Lord :

Minute of 8th June, 1899, 21,108.
21,111, 21,118, 21,132, 21,179,
21,180, 21,234, 21,289.

Minute of 7th July, 1899, 21,118,
21,199.

Minute of 13th January, 1900,
21,208, 21,210.

Reserves, *see* Army Organisation.

Supplies, reserves of :

Brackenbury, Sir H., representation as to de-
ficiencies in 1899, 21,280, 21,325, 21,396,
21,408.

Expenditure, inadequacy of, in years preced-
ing the war, 21,325.

Lansdowne, Lord, memorandum of May 21st,
1900, 21,280.

Mowatt Committee, recommendations, 21,280,
21,288.

Wolseley, Lord, Minute of 4th October, 1900,
21,415.

Treasury :

Mowatt Committee, recommendations of, atti-
tude of Treasury with regard to, 21,280.

War Office, relations with, 21,510.

Troops in South Africa :

Disposition of, non-interference by Govern-
ment with General-in-Command, 21,255.

Mounted men, decision of the Government as
to, 21,134.

Preparations for the war, *See that sub-*
heading.

Reinforcements offered to and declined by Sir
R. Buller in November 1899, 21,124.

War Office Organisation :

Adjutant-General :

Abolition of Adjutant-General's meetings,
21,471.

Position and duties of, 21,396, 21,409,
21,427, 21,439, 21,488, 21,582.

Army Board :

Constitution and duties of, 21,308, 21,406,
21,407, 21,410, 21,436, 21,459.

Board created in 1895, 21,471.

Board created in 1899, 21,488

Director-General of Army Medical Depart-
ment, question whether he should not
have been a member of the Army Board,
21,458.

Suggestions as to future utility of, 21,643,
21,495, 21,529.

Value of consultative Boards, views of
witness as to, 21,502.

Lansdowne, The Right Hon. The Marquis of—continued.

War Office Organisation—continued.

Commander-in-Chief, position of, 21,076
21,396, 21,402, 21,406, 21,414, 21,424,
21,427, 21,442, 21,488, 21,501, 21,576.

Cabinet, suggestions that Commander-in-
Chief should be a member of, or should
have entry to, views of witness as to
these suggestions, 21,443, 21,561, 21,587.

Certificate, annual, as to equipment and
fitness of the Army, views of witness as
to this suggestion, 21,446, 21,572.

Minutes by Lord Lansdowne of 31st Octo-
ber 1895, and of 8th May 1899, as to,
21,425.

Non-political character, importance of pre-
servation of, 21,567.

Constitution of War Office under Order in
Council of 1895, 21,076, 21,427, 21,440,
21,471.

Minutes by Lord Lansdowne of 31st Octo-
ber 1895, and of 8th May 1899, as to,
21,425.

Dawkins Committee, recommendations of,
21,481.

Expenditure :

Demands for Military expenditure, method
of dealing with, 21,510, 21,559.

Suggestion as to reserve fund for prepara-
tions, 21,373, 21,534.

Treasury, relations with War Office, 21,510,
21,523.

Heads of Departments, position of, and respon-
sibility of, Minutes by Lord Lansdowne of
31st October, 1895, and of May 8th, 1899, as
to, 21,425.

Intelligence Department :

Director-General of Military Intelligence,
position of, 21,077.

Mobilisation Committee, 21,488.

Ordnance Department :

Commander-in-Chief and heads of depart-
ments—facilities for knowing state of
ordnance supplies, question as to,
21,396, 21,408.

Director-General of Ordnance, position of,
21,400, 21,412.

Quartermaster-General, position and duties of,
21,396, 21,411, 21,488, 21,582.

Secretary of State, position of, 21,428, 21,451,
21,476, 21,513.

Direct communication between Secretary
of State and heads of departments,
21,466.

Minute by Lord Lansdowne of 31st
October, 1895, and of 8th May, 1899, as
to, 21,425.

Under-Secretary of State, position of, 21,466.

War Office Council :

Constitution and duties of, 21,474, 21,490,
21,530.

Value of Consultative Boards, views of
witness as to, 21,502.

Wolseley, Lord :

Army Organisation, *see that title, subheading*
Strength and Efficiency of the Army.

Mobilisation, working of, in practice on occa-
sion of the war, Minute of 13th January,
1900, as to, 21,208.

Preparations for the war, *see that title, sub-*
heading Troops.

Supplies, reserves of, Minute of 4th October,
1900, as to, 21,415.

LOVAT, MAJOR, THE LORD, C.B., D.S.O., Commanding
Lovat's Scouts in South Africa. (*See Ques-*
tions 20,630-20,774.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 20,631.

Army Organisation :

Regiments of scouts, organisation of, advo-
cated, 20,664, 20,673, 20,771.

Artillery, use of telescopes with, importance of,
20,646.

Boers, use of Zeiss glasses, 20,647.

Equipment, unsuitable, waste of money in, 20,730.

Horses, provision, waste of money alleged, 20,751.

Lovat, The Lord—continued.

Imperial Yeomanry—Home :

Officers :

Increase in numbers and in pay advocated, 20,695, 20,703.

Present amount of pay and grant, 20,708.

Regular Army, provision of certain number of officers from, views of witness as to, 20,698.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa :

Officers, quality and selection of, 1st and 2nd contingents, 20,682.

Pay :

Committee, Lord Scarborough's, 20,743, 20,749.

Defects in system, 20,737.

Lovat's Scouts for service in South Africa, raising and organisation of, 20,631, 20,635.

Equipment, 20,639, 20,761.

Arms—rifle and bayonet, 20,640.

Clothing and boots, 20,711.

Telescopes, grant for, 20,638, 20,758.

Grant from Government, 20,762.

Horses, 20,668.

Officers, selection, 20,688, 20,691.

Pay system, difficulties owing to non-appointment of paymaster, 20,740, 20,746.

Services in South Africa, 20,631, 20,635.

Sources from which drawn, and class of men, 20,633, 20,765.

Strength of, 20,694.

Lovat's Scouts—present organisation, 20,652.

Organisation as Yeomanry to act as a unit, 20,662.

Sources from which drawn, and class of men, 20,678.

Strength, 20,653.

Telescopes, use of, 20,654.

Training of men, 20,655, 20,672.

Weight of men, 20,670.

Telescopes :

Quality of Government telescopes, 20,758.

Use of, in modern warfare, importance of, 20,645.

Training in use of, period of, 20,647.

(See also sub-headings Lovat's Scouts.)

Transport, Land :

Native leaders and drivers of oxen, excessive pay, views of witness as to, 20,716.

LUCAS, COLONEL ALFRED G., C.B., M.V.O., Late Deputy Adjutant-General of Imperial Yeomanry. (See Questions 6451-6672 and 13,016-13,042.)

Committee on Remounts, 13,016, 13,021, 13,029.

Document handed in by Witness: Notes with regard to Reports dealing with Remounts, 13,016.

Horses :

Hungarian, purchase of, by Imperial Yeomanry during the war, 13,021.

Original purchases for Imperial Yeomanry, 6479.

Prices paid for, 13,021.

Registration of, by Yeomanry Adjutants, suggestion as to, 13,018, 13,032.

Remounts taken over by War Office, 6479.

Suggestions, general, as to future supply, 6640.

Supply of, through Yeomanry agencies, during the war, suggestion as to, 13,019, 13,040.

Imperial Yeomanry :

First contingent, raising and organisation of, in 1900, 6451, 6477.

Casualties in, 6568.

Quality of, 6514, 6577.

Strength of, total, 6491, 6503.

Second contingent, raising and organisation of, in 1901, 6518, 6526.

Numbers eliminated in South Africa, 6550 ; and invalided, 6566.

Quality of, 6541, 6574.

Training in South Africa, 6530.

Third contingent, raising and organisation of, September 1901 ; 6627.

Quality of, 6632.

Clothing, 6659.

Lucas, Alfred G.—continued.

Imperial Yeomanry—continued.

Drafts to maintain contingents not allowed, 6503, 6582.

Equipment, 6497, 6520.

Horses, *see that title*.

Officers, selection of, 6627.

Pay, 6615.

System in the field, suggestions as to, 6641.

War Office Organisation :

Department for Auxiliary Forces, suggested, 6635.

Yeomanry, Home :

Classes from which recruited, 6647.

Future organisation, suggestions as to, 6634, 6640, 6644.

MACBEAN, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FORBES, C.B., Commanding 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders. (See Questions 19,555-19,734.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 19,556.

Ammunition :

Supply and quality of, 19,557, 19,676.

Boers :

Foreign Legion, qualities as to shooting and cover, 19,593.

Shooting, quality as to, 19,593.

Disease in South Africa :

Deaths from, in 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, 19,557.

Enteric, prevention, 19,677.

Equipment :

Ammunition pouches and bandoliers, 19,557, 19,668.

Clothing, supply and pattern of, 19,557, 19,601.

Great-coat, abolition of, and substitution of cape and "British warm" coat advocated, 19,557, 19,604.

Issue of necessities on payment during active service, 19,557, 19,627.

Free issue subsequently to January 1902 on certain conditions, 19,640, 19,661.

Kilt, retention advocated, 19,557, 19,685.

Mess tins, 19,557.

Shoes :

Allowance of, and issue of additional supplies on payment, 19,635.

Quality of, 19,557, 19,615.

Water bottles, 19,557.

Waterproof sheets, 19,557.

Manœuvring Areas, provision of, necessity for, 19,557, 19,581, 19,699.

Glasgow, country round, 19,714.

South Africa, provision in, views of witness as to this suggestion, 19,728, 19,733.

Men :

Class and countries from which recruited, 19,569, 19,573.

Employment in civilian duties, arrangement as to in 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, 19,710.

Quality of, 19,557, 19,563.

Entrenching and cover, 19,557, 19,565.

Eyesight, 19,557, 19,587.

Intelligence, 19,557.

Marching, 19,684.

Kilt, effect of on, 19,557, 19,685.

Physique and morale, 19,557.

Shooting, 19,591.

Training, 19,557, 19,581, 19,690, 19,714.

Period necessary, 19,571.

Non-commissioned Officers :

Colour-sergeant, duties of, 19,697.

Quality of, 19,557.

Officers :

Pay responsibilities, 19,694, 19,709.

Quality of, as to initiative, and suggestions as to training, 19,688.

Pay System :

In the field, 19,694.

Regimental paymaster, appointment of views of witness as to this suggestion, 19,695, 19,709.

Macbean, Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes—continued.

Reservists with witness in South Africa :

Number of, 19,559.

Quality of, 19,564.

Rifle, quality of, 19,557, 19,599.

Sighting, 19,600.

Sanitation of camps and water, 19,677.

Supplies of food and forage :

Adequacy of generally, but deficiency as to salt and tea, 19,557, 19,670.

Transport, Regimental and General compared, 19,699.

Troops commanded by witness—1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders :

Division of battalion between Glasgow and Aberdeen, 19,708, 19,725.

India, Malta, and Egypt, battalion stationed in, at different periods, 19,557, 19,707, 19,731.

Services in South Africa, 19,555, 19,557, 19,558.

Strength of at present date, 19,707.

(See also subheadings, Men, Reservists, etc.)

MACKINNON, MAJOR-GENERAL W. H., C.V.O., C.B.

(See Questions 7361-7586.)

Appointment of witness, date of, 7455.

City Imperial Volunteers, raising and organisation of, 7364.

Ambulance, 7407.

Arms, artillery, and ammunition, 7473, 7479, 7570, 7586.

Artificers, deficiency of, 7446, 7566.

Civilian workmen to help with guns, admission of, 7486, 7564.

Classes from which recruited, 7413, 7420, 7545.

Cooks, insufficiency of, 7443, 7522.

Complete regiment raising, as, advantage of, 7409.

Composition of regiment, artillery, mounted infantry, and infantry, 7392.

Date of leaving England, 7390.

Date of return, 7406, 7492.

Drill, previous experience of men as to, 7487.

Equipment, 7382, 7408, 7473.

Boots, quality of, 7383, 7476, 7549, 7581.

Horses, provision of, 7401, 7407, 7496.

Cost of, 7499.

Quality of horses, 7534.

Married men :

Enlistment of, 7376, 7438, 7442.

Pay allotment, 7440.

Medical tests, 7377.

Non-commissioned officers, 7423, 7455, 7464, 7537.

Quality of, 7540.

Officers, 7394, 7423, 7460.

Quality of, 7471, 7540.

Pay :

Allotments, 7440, 7520.

Amount of, 7560.

Difficulties as to paying in the field, 7576.

Period of service, terms of enlistment as to, 7489.

Quality of men, 7377, 7394, 7558, 7578.

Marching, quality as to, 7542.

Riding and horse-mastership, quality as to, 7500, 7530.

Sanction of Commander-in-Chief for raising of regiment, 7366.

Strength, total, 7391.

Transport, provision, 7407.

War Department :

Assistance and encouragement from, 7473.

Preference of C.I.V.s for dealing with Civil Authorities, 7430, 7517, 7532.

Work of regiment in South Africa, 7399, 7404.

Volunteers, future organisation of, suggestions as to, 7410.

Artificers, reserve of, 7446.

Complete regiments and Service Companies, advantages compared, 7409, 7415, 7503, 7555.

Equipment, 7436.

Married men, enlistment of, 7438.

Officers and staff, appointment, 7423, 7431, 7457, 7510.

Scheme for summoning Volunteers in future emergency, desirability of, 7423, 7457.

MAJOR, MR. ALFRED. (See Questions 6296-6450.)

Director of Army Contracts, 6296. Duties of office, 6298.

Contracts :

Decentralisation of, question as to, 6379.

Director of Contracts, contracts made by, during war, 6302.

Meat contracts, 6347, 6413.

Representation of the Contract Department at seat of war, question of, 6403.

Staff of Department, insufficiency during war, 6312.

Supplies :

Increase of purchases from the trade during the war, 6322.

Medical stores, how bought, 6444.

Ordnance stores, extent of purchases in South Africa, 6391.

Sources of supplies, 6341.

Tinned meat, 6329.

MARSHALL, SIR G. H., K.C.B., B.A., Commanding Royal Artillery, 1st Army Corps, Aldershot. (See Questions 18,491-18,619.)

General Officer Commanding the Royal Artillery in South Africa, 18,491.

Ammunition :

Committee at Pretoria—Reports of Artillery Officers as to effectiveness of various kinds of ammunition, 18,536.

Common shell and shrapnel :

Effectiveness of, compared, 18,524.

Reasons for abolition of common shell, 18,533, 18,545.

Cordite, 18,616.

Distribution in the field :

Difficulties arising from different classes of guns in South Africa, 18,510.

System adopted in South Africa, 18,512.

Expenditure of, in South Africa, statement as to, 18,517.

Lyddite, 18,510.

Supplies, adequacy of, 18,512, 18,517.

Weight of projectile of 4.7 guns, 18,569.

Boers, use of artillery by :

Captured British guns, 18,494, 18,612.

Ammunition for, manufacture of, 18,496.

Classes, number, range, and effectiveness of guns, 18,493, 18,517, 18,522, 18,549, 18,562.

Tactics, 18,523, 18,596.

Classes, number, range, and effectiveness of guns, 18,493.

Advantages of heavy guns not recognised before the war, 18,567.

Future armament, proposals as to, 18,508, 18,556, 18,613.

Heavy battery guns, 18,510, 18,559.

Horse Artillery, effectiveness of, 18,497, 18,519.

Abolition of Horse Artillery, and substitution of mobile field artillery gun, views of witness as to this suggestion, 18,506.

Howitzers, 18,510, 18,551, 18,560.

Limit of range of guns used in South Africa, 18,612.

Limitation of varieties of patterns advocated, and use of same patterns for Home, India, and the Colonies, 18,510.

Naval guns, 18,510, 18,562, 18,564.

Pom-poms, 18,504, 18,517, 18,521.

Committee for introduction of new armament for Horse and Field Artillery, 18,508, 18,556.

Despatch at early date of Field and Horse Artillery in event of war, importance of, 18,617.

Equipment :

Quality and supply of, 18,512.

Saddlery and harness, 18,571.

Erosion of field guns, 18,614.

Field-firing at home, difficulties as to ranges, 18,600.

Foreign nations—Artillery :

Adoption of heavy gun, question as to, 18,597.

France, 18,495.

Germany, 18,493, 18,517, 18,600.

Fuses, range of, 18,612.

Horses, supply, quality, and wastage in South Africa, 18,594, 18,617.

Marshall, Sir G. H.—continued.

India:

Heavy guns, use of in, 18,567.

Patterns of guns, uniformity with those used at home and in the Colonies, advocated, 18,510.

Militia Reserve, suggestion as to, 18,591.

Number of guns in a battery, 18,598.

Organisation of Artillery, recent changes; British and German systems compared, 18,600.

Paardeberg, Artillery fire at, 18,531.

Personnel, Artillery:

Australian battery, 18,571, 18,581.

Canadian batteries, 18,571.

Training of officers at Royal Military College, 18,577.

Drafts to South Africa, supply and quality of, 18,586.

Men:

Quality of, and classes from which drawn, 18,571, 18,595.

Training, promotion, and prospects, 18,586, 18,600.

New Zealand battery, 18,571.

Officers:

Quality, training, promotions, and prospects of, 18,571, 18,573, 18,589, 18,595, 18,600.

Reserve of, inadequacy of, and suggestion as to future provision, 18,589.

Statement as to personnel employed in South Africa from 1899 to 1902, 18,571.

Supplies, adequacy of, 18,512, 18,517, 18,594, 18,617.

Tactics, Artillery, 18,524, 18,596.

Objects of Artillery fire, 18,529, 18,553.

Traction Engines, use of proposed, 18,563.

MARZIALS, MR. FRANK T., C.B. (See Questions 7797-8016.

Accountant-General, War Office, 7797-8016; position of, 7800, 7867.

Army Board:

Composition of, 7809.

Estimates submitted to, 7805, 7834, 7978.

Value of, 7835.

Contracts:

Director of Contracts, relation to Accountant-General, 7880.

South Africa, contracts in, 7995.

Expenditure:

Duty of Accountant-General in connection with annual estimates, 7804, 7815, 7938, 7967.

Mowatt Committee's scheme, 7842, 7893.

Proposals for expenditure by military departments:

Method of dealing with, 7802.

Years preceding the war, 7841, 7903, 7991.

Intelligence Department:

Increase of staff, proposals for, 7871, 7986.

Pay system:

Accounts, keeping:

At base, suggestions as to, 7920.

In field, difficulties of, 7917.

Regimental Paymaster, question as to, 7930.

Reservists, pay of, 7916.

Stores:

Clothing, 7902.

Guns and ammunition, 7896.

Harness, 7899.

In hand on 31 March, 1899; 7890.

In December, 1899; 7893.

Supply accounting:

Form of accounts at War Office, 7950.

Purchases in South Africa, 7922.

Treasury, relations with War Office, 7821, 7858, 7862, 7883, 7942, 7972.

METHUEN, LIEUT.-GENERAL, THE LORD, G.C.B., C.M.O., K.C.V.O., C.M.G., General Officer Commanding First Division. (See Questions 14,135-14,469.

Services of witness in South Africa, 14,135.

Army Organisation:

Mounted Infantry, arms and use of, 14,350, 14,424, 14,443.

Numbers and efficiency of the Army, 14,370.

Territorial system, suggestion that it should be more extended to officers, 14,275.

Artillery:

Batteries with witness in South Africa, 14,159, 14,183.

Range and classes of guns, 14,339, 14,384.

Equipment, reduction of weight advocated, 14,384.

Lyddite shells, effect of, 14,341.

Men, quality of, 14,242.

Classes from which drawn, 14,353.

Horsemastership, 14,217.

Officers, quality and training, 14,285.

Boers, shooting by, 14,451.

Cavalry under witness in attempt to relieve Kimberley, 14,159, 14,170, 14,182, 14,184.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 14,216, 14,221.

Colonial Forces:

Canadians not attached to force commanded by witness, 14,346.

Quality of men:

Entrenching and cover, 14,223.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 14,217, 14,219.

Intelligence and initiative, 14,242.

Shooting, 14,208.

Engineers:

Natives, employment of, in South Africa, 14,335.

Quality and classes from which drawn, 14,242, 14,335, 14,356.

German Army, training of officers in, 14,268, 14,292.

Horses:

Artillery, class of horses used in, 14,362.

Quality of, 14,320.

Wastage, 14,137, 14,162.

Imperial Yeomanry:

Officers, provision, suggestion as to, 14,276.

Period of service in South Africa, 14,233.

Quality, 14,237, 14,351.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 14,217.

Intelligence and initiative, 14,242.

Physique, 13,233.

Second Contingent, 14,205, 14,352.

Shooting and riding, 14,204.

Value in first Yeomanry of County connection and *esprit de corps*, 14,242.

Manœuvring Areas, suggestion as to, 14,366.

Maps and Reconnaissance Sketches, 14,376.

Jeppe's maps, 14,453.

Modder River, map of, 14,376, 14,425.

Medical Services:

Ambulance wagons, tonga carts, etc., 14387, 14,454.

Organisation and personnel, 14,326, 14,336.

Men:

Quality of:

Entrenching and cover, 14,223.

Horsemanship and Horsemastership, 14,216, 14,359.

Intelligence and initiative, 14,242.

Marching, 14,208.

Physique, 14,228.

Shooting, 14,188.

Tracking and reconnaissance, 14354.

Training:

Employment in civilian duties, effect of on training, 14,249.

Period of, 14,267.

Shooting, training in, 14191, 14,410.

Short service system, effect of on, 14,266.

Methuen, Lord—continued.

Military Operations :

- Belmont, action at, 14,161.
- Graspan, action at, 14,147.
- Kimberley, advance on, 14,139.
- Instructions to witness, 14,141, 14,428.
- Magersfontein, reasons for attacking Boers at, 14,169, 14,380.
- Medical organisation during, 14,326.
- Modder River, action at, 14,355, 14,376.
- Transport during, 14,147, 14,430.
- Troops, strength and composition of, 14,139, 14,159, 14,182.

Militia :

- Officers, 14,275, 14,280, 14,441.

Quality of men :

- Marching, 14,210, 14,442.
- Physique, 14,228, 14,442.
- Shooting, 14,199.

Training, 14,203.

- Mounted Infantry, arms and use of, 14,350, 14,424, 14,443.

Officers :

- Qualities shown by, and suggestions as to training, 14,247, 14,268, 14,285, 14,363.
- Reports and reconnaissance, quality as to, 14,283.

Staff Officers :

- Selection, 14,290, 14,373.
- Training, 14,285, 14,419.
- Q.M.G. work, 14,305.

- Reservists, qualities shown during the war by, 14,436.

- Rhodesian Police, quality of, 14,237.

- Rifles, quality of, 14,343.

- Supplies of food and ammunition, adequacy of, 14,312, 14,313.

- Of forage, 14,162.

Transport :

- Attached to witness in South Africa, 14,147, 14,175, 14,430.
- Regimental and general transport, comparison of, 14,322.

Troops :

- Disposition of in South Africa in November 1899, 14,139.

- Quality of, *see sub-heading* Men.

- Strength and composition of, 14,139, 14,150, 14,182, 14,185.

Volunteers :

- Officers, selection of, 14,398, 14,403.

- Quality of men, 14,237, 14,391.

- Marching, 14,210, 14,240.

- Shooting, 14,394.

- Training, suggestions as to, 14,371, 14,391, 14,397.

- New Regulations, effect of, on training, 14,399, 14,461.

- Pay, in consideration of increased training and efficiency, views as to, 14,407, 14,461.

MORGAN, LIEUT.-COLONEL H. G., C.B., D.S.O., Director of Supplies, Natal Field Force; Director of Supplies, South Africa. (*See Questions 18,320-18,490.*)

- Services of witness in South Africa, 18,320, 18,330.

Army Service Corps :

- Auxiliary branches, formation advocated, 18,329.

- Personnel, increase advocated, 18,329, 18,425.

- Canteens—field canteens, provision in South Africa, 18,432.

- Captured stock, stealing of by South African Colonials, and suggestion of special organisation to take charge of, 18,444.

- Detective Department in the field, 18,467.

- Disembarkation of stores at Cape Town, delay as to, 18,423.

- India, Supply, and Transport Services, organisation, 18,488.

Morgan H. G. —continued.

- Railways, transport of supplies, 18,420.

Rations :

- Newspaper correspondents, difficulties as to, 18,477.

- Troops, Rations for, quantity and quality, and suggestions as to nature of, 18,398,

Supplies :

- Accounts, simplification advocated : organisation of central clearing house in South Africa, 18,473.

- Adequacy of, 18,329, 18,419.

- Amalgamation of Services of Supply and Transport in the field advocated, 18,481.

- Contracts—Meat, 18,347.

- Captured stock, terms as to, 18,375.

- Cold storage companies, 18,349.

- Failure or delay in, no serious instance of 18,329.

- Quality of meat supplied, 18,390.

- Dundee, supplies in before the war, 18,337.

- Ladysmith, supplies in, 18,329, 18,333, 18,345.

Preparation for the war :

- Contracts based on number of troops in Natal, 18,330.

- Date of instructions to prepare for larger number of troops, 18,333.

- Purchase of in South Africa, 18,345.

- Quality of, 18,329, 18,390.

- Requisitioning, difficulties as to, in South Africa, and suggestions for future organisation, 18,450.

- Tinned meat—size of tins, 18,405.

- Unskilled labourers for handling supplies, provision advocated, 18,454.

- Natives, employment in South Africa, 18,455.

- Vegetables, milk, and eggs, production of on lines of communication, and arrangements as to farms, 18,458.

MORTIMER, COLONEL W. H., C.B. (*See Questions 18,834-18,955.*)

- Chief Paymaster to forces under General Buller in Natal, and subsequently Chief Paymaster for the whole of South Africa, 18,835.

- Duties as Chief Paymaster, 18,842.

Accounts :

- Defects of present system and suggestions for improvements, 18,840.

- (*See also sub-heading* Financial Control.)

Army Pay Corps :

- Strength of before the war, supply during the war, and suggestions for future provision, 18,837, 18,838, 18,933.

- Pay and other inducements, suggestion as to, 18,939.

Army Pay Department :

- Duties of, 18,921.

- Strength of staff before and during the war, 18,837, 18,933.

- Training of officers, 18,924.

- Army Service Corps, Pay Corps Section, suggestion as to, 18,838.

- Colour-Sergeant, duties of, 18,888.

- Financial Control and Audit of Accounts in the field, suggestion as to appointment of Chief Paymaster to act as Financial Adviser on Headquarters Staff, 18,838, 18,921, 18,931, 18,941.

India :

- Financial control, system of, 18,945.

Imperial Yeomanry :

- Clerks enlisted for Pay Office, 18,837.

- Difficulties as to pay, 18,837.

- System as to pay adopted, 18,840.

Militia :

- Increase of duties of Pay Department on calling out of, 18,838.

- Pay Department clerks, provision, 18,839.

Navy :

- Pay system in, 18,877, 18,915.

Mortimer, W. H.—continued.

Officers:

Relief from Pay responsibilities, view of witness as to, 18,840, 18,876, 18,882, 18,911, 18,950.

Pay in Home District:

System of, 18,848, 18,892.

Pay in the Field:

Allotments of pay to families and relatives, difficulties as to, 18,841.

Butler, Sir William, scheme proposed by, 18,840.

Committee of the War Office, recommendations as to, 18,840, 18,908.

System adopted in South Africa, 18,842, 18,844, 18,850, 18,863.

(See also sub-headings Financial Control, Regimental Paymaster, etc.)

Regimental Paymaster, appointment of, views as to this suggestion, 18,862, 8,864, 18,900, 18,913, 18,947.

Reserve:

Pay Department clerks, suggestion as to, 18,839.

Signing of pay-sheets, 18,952.

South African corps, pay system, 18,837, 18,917, 18,950.

MURRAY, LIEUT.-COLONEL ARCHIBALD J., D.S.O.,
Assistant Adjutant-General First Division
and First Brigade, Aldershot. (See Questions
17,769-17,851.)
Services of witness in South Africa, 17,769.

Army Organisation:

Non-operation of the peace organisation in the field, 17,812, 17,817.

Army Service Corps, efficiency of, 17,816.

Artillery:**Ammunition:**

Common shell and shrapnel, 17,822.

Organisation of ammunition columns, 17,816, 17,817, 17,818.

Canadian guns, 17,848.

Tactics, 17,816, 17,821.

Engineer services, efficiency of, 17,816.

Infantry tactics, 17,816, 17,821.

Intelligence:

Dundee, staff at, 17,778.

Ladysmith, staff at, 17,788.

Officers:

Attached to every General in command of a column, importance of, 17,808.

Staff of Intelligence Department, increase of, and provision for expansion in time of war advocated, 17,810.

Training, views as to, 17,799.

Medical services, efficiency, 17,816, 17,819.

Men:

Quality, as to intelligence, 17,834.

Training, 17,816, 17,839.

Mounted infantry, use of, 17,816, 17,823.

Officers:

Quality of, and suggestions as to training, 17,816, 17,830, 17,849.

Staff Officers:

Quality, selection, and training of, 17,824, 17,836, 17,844.

Reservists, qualities shown during the war by, 17,837.

NICHOLSON, LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR W. G., K.C.B., R.E.,
Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence. (See Questions 1-158, 264-457, and 18,133-18,319.)

Director-General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence since 1st May 1901, 1.

Military Secretary to Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief from 14th January to 21st February, 1900, and subsequently Director of Transport in South Africa, 18,134.

Statements submitted by witness from the Departments of the Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, Inspector-General of Fortifications, Director-General of Ordnance, 20

Nicholson, Sir W. G.—continued.

Army Organisation:**Army Corps:**

Movement of units, responsibility for, 18,220.

Under scheme of 1901, 18,245, 18,249, 18,310.

Compulsory Militia service, suggestion as to, 18,254, 18,272.

Compulsory universal military training, views as to, 18,256, 18,264, 18,272, 18,306.

General Staff, division of duties by Regulations of 1889 and 1895, and under organisation of 1901, 18,189, 18,210.

Objects of military organisation as laid down in Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum of 1st June 1891, 18,245, 18,247.

Strength which is, and should be, available for foreign service, views of witness as to, 18,245, 18,249, 18,271, 18,292, 18,303.

System before the war, 18,245, 18,246.

Army Service Corps:

Officers of, in charge of transport, 18,169.

Auxiliary Forces:

Militia, see that sub-heading.

Scheme for organisation of:

Formation by War Office of a scheme based on experiences of the war, question as to, 18,277.

Suggestion by witness as to organisation, equipment, and training in peace time, 18,245, 18,294.

Use of, in event of war with first-rate European Power, question as to, 18,294, 18,303.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 119, 435, 18,286, 18,295, 18,317.

Defence schemes, 358.

Documents relating to the war, 63, 84, 158, 265, 303, 346, 430, 449.

Equipment, Entrenching tools, etc., transport for carrying, 18,313.

Field Intelligence Staff in South Africa, 335, 373.

India:

Commissary-General-in-Chief, duties of, 18,206.

Intelligence Department, 18,296.

Movement of troops, responsibility for, 18,222.

Quartermaster-General, department of, 18,189, 18,206.

Transport systems, 18,141, 18,145.

Committee on, 18,174.

Maps of South Africa, difficulties with regard to, 132.

Militia:

Compulsory Militia service, suggestions as to, 18,254, 18,272.

Foreign service, making liable for, views as to, 18,258, 18,267.

Officers, 18,263.

Officers—Staff Officers:

Training and duties of, 18,189.

Transport (Land):

Assistant Adjutant-General for Transport, appointment in South Africa, 18,166.

Director of Transport in South Africa, appointment of witness as, 18,134.

Entrenching tools, equipment, etc., transport for, 18,313.

Non-commissioned officers, 18,183.

Officers:

Provision, future organisation as to, 18,170, 18,172, 18,177, 18,180.

Qualities shown by, during the war, 18,169.

Regimental and general transport, advantages of, compared, 18,140.

Reorganisation under Lord Roberts, 18,138.

System adopted in later stages of the war, 18,165.

War Office organisation in relation to transport, 18,167, 18,171.

Nicholson, Sir W. G.—continued.

War Office Organisation :

Adjutant-General, position of, 18,189, 18,197.
Army Board, 11, 58, 60, 78, 95, 104, 283.
Commander-in-Chief, position of, 18,189, 18,197, 18,199, 18,228.
Constitution of War Office, general changes effected under Order in Council 4th November, 1901, 6, 77.

Intelligence Division :

Creation in 1873, 18,189.
Duties of, 340, 356, 365, 369, 382, 399, 438.
Comparison with duties of General Staff in Germany and France, 366, 393.

Increase of staff, proposals for, 276, 289, 325, 363.

Officers of, how selected, 396.

Present staff, 318, 389, 441.

Section of the Intelligence Division, 311.

Joint Military and Naval Defence Committee, 268.

Mobilisation and Intelligence Department :

Amalgamation of the two departments
Order in Council, 4th November, 1901,
Position and duties of Department, 18,194, 18,279.
Staff, increase of, necessity for, 18,286, 2107.

Amount allotted to, in Estimates (1903), 18,288, 18,296.

Mobilisation Division :

Commander-in-Chief's position with regard to, previously to Order in Council, 4th November, 1901, 405.

Duties of, 344, 387, 412.

Increase of staff proposed, 417.

Present staff, 409.

Ordnance Committee, 285.

Quartermaster-General's Department :

Position and duties of, 18,172, 18,189, 18,190, 18,223, 18,228.

Secretary of State, position of, 18,231.

Troops, movement of, department responsible for, 18,189, 18,194, 18,201, 18,211.

Army Corps, movements of units, 18,220.

War Office Council, constitution and duties of, 14, 47, 59, 61, 82, 87, 95, 114, 265.

Witnesses, suggestions as to, 26, 72, 93, 126, 151.

NOBLE, SIR ANDREW, BART., K.C.B., Chairman of the Armstrong Company. (See Questions 20,828-20,904.)

Ammunition :

Common shell, 20,864, 20,889.

Composition of various explosives, 20,875.

Cordite, 20,888.

Effectiveness of different kinds of ammunition, 20,864, 20,876.

Lyddite :

Composition of, 20,875.

Detonation of, use of a fulminate prohibited, 20,864, 20,872, 20,876.

Shrapnel, 20,864, 20,857, 20,889.

Supplies of :

Condition as to, on outbreak of the war, 20,835.

Elswick firm :

Power of production, 20,857.

Supplies by, during the war, 20,835.

Artillery :

Elswick Battery, 20,847, 20,885, 20,892.

Range and weight of guns, 20,852.

Naval guns, 20,871, 20,882.

7.5 guns, 20,893.

Range of guns, effect of atmosphere upon, 20,895.

Supply of :

Arrangements with Elswick Company, 20,846, 20,849, 20,861, 20,898.

Power of production of field and heavy guns by Elswick Company, statement as to, 20,856.

Reserves, exhaustion of, 20,835.

Small arms, manufacture of, by Elswick firm, 20,902.

Velocity of guns, 20,900.

Noble, Sir Andrew—continued

Boers—Artillery :

Purchase of, 20,829.

Range, weight, and mobility of Long Toms, 20,854, 20,855.

Germany, reserve fund for military expenditure, 20,832.

Preparations for war :

Expenditure in connection with, reserve fund for, suggestion as to, 20,832, 20,840.

Representations made to War Office as to purchases of artillery by Boers, 20,829.

Rifles, range of, 20,903.

Ships—Battleships, cruisers, torpedo boats, etc., powers of production of Elswick firm, 20,857.

O'GRADY-HALY, MAJOR-GENERAL R. H., C.B., D.S.O. (See Questions 8343-8597.)

Command of Dominion Forces from July 1900 to July 1902, 8344, 8451.

Arms, ammunition and artillery :

Manufacture in Canada, 8449, 8503, 8585.

Rifles, Government contract for, 8507.

Reserves of, 8597.

War Office, provision by, 8585.

Coal supply for navy from Canada, question as to, 8579.

Compulsory service in Canada, enforcement of Militia Act advocated, 8435, 8439.

Contingents, Canadian, for service in South Africa, 8343, 8348.

First contingent, raising and organisation of, 8348.

Second contingent (Canadian Mounted Rifles, First Regiment), raising and organisation of, 8376.

Strathcona's Horse, raising and organisation of, 8390, 8399.

South African Constabulary, raising and organisation of, 8401.

Third contingent (Canadian Mounted Rifles, 2nd Regiment), raising and organisation of, 8411.

Fourth contingent, raising of, 8417.

Acceptance by home authorities of offers of contingents, 8348.

Casualties, 8363, 8381, 8399, 8406, 8411.

Dates of sailing, 8357, 8380, 8399, 8402, 8411, 8420.

Equipment, 8357, 8380, 8397, 8402, 8411.

Arms, artillery and ammunition, 8502.

Clothing, and especially boots, quality of, 8500.

Expenses, how defrayed, 8382, 8396, 8412, 8405.

Field Hospital, 8416.

Horses, provision and cost of, 8388, 8582.

Militia, men drawn from, 8427.

Number of contingents organised by witness, 8491.

Officers, provision, 8424, 8464.

Pay, 8384, 8398, 8407, 8415.

Physique of men, 8498.

Strength, total, 8421, 8545.

Transport by sea, 8380.

Horses, Canadian :

Quality of, 8559.

Remount depôts for Imperial service, question as to, 8559, 8579.

Imperial forces in Canada, 8452.

Interchange of battalions between Canada and Home Country, question as to, 8557.

Medical units and field hospitals, 8457.

Militia, Canadian :

Allowance, 8519.

Medical units, 8458.

Mounted rifles, increase in number of, 8493.

Officers, training of, 8444, 8549.

Quality of men, 8488.

Strength of, 8424, 8460.

Terms of enlistment, 8430, 8433.

Training, 8429, 8487.

Mounted police, 8462.

Men drawn from for service in South Africa, 8464.

Officers, training of, at Royal Military College, Kingstown, 8466.

O'Grady-Haly—continued.

Permanent Dominion Force, 8456.

Composition of, 8481.

Discipline identical with that of Regular forces in England, 8484.

Officers:

Appointment of, 8595.

Number of, 8592.

Training at Military College, Kingstown, 8594.

Pay, 8513.

Quality of men, 8485.

Strength of, 8424, 8480.

Quality of Canadians, as to physique and shooting, 8495, 8498.

Rifle clubs, establishment of, 8537.

Scheme proposed by Sir George French, for Colonial Reserve, comments on, 8523.

Scheme for providing Canadian Colonial Reserve, 8434, 8526.

Compulsory service under Militia Act, 8435, 8528.

Number of men to be raised, estimate of, 8531, 8540.

Officers, provision, 8548.

Pay or additional inducements not to be granted, 8532.

Supplies of flour and other provisions from Canada, question as to, 8576.

OGSTON, PROFESSOR ALEXANDER, C.M. (*See Questions 10,941-11,264.*)

Professor of Surgery at Aberdeen, 11,166; experience as to foreign Army Medical Services, 10,945; experience in South Africa, 10,942, 10,946, 10,950.

Ambulance wagons, 11,103.

Colonial Contingents, medical equipment, 11,138, 11,157, 11,230.

Equipment, Medical, 10,956, 11,027.

Bacteriological Departments, absence of, 11,014, 11,027.

Disinfectants, supply and use of, 10,997, 11,033, 11,064.

Dressings, 11,049, 11,072.

Drugs, 11,049, 11,156, 11,258.

Hospital tents, 10,963.

Size of, 10,964.

Huts, portable, advocated, 11,104.

Instruments, 11,014, 11,033.

Lights, 11,030.

Packing of stores, 11,051.

Splints and other apparatus, 11,046, 11,050.

X-Rays, 11,027.

Establishment, basis of, 10,946, 11,072, 11,235.

Hospitals, Military:

Civil population, treating in, advocated, 11,011.

Number and equipment of, 11,010.

Personnel, Medical:

Civilians, relations with Army Medical Department, 11,025, 11,074.

Cooks female advocated, 11,134.

Dental surgeons, provision in the field advocated, 11,228.

Instrument makers and electricians, absence of, 11,029.

Nurses, female, employment and value of, 11,132, 11,140.

Reserve of, suggestion as to, 11,253.

Training, 11,202, 11,248.

Officers (Medical):

Military officers, views of, as to efficiency of civilian and Army medical officers, 11,219.

Reserve of civil practitioners, suggestion as to, 11,168.

Status and remuneration, 11,123.

Supply of, 10,949, 10,955, 10,982, 11,242.

Number required for adequate supply, 11,148, 11,160, 11,176.

Training:

Account, general, of present system, 11,221, 11,236.

Ogston, Professor A.—continued.

Personnel, Medical—continued.

Officers (Medical)—continued.

Training—continued.

Defects in, and improvements suggested, 11,012, 11,041, 11,105, 11,120, 11,145, 11,182, 11,257.

Orderlies:

Cooking by, 10,999.

Qualities of men, 10,996, 11,091.

Supply of, 10,949, 10,955, 10,989.

Number required, 11,176.

Training, defects in and improvements suggested, 10,995, 11,003, 11,091, 11,113, 11,145, 11,207, 11,244.

Account, general, of training in hospitals, 11,114.

Period of training for male nurses, 11,174.

Sanitary officers, special, advocated, 11,223.

Physique of regiments, 11,137.

Sanitation, defects in, and improvements suggested, 11,090.

Sickness in Army Medical Corps, 11,136.

Transport, for medical purposes:

Ambulance wagons, 11,103.

Hospital trains, 11,081.

Voluntary aid:

Attitude of Army Medical Department as to, 11,073.

Organisation suggested, 11,078.

PAGET, MAJOR-GENERAL A. H., C.V.O. (*See Questions 16,396-16,539.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 16,396.

Command of 1st Brigade at Aldershot, 16,533.

Artillery:

Ammunition—Common shell and shrapnel, 16,520.

C.I.V. Battery, 16,428, 16,520.

Elswick guns, 16,433.

Naval guns, 16,525, 16,530.

Range and quality of guns, 16,519.

Boers:

Artillery, 16,519.

Shooting, quality as to, 16,440.

Horses, supply of, and wastage in South Africa, 16,501.

Men:

Qualities shown during the war, 16,408, 16,423.

Horsemanship, marching, physique, and morale, 16,465.

Horsemastership, 16,467.

Intelligence and initiative, 16,472.

Shooting, 16,439.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,457, 16,475, 16,528.

Military Operations:

Lindley, march to, and occupation of, 16,405.

Officers:

Mixed irregular troops, appointment of officers for, 16,425.

Qualities shown during the war by, 16,493.

Initiation and readiness to take responsibility, deficiency in, and suggestions for training in, 16,479, 16,532.

Staff Officers:

Qualities shown by staff with witness in South Africa, 16,494, 16,498.

Training and qualification, 16,496.

Rifles, quality of, 16,518.

Supplies:

Lindley, supplies at, 16,409.

Sufficiency and adequacy of food supplies, 16,517.

Transport (land):

Motor cars, use of oil motors advocated, 16,536.

Traction engines, 16,411.

Troops in South Africa:

Composition of force under witness at Lindley, 16,423.

PENTON, LIEUT.-COLONEL A. POLE, R.A. (*See Questions 8598-8694.*)

Commandant of Forces in New Zealand from October, 1896, to October, 1901; 8599.

Arms and ammunition, reserve supplies, 8658.
Compulsory service, law as to, in New Zealand, 8686.

Contingents sent from New Zealand for service in South Africa, 8599.

Acceptance by Imperial authorities, and decision as to character of troops, 8600.

Age standards, 8604.

Character and composition of, 8601.

Equipment, 8604.

Artillery, 8606.

Expenses, how defrayed, 8606, 8609, 8624, 8633.

Horses, 8604, 8635.

Total number sent out, 8639.

Medical Tests, 8644.

Number of contingents sent out, 8599.

Officers, 8627, 8691.

Pay, 8613, 8624, 8633.

Allotments to married men, 8670.

Quality of men, 8604, 8625, 8640.

Classes from which men were drawn, 8643.

Reports as to conduct in South Africa, 8642, 8671.

Riding tests, 8644.

Strength of, 8606, 8607, 8635.

Total strength, 8639.

Terms of enlistment, 8612.

Fifth contingent, special terms, 8633.

Period of service, 8668.

Fortified positions in New Zealand, garrisoning of, 8677, 8687.

Officers, training, and appointment of, 8630, 8666, 8692.

Permanent Force:

Composition and strength of, 8616, 8618.

Fortified positions garrisoned by, 8678.

Scheme for providing Colonial Reserve for Imperial service, 8649.

School of Military Instruction, 8630.

Volunteers:

Fortified positions, garrisoning of, 8678, 8687.

Men drawn from, for service in South Africa, 8604, 8615.

Training, 8621, 8687.

PITT, CAPTAIN FRANCIS J., R.N. (*See Questions 9782-9884.*)

Duties as Naval Assistant to the Director of Transports, 9783.

Transport by sea:

Accommodation of troops, 9811, 9816, 9849

Space allowed, 9817, 9820, 9846, 9857.

Admiralty:

Preparations for the war, 9809, 9833.

Registration and inspection of vessels suitable for transport, 9785, 9789, 9811.

Satisfactory working of system 9513, 9867, 9884.

Colonial troops, transport of, 9844.

Fittings of ships, 9789, 9809, 9840.

Horses, transport of:

Accommodation—space allowed, 9820.

Cattle boats, use of, for, 9789, 9801, 9807, 9851.

Exercise on board, 9805.

Fittings, new, provision of, 9793, 9804, 9836, 9863.

Hospital ships, provision, 9856.

Losses and delay caused by accidents, 9824, 9854.

Prisoners, transports used as depôts for, 9859.

Statement by witness as to general arrangements for transport during the war, and suggestions as to the future, 9884.

PLUMER, MAJOR-GENERAL H. C. O., C.B. (*See Questions 17,945-18,132.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 17,945.

Armoured trains, 17,950, 18,047.

Artillery:

Canadian battery, 17,950, 17,976, 17,984, 17,992, 18,065, 18,116.

Effectiveness of pom-poms, 18,067, 18,111.

Field glasses, equipment, 18,072.

Range, quality, and numbers of guns, 17,950, 18,047, 18,061.

Boers:

Numbers in the field, 17,950.

Shooting, quality as to, 17,993.

Colonial Forces:

Australian, 17,950, 17,951.

Officer Commanding New South Wales contingent, 17,986.

Quality of men, 17,976, 18,044, 18,115.

Dismissal, power of Commanding Officer as to, 17,968.

Memorandum with regard to raising and organisation of, no instruction received by witness as to drawing up, 17,966.

New Zealand troops, quality of men, 17,932, 17,976, 18,114.

Non-commissioned officers, provision, 17,961, 17,964.

Officers, provision from Imperial Army, 17,959, 17,962, 17,968, 17,982, 18,003, 18,117.

Quality of men:

Education, 18,113.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 18,003, 18,044.

Physique, morale, and intelligence, 18,005, 18,012.

Shooting, 17,991.

South African Colonials, 17,949, 17,950, 17,951, 18,057.

Non-commissioned officers, 17,961.

Officers, provision, 17,950.

Quality, 17,957, 18,001, 18,005, 18,057.

Terms of enlistment—pay, and period of service, 17,958.

Engineer Services, 18,057.

Horses:

Quality and price of, 18,034.

Wastage in South Africa, 18,041, 18,106.

Medical Services, 18,053.

Men:

Quality of:

Entrenching, 18,010.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 18,002, 18,003, 18,042, 18,096.

Intelligence and initiative, 18,095.

Shooting, 17,990, 17,993.

Training, suggestions as to:

Cooking, training in, 18,012.

Employment in civilian duties, effect of on training, 18,014.

Entrenching, 18,010.

Intelligence and initiative, cultivation of, 18,005.

Mounted infantry, training as, 18,081.

Scouting, 18,012.

Military Operations in Rhodesia:

Statement by witness as to, 17,948.

Mounted Infantry:

Training and future organisation, 18,081.

Native pioneers, employment of, with Rhodesian force, 18,060.

Officers:

Colonial forces (*see that sub-heading*).

Pay responsibilities and accounts, release from, advocated, 18,020, 18,121.

Qualities and suggestions as to training, 18,020, 18,108.

Staff officers, qualities, duties, and training, 18,024.

Plumer, Major-General H. C. O.— continued.

Rifles, Quality of, 18,080.

Scouts :

Organisation as distinct corps, question as to, 18,125.

Telescopes and field glasses, equipment, 18,073.

Signallers, 18,103.

Supplies, adequacy of, supplies collected in Rhodesia before the war by Colonel Nicholson, 18,028.

Transport (Land), 18,050, 18,130.

Troops serving under witness in South Africa, 17,950, 17,951, 18,094.

(See also sub-headings Colonial Forces and Men.)

POLE-CAREW, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR REGINALD, K.C.B., C.V.O. (See Questions 16,540-16,624.)

Service of witness in South Africa, 16,540.

Army Organisation :

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 16,590.

Foreign Service, liability for, effect of, on recruiting for the Guards, 16,569.

Mounted Infantry, *see that sub-heading.*

Artillery, range, and quality of guns, 16,614

Naval guns, 16,614, 16,617.

Boers :

Artillery, 16,614.

Entrenching, 16,600, 16,616.

Rifles, quality of, 16,614.

Colonial Forces, qualities shown during the war by, 16,587, 16,624.

Horses :

Quality of, 16,610.

Supply of, and wastage in South Africa, 16,552, 16,610.

Manœuvring Areas in South Africa, views as to this suggestion, 16,571.

Men :

Education and class, 16,589.

Qualities shown during the war by, 16,559.

Entrenching and cover, 16,600.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 16,594.

Intelligence and initiative, 16,569, 16,583.

Physique and morale, 16,567, 16,600.

Shooting and marching, 16,594.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,595, 16,599

Military Operations :

Kimberley Relief Force :

Route taken by, 16,545.

Strength of, inadequacy of, 16,543.

March from Paardeberg to Bloemfontein, 16,550.

Mounted Infantry :

Deficiency in numbers of mounted men in earlier stages of the war, 16,543, 16,550.

Organisation, defects of, and suggestions as to, 16,595.

Officers :

Qualities shown during the war by, 16,578, 16,601.

Staff officers :

Qualities of, and suggestion as to constitution of a General Staff, 16,601.

Training, 16,604.

Reservists :

Proportion in each regiment, effect of, upon discipline, 16,559.

Quality of, 16,567, 16,569.

Rifles, quality of, 16,614.

Supplies of food and forage, 16,552, 16,556, 16,610.

Troops in South Africa :

Strength of, at different periods of the war, 16,544, 16,549.

Volunteers, quality of, 16,587, 16,593, 16,619.

RICHARDSON, COLONEL SIR W. D., K.C.B. (See Questions 3367-3588.)

Deputy Adjutant-General for Supplies in South Africa from September, 1899 ; duties, control over all Army Corps services, 3370.

Army Service Corps :

Arrival of, effect upon situation, 3420.

Personnel, 3424.

Commandeering supplies, 3376, 3508.

Equipment :

Baking troughs, 3451.

Harness, 3444, 3520.

Supplies and transport, separation of services by Sir R. Buller, 3418, 3549 ; by Lord Roberts, 3482.

Supplies of foodstuffs, forage, etc. :

Carrington's force, supplies to, 3489.

Contracts with Cold Storage Company, 3391.

Hospital supplies, 3493.

In October, 1899, supplies in South Africa, 3374, 3382.

Meat and other supplies, 3389, 3402.

Prices in South Africa, 3502.

Quality of supplies furnished by War Office, 3497, 3528, 3555, 3577.

State of supplies on arrival of Sir R. Buller at Cape Town, 3405.

Transport (land) :

Advance of Lord Methuen, transport on, 3456, 3472, 3516.

Mule and ox transport compared, 3455, 3480, 3515.

Reorganisation by Lord Roberts, 3455, 3473, 3559, 3565.

Transport (sea), 3432, 3533.

Disembarkation of stores, 3433, 3530, 3557.

RIMINGTON, BRIGADIER-GENERAL M. F., C.B., Lately Commanding Rimington's Guides. (See Questions 12,608-12,824.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 12,608, 12,755.

Arms for Colonial mounted troops, suggestions as to, 12,691, 12,707.

Artillery, 12,766.

Australians :

Bayonets, use of, 12,702, 12,791.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 12,707, 12,776.

Horses, 12,788.

Cavalry, value of, compared with mounted infantry, 12,727.

Discharge of men in the field, 12,755.

Horsemastership, suggestions as to, 12,652, 12,750.

Maps, use of, 12,627.

Officers for Colonial Corps, suggestions as to :

Selection of, 12,759.

Training at Military Colleges, value of, 12,744, 12,769, 12,812.

Rimington's Guides, raising and organisation of, 12,610.

Age standards, 12,640.

Casualties, 12,816.

Discharge of men in the field, 12,637.

Discipline, change as to field imprisonment, 12,752, 12,810.

Dutchmen and Uitlanders joining corps, 12,612.

Equipment, 12,734.

Arms, 12,684, 12,774.

Saddles and harness, 12,653, 12,735.

Health of corps, medical officer, etc., 12,818.

Horsemastership, system of, 12,652, 12,750.

Horses, 12,644, 12,760.

Weight carried by :

Kit, 12,654.

Man, average weight, 12,660.

Non-commissioned officers, 12,748.

Officers :

Horse management, 12,651.

Selection of, 12,641, 12,650, 12,741.

Quality of men, 12,636, 12,755.

Comparison with Regular cavalry, 12,727.

General qualifications as scouts, 12,626.

Rimington, Brigadier-General, M. F.—continued.

Rimington's Guides—continued.

Scouting, system adopted, 12,725.

Strength of corps, 12,633, 12,800.

Shooting, riding, and medical tests, 12,632.

Training, 12,621.

Transport, 12,682, 12,802.

Water-carts, 12,738.

Telescopes and binoculars, use of, in scouting, 12,711.

Training of Colonial Mounted troops, suggestion as to, 12,707, 12,797.

Yeomanry, Home, quality as to horsemanship, 12,709.

ROBB, COLONEL F. S., M.V.O. (See Questions 4389-4471.)

Assistant Adjutant-General. Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General at Headquarters to 31st December, 1901; 4389.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa, 4417.

Men:

Drafts for South Africa, 4444.

Effectives in England early in 1900, 4457.

Wastage in the Army, 4452, 4462.

Mobilisation:

Emergency Forces, question of mobilising, 4426.

Progress of, in October 1899; 4399.

Mounted Infantry, 4428.

Volunteers:

City of London, 4403.

Reserves, proposals, 4416.

Volunteer Service Companies, 4403.

War Office Organisation:

Adjutant-General's Department, duties of, 4392.

Clerks, substitution of military, for civil, 4441.

Correspondence of public with War Office, a cause of over-centralisation of, 4429.

Dawkins' Committee recommendations, 4439.

Yeomanry, Home, 4418.

ROBERTS, FIELD-MARSHAL THE RIGHT HON. EARL, V.C., K.G., K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Commander-in-Chief (See Questions 10,182-10,856; and 13,126-13,380.)

Ammunition, supply of, 10,501.

Arms:

Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, 10,409, 13,247,

13,250, 13,281, 13,293, 13,341.

Sighting of rifles, 10,575.

Army Organisation:

Army Corps:

Composition of, and utility of, 10,562,

10,661, 10,723.

Number of under scheme of 1901, 13,264,

13,269, 13,365.

Before the war, system of organisation, 10,243,

10,828.

Cavalry, arms and use of, 10,409, 13,247,

13,250, 13,281.

Certificate, annual, by Commander-in-Chief, as to equipment and fitness for war of the Army, view as to this proposal, 10,821.

Compulsory service, views as to, 10,377, 10,403, 10,661.

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 10,286,

10,382, 10,661.

Expeditionary forces, 10,662.

Linked battalions, system of, 10,292, 10,661,

10,667, 10,688.

Mounted infantry, arms and use of, 10,375,

13,250, 13,282, 13,293, 13,341.

Organisation of the general staff and changes in position of Adjutant-General's Department and Quartermaster-General's Department, 10,447, 10,532, 10,738.

Reforms, general suggestions as to, 10,661, 13,209, 13,247.

Reserve, 10,247, 10,248, 10,336, 10,395, 10,661,

13,272.

Strength of force in South Africa at present time, 13,364, 13,369, 13,579.

Army Service Corps, satisfactory working of, 13,131.

Roberts, The Right Hon. Earl—continued.

Artillery:

Classes of guns, 10,564, 10,578, 10,609.

Responsibility for, 10,606.

Tactics, 10,565, 13,248.

Want of mobile heavy artillery, 10,183.

Auxiliary forces:

Difficulties arising during the war from insufficient training, 13,146.

Officers, 10,253, 10,298, 10,361, 13,239, 13,282.

(See also Militia and Volunteers.)

Boers:

Artillery, 10,595.

Interception of messages by, 13,361.

Knowledge of ground, and skill in taking cover and resourcefulness, 10,442.

Shooting, skill in, 10,426.

Under-estimate of their strength and resources, 10,243.

Botha, General Chris., peace negotiations with, 13,127 (page 54).

Botha, General Louis, peace negotiations with, 13,127 (page 57), and appendix to day's evidence.

Bridges, reconstruction, 13,350.

Cavalry. (See Army Organisation.)

City Imperial Volunteers, 10,312, 10,412, 13,288.

Artillery, 10,611.

Colonial Contingents:

Officers, 10,253, 10,266, 10,298, 10,361, 10,415.

Quality and suggestion as to training, 10,234,

10,260, 10,343, 10,367, 10,374, 13,252, 13,357.

Commander-in-Chief. (See War Office Organisation.)

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 13,210, 13,223,

13,226, 13,267.

Equipment, accoutrements, boots and clothing, 10,501.

Expenditure on the Army, present amount, and views as to possible increase or reduction, 13,217.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

Quality, 10,260, 10,373.

Second contingent, 10,310.

India, drawing of troops from, 10,669, 10,673.

Intelligence Department:

Duties of, 10,456.

Information supplied by during the war, 13,308, 13,320.

Staff, 10,558.

Ladysmith:

Objections to as a base, 10,199, 10,204, 10,229.

Selection of, 10,183, 10,190, 10,204.

Supplies in, 10,209.

White, Sir George, decision as to staying in, question as to, 10,201, 10,853.

Manœuvring Areas, difficulties of procuring in England, and views as to suggestions for provision in the Colonies, 13,302.

Manual of Field Service, preparation of, 13,311.

Maps:

Jeppe's maps, 10,617, 10,657.

Steps taken in 1900 to construct maps of Cape Colony, Free State, and Transvaal, 10,615, 10,657.

Want of suitable maps of South Africa, 10,183, 10,615.

Medical Service:

General observations as to, 10,485, 10,537, 13,255, 13,284.

Kroonstadt, arrangements at, 13,127 (page 51), 13,167.

Sanitary Officer, appointment advocated, 13,171.

Men, quality, training, and supply of:

Drill Books, modification of, as result of the experiences of the war, 13,209.

Education, 10,329.

Employment in civilian duties, effect of on training, 10,331.

Endurance, 10,264.

Entrenching and cover, 10,442.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 10,440, 10,442.

Individuality and intelligence in action, 10,442, 13,144, 13,247.

Roberts, The Right Hon. Earl—continued.

Men, quality, training, and supply of—continued.

Marching, 10,437, 10,442, 10,544.

Period of training, 13,160, 13,287.

Reservists, drilling, 10,336, 10,395.

Scouting, 10,422.

Shooting, 10,426, 10,442, 13,282.

Supply of:

During the war, 10,234.

Inducements to enlist, 10,317, 10,359.

Military Operations:

Buller, Sir R., operations by, 10,846, 13,127 (page 53), 13,186.

Strength of force, 13,183.

Disposition of forces in South Africa before outbreak of war, 10,183.

Orange River bridges and Laing's Nek tunnel, non-destruction of, 10,835.

Paardeberg, operation at, 13,128, 13,357.

Statement by witness as to his operations in South Africa, 10,843, and continued at 13,126.

Western route to Bloemfontein, choice of, reasons for, 10,849.

White, Sir George, operations by, 10,183, 10,185.

Militia:

Ballot Act, questions as to enforcement of, 10,694, 10,729.

Foreign service, question of making liable for, 10,661.

Officers, 10,253, 10,390.

Training, 10,693.

Use of, in South Africa, 10,369.

Mobilisation by divisions, question as to, 10,725.

Mounted Infantry. (See Army Organisation.)

Officers:

Auxiliary and Colonial forces, 10,253, 10,298, 10,361, 13,239, 13,282.

Increase in number of, need of, and question as to methods of meeting this need, 10,277, 10,283, 10,306, 10,314, 10,362, 10,384, 10,422, 10,538, 10,661.

Quality of, and suggestions as to training, 10,446, 10,447, 10,474.

Initiative, 10,333, 10,523, 10,554, 13,144, 13,247.

Military Colleges, training at, 13,360.

Specialising, question as to, 13,205.

Staff officers, quality, training, and appointment of, 10,447, 10,457, 13,163, 13,191, 13,280, 13,296, 13,336.

Pay, adequacy of, 10,317.

Post Office and telegraph services, 13,175.

Preparations for the war:

Force in South Africa before the war, 10,183.

Main defects in preparations, 10,183.

Schemes for defence of Natal made before the war, 10,187.

Schemes of operations existing before the war, and questions as to instructions to Sir G. White, 10,187, 10,213, 10,222.

Proclamations by witness in South Africa, 10,843 (page 465), 13,127 (page 55), 13,206.

Railway bridges, re-construction of, 13,350.

Reserve. (See Army Organisation.)

Secretary of State for War. (See War Office Organisation.)

Surrenders, 10,630.

Transport (Land):

Absence of organised department at commencement of the war, 10,183.

Railways, 10,506.

Re-organisation of transport system in 1900, 10,506.

Transport (Sea), 10,502.

Troops in South Africa at present time, strength of, 13,364, 13,369, 13,379.

Volunteers:

City Imperial Volunteers. (See that title.)

Efficiency of force, 10,692, 10,720.

Service Companies, 10,366, 13,243.

Training, annual, 10,342.

Roberts, The Right Hon. Earl—continued.

War Office organisation:

Adjutant-General, position of, 13,317.

Army Board:

Functions during the war, and subsequently, 10,764.

Suggested functions, 10,781, 10,796.

Changes in 1895 and 1901, 10,550.

Commander-in-Chief, position of, 10,737, 10,781, 10,787, 10,815, 13,233, 13,236, 13,317, 13,330.

Certificate, annual, as to equipment and fitness for war of the Army, views as to this proposal, 10,821.

Intelligence Department, duties and staff of, 10,456, 10,558.

Intelligence and Mobilisation Division, position of, 13,317.

Quartermaster-General's Department, position of, 10,449, 10,737, 10,753, 13,317, 13,323.

Secretary of State for War, position of, 10,737, 10,783, 10,811, 13,230, 13,233, 13,236.

Suggestions as to reform, 10,737, 10,807, 13,229.

War Office Council, functions and procedure, 10,768, 10,799, 13,233.

Yeomanry, Home, 10,400.

ROBERTSON, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. R., D.S.O. (See Questions 690-720.)

Assistant Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Division. Service of witness at home and in South Africa, 690.

Boer military strength and armament, collection of information as to, 700.

Field Intelligence Department, 703.

Maps, 712.

War Office organisation, staff of sub-division of Intelligence Division dealing with collection and collation of information as to foreign countries, 695.

RUNDLE, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR H. M. L., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O. (See Questions 17,852-17,944.) Services of witness in South Africa, 17,852.

Artillery:

Ammunition, quality of, 17,917.

Equipment, 17,933.

Horse Artillery, supersession by heavy field artillery, suggestion as to, 17,932, 17,935.

Quality, range, and effectiveness of guns, 17,925, 17,928, 17,930, 17,935.

Tactics, 17,927.

Boers:

Artillery, 17,930.

Entrenching, 17,899.

Shooting, 17,879.

Colonial Troops serving under witness in South Africa, 17,858.

Quality of, 17,861.

Discipline, 17,862.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 17,880, 17,886.

Entrenching Tools:

Carrying on carts advocated, 17,904.

Wallace spade, 17,903.

Equipment, 17,918.

Horses, quality and supply of, 17,922.

Imperial Yeomanry serving under witness in South Africa, 17,857.

Quality of, 17,863.

Infantry Tactics, 17,927.

Medical Services, 17,924.

Men:

Quality:

Entrenching and cover, 17,887, 17,938.

Memorandum by witness of June 13th, 1900, as to entrenchments, 17,888.

Esprit de corps and the territorial system, 17,874, 17,877.

Guards Battalions, 17,874.

Horsemanship and horsemastership, 17,883.

Marching, 17,881.

Shooting, 17,879.

Rundle, Major-General Sir H. M. L.—continued.

Men—continued.

Training, suggestions as to.

Cooking, 17,909.

Entrenching, 17,896.

Small bodies, training in, advocated, 17,939.

Officers:

Quality, as to entrenching and cover, 17,888, 17,890, 17,938.

Training, suggestions as to, 17,939.

Entrenching, 17,926.

Reservists, qualities shown during the war by, 17,869.

Supplies, food, 17,905, 17,916.

Transport, land, 17,913, 17,923.

Troops serving with witness in South Africa, 17,857.

SALMOND, MAJOR-GENERAL W., C.B. (See Questions 1835, 1994, 2060-2128.)

Deputy Adjutant-General, Royal Engineers, at Headquarters, from 1896 to 1902, 2060, duties, 2062.

Army Corps, proportion of Engineers allotted to, 2100.

Mobilisation, engineer units, 2068.

Personnel, Engineers, 2100, 2108, 2128, 2116.

Balloons, 2095.

Pontoons, 2076.

Searchlights, 2092.

Special units, 2095.

Strength, total, 2101.

Telegraphs, 2108.

Traction engines, 2094.

Railways, Army Department suggested, 2071, 2119.

Reservists, engineers, on railways, 2108, 2128.

SCARBOROUGH, COLONEL A. F. G. B., THE EARL OF, A.D.C., Yorkshire Dragoons. (See Questions 7275-7360.)

Services of witness at home and abroad, 7276, 7358.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

First contingent, raising and organisation of, 7278.

Equipment, weight of, reduction, 7286.

Horses, provision of, 7283.

Non-commissioned officers, 7280.

Officers, selection of, 7278.

Quality of men, 7281.

Second contingent, raising and organisation of, 7348.

Elimination of men in South Africa, 7349.

Certificate of discharge, 7353.

Quality of men, etc., 7348.

Pay, difficulties as to, 7343.

Reserve advocated, 7314.

Shooting, quality of men as to, 7302.

Yeomanry, Home, future organisation of, 7308.

Age standards, 7319.

Arms, 7293, 7305.

Cost of Yeomanry compared with other forces, 7313, 7316.

Cyclists more effective than horsemen in this country, 7311.

Equipment, 7286.

Foreign service, liability for, views as to, 7311.

Horses, provision of, 7283.

Size advocated, 7286.

Officers, 7324.

Pay system, 7343.

Training, 7320.

As mounted infantry, 7308.

Weight, desirable, for Yeomen, 7288.

STOPFORD, BRIGADIER-GENERAL THE HON. SIR F. W. K.C.M.G., C.B. (See Questions 931-1064, 16,625-16,770.)

Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller in South Africa, 16,625.

Chief Staff Officer First Army Corps: Services at home and in South Africa, 931.

Stoptord, The Hon. Sir F. W.—continued.

Army Organisation:

Bicycle Corps, use of, 16,707.

Mounted Infantry, *see that sub-heading.*

Numbers and efficiency of the Army, 16,667.

Reservists, *see that sub-heading.*

Artillery:

Ammunition:

Shrapnel and common shell, effect of, compared, 16,635, 16,695.

Delay in sending out to South Africa, questions as to, 16,750.

Howitzers, 16,635, 16,695.

Mobility of heavy guns, 16,635, 16,700.

Naval guns, 16,635, 16,743.

Range and quality of guns, 16,635.

Boers:

Artillery, 16,635.

Cavalry:

Arms for, 16,635.

Delay in sending out to South Africa, question as to, 16,750.

Colonial Forces:

South African Corps, 16,635, 16,674.

Strathcona's Horse, 16,635, 16,680, 16,768.

Engineer Services, efficiency of, 16,635.

Medical Services, adequacy of, 16,635.

Men:

Class from which recruited, 16,662.

Qualities shown during the war, 16,635.

Intelligence and initiative, 16,635, 16,660.

Physique and morale, 16,365.

Shooting, marching, entrenching and cover, 16,635.

Training, suggestions as to, 16,660, 16,667.

Military situation in Natal and Cape Colony on arrival of Sir Redvers Buller in South Africa, 16,635.

Mobilisation:

Expenditure in connection with, date of authorisation, 943, 966, 983, 1007, 1031, 1040, 1044, 1054.

Scheme for, 935, 962, 979, 999, 1056.

Steps taken to mobilise for the war in South Africa, 943, 1019, 1034.

Working of mobilisation in practice, 951, 965, 1041, 16,629.

Mounted Infantry:

Organisation of, 16,731.

Training, 16,635.

Officer responsible for, at Aldershot, 16,733.

Value of, in future campaigns, 16,635, 16,703.

Officers:

Promotion of young officers, 16,723.

Qualities shown during the war by, and suggestions for increased training in initiative, 16,635, 16,681, 16,715.

Staff officers:

Qualities and training, 16,635, 16,684.

Reservists:

Calling up of Reservists on outbreak of war, 957, 965, 970.

Period for which Reservist would probably retain his discipline, military habits, etc., 16,754.

Proportion allotted to each regiment, 970, 16,638, 16,666.

Qualities shown by, during the war, 16,635, 16,637, 16,640.

Rifles, quality of, 16,635.

Supplies, adequacy and sufficiency of, 16,635.

Transport (land), 942, 943, 957, 1013, 1025.

Transport (sea), 1021.

Troops in South Africa:

Strength of, inadequacy of, for military situation in South Africa, on arrival of Sir R. Buller, 16,635, 16,636.

War Office Organisation:

Mobilisation and Intelligence Department, 952, 966, 16,759.

THORNEYCROFT, COLONEL A. W., C.B., *Lately Commanding Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry. (See Questions 12,374-12,607.)*
Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General at Pietermaritzburg in 1899, 12,374.

Equipment of Colonial Forces, suggestions as to:

Arms, 12,472, 12,538, 12,607.

Artillery, 12,586.

Clothing, 12,597.

Reserves of, 12,470, 12,522.

Tents, 12,599.

Horses, shoeing on board ship, 12,429.

Imperial Light Horse, raising and organisation of, 12,379.

Intelligence Department for Colonial Forces in the field, suggestion as to, 12,496.

Manual for use in future organisation of Colonial Corps, views as to compilation of, 12,567.

Maps of South Africa, 12,507.

Officers of Colonial Corps, suggestions as to:

Regimental mess, 12,516.

Selection of, 12,401, 12,412.

Paymaster for Colonial Corps, appointment advocated, 12,461, 12,548.

Signallers and Signalling Equipment, 12,504.

Telescopes and Zeiss glasses, importance of, 12,446.

Thorneycroft's Horse, raising and organisation of, 12,377.

Age standards, 12,520.

Casualties, 12,544.

Dates of authority for enlistment, and of going to the front, 12,395, 12,416.

Discharge of men, terms of enlistment as to, 12,518.

Discipline, 12,455.

Equipment, 12,414, 12,567.

Arms, 12,430, 12,487, 12,492.

Artillery, 12,584.

Boots, 12,595.

Horses, 12,420, 12,426, 12,579.

Intelligence Corps in the field, 12,496.

Natives, use of, for purposes of Intelligence, 12,604.

"Manual for Field Service for Mounted Infantry," use of, 12,567.

Medical Establishment:

Ambulance wagons, 12,503.

Efficiency of, 12,502.

Recognition of Geneva Cross by Boers, 12,530.

Stretcher bearers, 12,527.

Medical tests, 12,454.

Non-commissioned officers, 12,407.

Officers, selection, 12,401.

Pay, 12,387, 12,410, 12,461.

Quality of men:

Cover, taking, 12,441.

Discipline, 12,455.

Education, standard of, 12,559.

Entrenching, 12,444.

Esprit de corps, and conduct in face of the enemy, 12,563.

Horsemastership, 12,420, 12,422.

Intelligence and initiative, 12,457, 12,559.

Comparison with over-sea Colonial Corps as to intelligence, 12,574.

Physique, 12,453.

Scouting and reconnoitring, 12,444.

Shooting, 12,434.

Boers, comparison as to, 12,435.

Tracking, 12,449.

Shooting tests, 12,434.

Strength of force, 12,584.

Training of men, 12,414, 12,420, 12,435.

Transport, 12,532.

Training of Colonial Forces, as to riding and shooting, views as to, 12,435, 12,468.

TREVES, SIR FREDERICK, Bart., K.C.V.O., C.B. (*See Questions 11,966-12,204.*)

Services of witness in South Africa, 11,966.

Treves, Sir Frederick—continued.

Equipment:

Advance Medial Depôts, suggestion as to, 12,013, 12,139.

Disinfectants, 12,155, 12,171.

Drugs, 12,004, 12,149.

Elimination of unsuitable equipment advocated, 11,998, 12,135.

Instruments, 12,145, 12,154, 12,162, 12,170, 12,181.

Supply of, general observations as to, 12,145.

Food Supplies, control of, change advocated, 11,986.

Foreign Powers, Army Medical Services, 13,115, 12,172, 12,186.

Hospitals:

Military:

Base hospitals, management on civil lines advocated, 12,118.

Civil population, treating in, views as to, 12,115.

Defects in English military hospitals, and suggestions for improvements, 12,111, 12,168, 12,173, 12,201.

New Military Hospital and Staff College, 12,156.

Naval hospitals not inspected by Advisory Medical Board, 12,183.

Mobile Field Hospital, suggestion as to, 12,035, 12,106.

Organisation of Army Medical Service in the field, decentralisation advocated, 11,971.

Personnel:

Bearer companies, 12,023, 12,091, 12,101.

Nurses, 12,086.

Officers:

Administrative duties in the field, excess of, 11,977, 11,992, 12,121.

Collecting stations, duties at, 12,022.

Training and opportunities for practice, 12,115, 12,125, 12,156, 12,162, 12,172, 12,192.

Sanitary Officer, appointment of, views as to, 12,144.

Transport for Medical Purposes:

Ambulance wagons, 12,044, 12,094.

Defects in, and suggestions for improvements, 12,035, 12,044.

Dhoolies, use of in South Africa, 12,097.

War Office Organisation:

Advisory Medical Board:

Constitution, procedure, etc., 12,060.

Place of meeting, 12,160.

TROTTER, COLONEL J. K., C.B., C.M.G., *Assistant Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Division. (See Questions 13,636, 13,828-13,838.)*

Bridges, non-destruction of, 13,829.

Kimberley, defence of, 13,837.

TRUMAN, MAJOR-GENERAL W. R., *Inspector-General of Remounts from January, 1899. (See Questions 12,825-12,907.)*

Committees on Remounts, 12,826.

Horses:

Estimate of number required in time of war, 12,855, 12,867, 12,894.

Foreign sources of supply, information as to, 12,873.

Purchase of, by Remount Department, 12,899, 12,904.

Argentinians, 12,880, 12,885, 12,889, 12,895.

Australian, 12,899, 12,904.

Canadian, 12,879.

Excess of purchase over demands, 12,846.

Normal purchases in time of peace, 12,856, 12,875.

Order for reduction or cessation of purchases followed by increased demand, 12,831.

Prices paid, 12,889, 12,904.

Qualities of horses of South America, Texas, and southern portion of United States, 12,880.

Wastage in the German Army in 1870, 12,892.

War Office Organisation:

Remount Department, 12,827, 12,849.

Office accommodation, 12,828, 12,864.

Staff, number of, 12,849, 12,858.

Cavalry Columns, medical transport for accompanying, absence of, 12,055.

Civil Surgeons serving during the war, 12,080.

Collecting and Dressing Stations, 12,016.

TULLIBARDINE, MAJOR THE MARQUIS OF, C.V.O.,
s.s.o., Royal Horse Guards, late Lieut.-
 Colonel Commanding Scottish Horse. (See
 Questions 20,274-20,415.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 20,274,
 20,281 (page 446), 20,405.

Auxiliary Forces, suggestions for future organisa-
 tion and equipment of, 20,281 (page 452).

Arms, 20,281 (page 452), 20,370.

Australians, arming with swords advocated,
 20,281 (pages 453, 454), 20,372.

Rifles, method of carrying, 20,281 (page
 453), 20,381.

Artillery, 20,281 (page 453), 20,386.

Discipline, power of dismissal and other punish-
 ments, 20,355.

Equipment, 20,281 (page 452), 20,381.

Arms, *see that sub-heading*.

Great coats, method of carrying, 20,281
 (page 453), 20,385.

Farriers and signallers, provision, 20,281 (page
 452), 20,369.

Horses, provision, 20,281 (pages 450, 454),
 20,348.

Non-commissioned officers, 20,281 (page 452),
 20,351.

Officers, provision, 20,281 (pages 452, 454),
 20,349.

Pay:

Rates of pay on service, uniformity advo-
 cated, 20,281 (page 454).

Regimental Paymaster, appointment advo-
 cated, 20,281 (page 454), 20,331.

Rations, 20,281 (page 454).

Recruiting, class of men, etc., 20,281 (page
 454), 20,359.

Terms of enlistment, period of service, etc.,
 20,281 (page 454).

Training:

Riding, shooting, and scouting, 20,281
 (page 454).

Signalling, 20,281 (page 452).

Transport, 20,281 (page 453), 20,324, 20,391.

Motor cars for, question as to, 20,395.

Veterinary officers, 20,281 (page 452).

Water-carts, fitted with stove for boiling water
 on the march, suggestion as to, 20,281 (page
 453), 20,391.

Cavalry, arms for, 20,281 (page 453).

Imperial Yeomanry, 2nd Contingent, quality of,
 20,281 (page 454).

Scottish Horse for service in South Africa, raising
 and organisation of, 20,276.

Artillery, 20,386.

Australians, 20,281 (page 447).

Age standards, 20,299.

Arming with lances, 20,372.

Government of New South Wales and
 Queensland, attitude of, 20,315.

Officers, quality of, 20,281 (pages 450, 451,
 452).

Pay, 20,281 (pages 447, 448), 20,315.

Quality as to shooting, scouting, horsemanship
 and horsemastership, 20,281 (page
 451), 20,293, 20,300, 20,303, 20,363.

Scots, employment as, 20,281 (page 451).

Book of Headquarters Orders, 20,281 (page
 449).

Canadians, arrangements for recruiting not car-
 ried out, 20,281 (page 447), 20,305, 20,412.

Classes from which recruited, 20,281 (pages
 446, 447, 451).

Discipline, punishments, power of dismissal in
 the field, 20,281 (pages 450, 451), 20,283,
 20,235, 20,360.

Equipment, 20,281 (pages 452, 453), 20,369,
 20,395.

Accounts for clothing, none in Scottish
 Horse, 20,334.

Supply of necessaries, advance depôts for,
 20,336.

Headquarters office and depôt at Johannesburg,
 20,281 (page 448).

Horses:

Provision, 20,281 (pages 448, 450), 20,339.

Quality of, and wastage in South Africa,
 20,281 (page 450), 20,341.

Tullibardine, Major the Marquis of—continued.

Scottish Horse for Service in South Africa—
 continued.

Hospitals:

Johannesburg, hospital and convalescent
 camp at, 20,281 (page 448).

Thieving in, 20,281 (page 452), 20,365.

Natives, employment of, 20,281 (pages 451,
 456).

New Zealanders, 20,309.

Non-commissioned officers and men, numbers
 and casualties, summary of, 20,281 (page
 455).

Officers, 20,281 (pages 448, 450, 451), 20,322:

Colonial officers, 20,281 (pages 450, 451,
 452, 454).

Numbers and casualties, summary of,
 20,281 (page 455).

Pay, 20,281 (page 448).

Quality of, 20,281 (page 451), 20,349,
 20,362.

Pay:

Allotments, difficulties as to, 20,281 (page
 449), 20,335.

Army Pay Department, difficulties with,
 20,281 (page 449), 20,331.

Demobilisation, arrangements as to pay
 on, 20,281 (page 449), 20,338.

Rates of, 20,281 (pages 447, 448), 20,310,
 20,330.

Regimental Paymaster, provision, 20,281
 (page 448), 20,331.

Quality of men:

Esprit de corps, 20,281 (page 451).

Letter from Colonel Benson as to, 20,281
 (page 456).

Shooting, scouting, horsemanship, and
 horsemastership, 20,281 (pages 451, 454),
 20,363.

Teeth, 20,396.

Rations, 20,281 (page 454), 20,396.

Scots Volunteer Service Companies, men
 nominated from, in South Africa, 20,281
 (page 447), 20,310.

Pay, difficulties as to, 20,281 (page 448),
 20,310.

Scouts, troop of attached to each regiment,
 20,281 (page 451).

Services of the regiment in South Africa,
 20,281 (page 454), 20,319, 20,346, 20,409.

South Africans, enlistment, 20,281 (pages 446,
 447).

Pay, 20,281 (pages 447, 448).

Quality of men, 20,281 (pages 446, 447,
 451), 20,304.

Strength of regiment, 20,281 (page 448).

Summary, giving particulars of establishment,
 numbers, casualties, etc., 20,281 (page 455).

Supplies for, 20,281 (pages 448, 454).

Training of recruits in horsemanship, 20,281
 (page 448).

Transport, 20,281 (page 448), 20,324.

Yeomanry raised in Scotland and sent out by
 Duke of Atholl, 20,281 (page 447).

Age standards, 20,298.

Pay, 20,281 (pages 448, 449).

Position of, under Lord Tullibardine,
 20,281 (page 448), 20,282, 20,284.

Quality of men, 20,281 (pages 447, 451),
 20,288, 20,319.

Report by His Grace the Duke of Atholl,
K.T., to the Marquis of Tullibardine, re
 raising of, 20,281 (page 456).

Sources from which drawn, 20,281 (pages
 456, 457), 20,285, 20,411.

Training in horsemanship, 20,317.

Scottish Horse, Present Organisation:

Proposal to raise Volunteer Corps in Canada
 and Australia under local conditions, 20,281
 (page 454).

Scotland, organisation in, 20,281 (pages 452,
 454), 20,367.

Transvaal, organisation in, 20,281 (page 454),
 20,398.

TURNER, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR A. E., K.C.B., Inspector-General of the Auxiliary Forces. (*See Questions 7587-7796.*)

Auxiliary Forces:

- Cost of Volunteers, Yeomen, Militia, and Regular Infantry, compared, 7652.
- Home defence only, liability for, 7628.
- Inspection, German system advocated, 7671.
- Number of officers and men who served in South Africa, 7597.
- Officers of Regular Army joining, 7608, 7674.
- City Imperial Volunteers, raising and organisation of, 7634.
- Imperial Yeomanry, strength of, 7597.
- Militia:**
 - Age standards, 7688.
 - Conscription, question as to, 7678, 7754.
 - Engineers serving in South Africa, 7790.
 - Number of officers and men who served in South Africa, 7597.
 - Proportion not volunteering for service abroad, 7783.
 - Officers, provision of, 7686.
 - For service in South Africa, 7787.
 - Shortage of, 7592, 7600.
 - Strength of, 7588, 7590, 7592, 7680.
 - Shortage in rank and file, 7699, 7754, 7787.
- Recruiting for Regular Army, probable effect on, of increase in pay, 7707, 7777.
- Uniforms, cost of, 7601, 7679, 7759.

Volunteers:

- Artillery, service in South Africa, 7793.
- Capitation fees:
 - Effect of new regulations, 7715.
 - Increase advocated, 7651, 7659.
- City Imperial Volunteers, raising and organisation of, 7634.
- Drills, number of, 7695.
- Emergency camps, Lord Lansdowne's, 7656.
- Engineers, service in South Africa, 7790.
- Foreign Service, making liable for, question as to, 7627.
- New regulations, effect of, 7618, 7690, 7715, 7750, 7722.
- Officers:
 - Expenses of:
 - Prizes, provision of, 7737.
 - Uniforms, 7602, 7616, 7684.
 - Shortage of, 7595, 7616.
 - Quality of men, and classes from which drawn, 7653.
 - Scheme for summoning in cases of emergency, question as to, 7628, 7645.
 - Service Companies, 7635.
- Strength of:
 - In 1899, 7588, 7594.
 - In 1902, 7594.
 - Number of officers and men who served in South Africa, 7598.
 - Use of, in South Africa not contemplated before the war, 7636.
- War Office organisation:**
 - Department, separate, for Auxiliary Forces, views as to, 7661.
 - Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces, position of, 7661, 7703.
- Yeomanry, Home:**
 - Number of officers and men who served in South Africa, 7597.
- Officers:**
 - Expenses of, as to uniforms, 7601.
 - Provision of, from Regular Army, 7608.
 - Shortage of, 7600, 7607.
 - Strength of, in 1899, 7588, 7592.

VALENTIA, COLONEL VISCOUNT, C.B., M.V.O., M.P. (*See Questions 7002-7088.*)

Assistant Adjutant-General for Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa from January 1900, to November 1900, 7002.

Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:

- Age standards, 7057.
- Arms, equipment, 7035.
- Cavalry, use as, 7050.

Valentia, Colonel Viscount—continued.

Imperial Yeomanry—continued.

- Composition of regiments in South Africa, mixed character, 7011.
- Horsemastership, 7070.
- Hospitals, 7068, 7074.
- Officers of first contingent, 7063.
- Horsemastership, 7070.
- Raising and organisation of first contingent, 7007.
- Staff, inadequacy of, 7009.
- Transport (land), 7047, 7082.

Yeomanry, Home:

- Arms, equipment, 7035, 7062.
- Cavalry character of force, retention of, 7050.
- Enlisting, increase in, since the war, 7032.
- Foreign Service, section for, views as to formation of, 7033.
- Future organisation, suggestions for, 7021-63.
- Horses, provision of, 7032.
- Officers, 7021.
- Transport, squadron, comparison with regimental transport, 7045.

VINCENT, COLONEL SIR C. E. HOWARD, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D., M.P., A.D.C., Colonel Commandant of the Queen's Westminster Volunteers, and Aide-de-Camp to the King. (*See Questions 5444-5692.*)

Visits of witness to South Africa during the war, 5467, 5482.

Artillery:

- Use of, in the war, 5513.
- Volunteer Force, 5648.
- City Imperial Volunteers, raising and organisation of, 5453.
- Hospitals, 5483, 5512.
- Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa:
 - Recruiting, method of, 5473, 5669.
 - Volunteers enlisting in, 5477, 5564.

Men:

- Quality of Regular soldier, comparison with other armies, 5487, 5493, 5522, 5626, 5659.
- Service in Army, alterations suggested, 5489, 5504, 5527, 5539.
- Preparation for war, views as to, 5660.
- Recruiting system, 5524, 5558.
- Shooting, quality of Volunteers as to, 5621.
- Supplies in South Africa, 5482, 5510.

Volunteers:

- City of London Imperial Volunteers, raising of, 5453.
- Conduct of, in South Africa, 5467.
- Effect of recent regulations on the Volunteer Force, 5480, 5515, 5567.
- Equipment, 5537, 5652.
- Future utilisation of the force, suggestions as to, 5459, 5481.
- Numbers who served, 5476.

Officers:

- Selection of, for active service, 5453, 5495, 5502.
- Supply of deficiencies, 5638, 5682.
- Pay in South Africa, 5668.
- Service Companies of Volunteers employed, 5462, 5473, 5494, 5559.
- Suggestion to War Office made by witness in August, 1899, to raise a battalion for active service, and subsequent proposals, 5449, 5501.
- Training and efficiency, 5591, 5644.
- War Office organisation, absence of representation of Volunteer Forces, 5637, 5674.

WARD, COLONEL SIR EDWARD W. D., K.C.B. (*See Questions 1430-1552 and 5693-5981.*)

Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, 1430.

Services in South Africa as Director of Supplies in Natal, 1431, 5693; as Director of Supplies to Lord Roberts' Field Force, 1433, 5775.

Contracts, 5817, 5960.

Documents:

- Instructions to General Officers Commanding, 1542.
- Reports from South Africa as to Army efficiency, 1534.
- Telegrams, 1544.

Ward, Colonel Sir E. W. D.—continued.

Ladysmith :

- Accumulation of stores at, 5713, 5936.
- Ammunition stores, 5757.
- Food supplies at commencement of siege, 5723, 5933.
- Medical supplies, 5746.
- Proceedings with regard to supplies during the siege, and date which they would last, 5737, 5869, 5909, 5972.
- Water supply, 5751.
- Withdrawal of stores, possibility of, question as to, 5732.
- Ordnance stores, distribution in the field, 5843.
- Pay, methods of, in the field, 5847.
- Financial control and audit of accounts in the field, suggestion as to, 5847, 5875, 5903, 5923.

Railways :

- Organisation of railway service in the field, suggestions as to, 5833, 5976.
- Railway rates in Natal, 5951.

Supplies :

- Bloemfontein, supplies at, in March 1900; 5778, 5786.
- March to Pretoria, supplies on, 5789, 5918.
- Meat supply, 5808.
- Medical supplies, 5786.
- Natal, supplies in :
 - In October 1899, 5697, 5960.
 - Relief of Ladysmith, supplies after, 5772.
 - (See also sub-heading "Ladysmith.")
- Pretoria, supplies at, 5797, 5921.
- Prices, fixing of, 5828.
- Quality of supplies, 5802, 5895.
- Transport of, on march, 5790.
- Transport, reorganisation under Lord Roberts, 5856.

War Office Organisation :

- Advisory Boards, 1495.
- Army Board, 1475.
- Changes effected under the Order in Council of 1901, 1436.
- Commander-in-Chief, position of, 1436.
- Dawkins' Committee, steps taken to carry out recommendations of, 1503.
- Decentralisation of work, 1500.
- Permanent Executive Committee, 1488.
- War Office Council, 1465, 1530.

WARREN, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR CHARLES, G.C.M.G., K.C.B. (See Questions 15,652-15,964.)

Services of witness in South Africa, 15,652.

Army Organisation :

- Battalions, batteries, etc., on foreign service to remain there permanently, suggestions as to, 15,852, 15,921.
- Cavalry, *see that sub-heading*.
- Defective organisation, effect of on campaign in South Africa, 15, 60, 15,662, 15,852, 15,932.
- Engineers, *see that sub-heading*.
- Regulations for Home, India, and the Colonies, uniform basis, suggestions as to, 15,740, 15,742, 15,852.
- Suggestions for general reform, 15,852.

Artillery :

- Range of guns, tactics, etc., 15,850.
- Auxiliary Forces, qualities shown during the war by, 15,697, 15,702, 15,723.

Boers :

- Artillery, use of, 15,660.
- Mobility, 15,660.
- Shooting, quality as to, 15,660, 15,698.
- Canadian Forces, quality of, 15,702, 15,731.

Cavalry :

- Arms, 15,660, 15,850.
- Qualities shown during the war by, 15,660, 15,667, 15,695, 15,697.

Engineers :

- Officers, position as to general staff, 15,813, 15,837.
- Qualities shown by Field Engineers, and suggestions as to training, 15,813.
- Sanitation, joint responsibility of Medical Officers and Engineers advocated, 15,513, 15,820, 15,828.

Warren, Lieutenant-General Sir C.—continued.

Equipment, 15,771, 15,789.

Horses, qualities of, and wastage during the war, 15,771, 15,778.

India, routes suggested for troops going to and from :

Canadian route, 15,949.

South African route, 15,852, 15,893.

Medical Services :

Officers :

Qualities shown during war by 15,813.

Relations of Medical Officers with General Officers, views of witness as to, 15,845.

Sanitation :

Appointment of Sanitary Committee, and making liable of Medical Officer and Engineer Officer advocated, 15,814, 15,842.

Training of combatant officers in sanitation advocated, 15,848.

Men :

Education, 15,852, 15,853.

Foreign service, period of, 15,852, 15,923.

Living under canvas, suggestion as to, 15,852.

Qualities shown during the war, 15,660, 15,663, 15,693, 15,697.

Discipline, 15,852, 15,934.

Entrenching and cover, 15,697, 15,724.

Horsemanship and horsemanship, 15,697.

Intelligence, 15,697.

Marching, 15,697, 15,720.

Physique, morale, and endurance, 15,697, 15,726.

Reconnaissance, 15,852.

Shooting, 15,663, 15,697, 15,698.

Training, suggestions as to, 15,663, 15,699, 15,711, 15,852.

Drill Book, defects in before the war, as to attack and advance, 15,660, 15,687.

Gymnastic training, advantages of, 15,852, 15,936.

Lessons of the war, applicable to European warfare, 15,688.

Military Operations :

Advance, line of, questions as to, 15,660, 15,671.

Cape Colony, defence of, scheme proposed by witness in December 1899, 15,660, 15,673.

Natal :

Artillery for Ladysmith Relief Force, 15,692.

Ladysmith :

Selection of, 15,660, 15,680.

Troops, number of, inadequate for efficient defence, 15,660, 15,677.

Spion Kop, operations terminating in battle of, 15,656.

Troops, strength of :

Number required for operations in Natal, estimate of, 15,660, 15,690.

Number which would have been necessary to protect Colony from invasion in 1899, 15,668.

Officers :

Arms and dress of, suggestions as to, 15,683.

Captains of companies, increased authority advocated, 15,740, 15,746, 15,757, 15,852.

Command in the field, territorial as well as personal, 15,852.

Confidential reports, regulations as to, 15,852, 15,861, 15,943.

Feeling between officers and men, 15,858.

Foreign service, period of, 15,852, 15,921.

Letters, opening by Censor, on active service, 15,852, 15,864.

Lieutenants-General, duties of, definition advocated, 15,852.

Promotion, 15,740, 15,748, 15,765, 15,852, 15,854, 15,859, 15,940.

Qualities shown during the war, 15,660, 15,724.

Staff officers, duties of, 15,740.

Training, suggestions as to, 15,663, 15,740, 15,757, 15,779, 15,848, 15,852, 15,937.

Railways, repair of, control of, 15,799, 15,811.

Rifles, quality of, 15,850.

Warren, Lieut.-General Sir C.—continued.

Supplies, 15,771.

Tinned meat, 15,771, 15,773, 15,786.

Transport, land, 15,799.

Contracts for wagons and oxen, 15,799, 15,801.

Regimental and general transport compared, 15,808.

Troops in South Africa:

Qualities shown by Regular Forces, *see sub-heading* Men.

Strength of, views of witness as to adequacy, 15,660, 15,668, 15,671, 15,677, 15,690.

WHITE, GENERAL SIR GEORGE, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., General Officer Commanding Natal; Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Gibraltar. (*See Questions* 14,688-14,962.)

Command of forces in Natal, 14,705.

Quartermaster-General previously to 16th September 1899, 14,688.

Artillery, *see sub-heading* Military operations in Natal—Siege of Ladysmith.

Boers:

Artillery, use of, 14,820, 14,838 (page 156).

Numbers in the field, mobility, etc., 14,707 (pages 145, 146, 148), 14,747, 14,838 (pages 155, 156), 14,896 (pages 163, 164), 14,897, 14,920.

Cavalry, retention of, *see* Military Operations in Natal—Siege of Ladysmith, Troops.

Colonial Forces:

Mounted troops, decision as to in early stages of the war, 14,955.

South African Corps, raising, organisation and pay of, 14,844.

Interviews with Officials, 14,707 (page 144), 14,720, 14,938, 14,951.

Military Operations in Natal:

Previously to investment of Ladysmith:

Distribution and strength of troops when witness took command in Natal, 14,707 (page 144).

Dundee and Glencoe, occupation of, and withdrawal from, 14,707 (pages 144, 145, 146, 147), 14,716, 14,724, 14,726, 14,838 (pages 154, 155), 14,864.

Talana Hill, action at, considerations as to, and questions whether it should have been fought in superior force, 14,707 (pages 144, 145, 146), 14,737, 14,743.

Elandslaagte, action at, 14,707 (page 145), 14,838 (page 155).

Rietfontein, action at, 14,707 (page 147).

Colenso Bridge, defence of, 14,707 (page 146), 14,804, 14,838 (page 156).

Lombard's Kop, action on 30th October, 14,707 (pages 147, 148), 14,828.

Nicholson's Nek, loss of troops at, 14,707 (pages 147, 148).

Fortification of Ladysmith and general scheme of defence, 14,707 (pages 147, 148), 14,794.

Telegrams during October, 1899, between witness, the Secretary of State, and others, 14,838-14,866.

Railways, non-destruction of, 14,755, 14,760.

Siege of Ladysmith

Artillery, 14,824, 14,838 (pages 155, 156).

Naval guns, 14,707 (page 148), 14,814, 14,824, 14,838 (page 154), 14,930.

Effect of successful defence, 14,707 (page 148).

Reasons for defending, 14,707 (page 146).

Views of witness as to practicability of withdrawing south of the Tugela, 14,767.

Relief operations by Sir Redvers Buller, and messages that passed between him and Sir George White during the siege, 14,865 (page 157) to 14,926.

White, General Sir George—continued.

Military Operations in Natal—continued.

Siege of Ladysmith—continued.

Relief Operations, &c.—continued.

Colenso, battle of, 14,874 (page 159), 14,880, 14,881, 14,888, 14,896 (pages 160, 161).

Heliogram from Sir R. Buller on 16th December, 14,881 (page 161), 14,893.

Preparations by witness to co-operate at this date, 14,881 (page 160), 14,889.

Spion Kop, battle of, 14,896 (pages 164, 165), 14,896*.

Sorties during the siege and attacks on enemy's guns, 14,838 (pages 156, 159), 14,872.

Wagon Hill and Caesar's Camp, attack on, 14,896 (page 162).

Preparations by witness for pursuit of Boers after the relief, 14,901.

Supplies during the siege and period they would last, heliograms as to, 14,838 (page 156), 14,866 (page 158), 14,884, 14,896 (pages 163, 164, 165, 166).

Troops in Ladysmith:

Cavalry, retention of, 14,797, 14,838 (page 156).

Morale after action at Lombard's Kop, 14,832.

Quality of men, 14,956.

Rifle Brigade, withdrawal of, proposal as to, 14,838 (page 154), 14,863.

Milner, Sir A., interview of witness with, 14,707 (page 144).

Mounted Troops, importance of, under conditions of South African war, 14,707 (page 148).

Officers, Staff, selection of, by witness, 14,927.

Preparations for the War:

Defence schemes for Natal, previously to the war, 14,713, 14,945.

Expenditure, sanction of, 14,692, 14,699, 14,782.

Interviews between witness and officials, 14,707 (page 144), 14,720, 14,938, 14,951.

Quartermaster-General's Branch, witness responsible for, previously to September 1899, 14,689.

Transport (land), 14,699, 14,707 (page 145), 14,770.

Troops in South Africa:

Distribution and strength of troops when witness took command in Natal, 14,707 (pages 144, 145).

Mounted troops, importance of, under conditions of South African war, 14,707 (page 148).

Superiority in numbers required by military situation in South Africa, 14,707 (pages 146, 148).

Thorneycroft's and Imperial Light Horse, 14,852.

(*See also* Military Operations in Natal—Siege of Ladysmith.)

War Office Organisation:

Army Board:

Discussion as to preparations for the war, 14,692.

Future use of, suggestions as to, 14,933.

Commander-in-Chief, position of, 14,937, 14,942.

Intelligence and Mobilisation Department, position of, 14,938.

WILSON, LIEUT.-COLONEL E. M., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., R.A.M.C. (*See Questions* 11,265-11,471).

Deputy-Assistant Director-General Army Medical Department, 11,266.

Establishment, basis of, 11,270, 11,316.

Foreign Powers, Army medical organisation, witness no official knowledge of, 11,466.

Hospitals, military, treating of civil population, advocated, 11,429.

Wilson, Lieut.-Colonel E. M.—continued.

Personal, medical :

At different stages of the war, 11,294, 11,392, 11,449, 11,452.
Before the war, 11,270, 11,447.
Increase of, 11,306, 11,394.
Nurses, female, 11,295, 11,404.
Officers, 11,295, 11,433.

Orderlies :

Quality, 11,391, 11,332, 11,386, 11,423, 11,440, 11,442, 11,463.
Reserve of, 11,271, 11,304, 11,450.
Supply of, 11,276, 11,294, 11,304, 11,392, 11,452.
Number of men required for two Army Corps, estimate of, 11,279.
Training and duties, 11,324, 11,329, 11,415, 11,444.
Period of training, 11,338.
Strength of personnel, percentage requisite, estimates of, 11,279.
Preparations for the war, as to increase of personnel, etc., 11,306.
Volunteer and local aid, 11,295, 11,299, 11,312, 11,321.

WILSON, SIR GUY FLEETWOOD, C.B. (See Questions 5982-6295.)

Assistant Under-Secretary of State for War, 5982.

Services in South Africa as financial adviser to Lord Kitchener, 5983.

Reports made to Lord Kitchener, 5984.

Clothing :

Changes in position of Clothing Department, 6276.
Supply of, for troops in South Africa, 6278, 6287.
Commandeering, claims in respect of, 5987, 6129, 6200.

Contracts :

Director of Contracts, change in position of, suggested, 6227.
Operation of the peace system under war conditions, 6019, 6184, 6219.
Power of making contracts in peace, suggested transfer to the Military Authority, subject to civil audit, 6020, 6220, 6230, 6260.
Transport in South Africa, contracts for, 6289.

Expenditure :

Control of expenditure in the field, 6009, 6016, 6134, 6155.
Demands for and sanction of military expenditure, considerations with regard to, 6103, 6240.
Financial advisers to Army Corps, 6266.
Appointment of Chief Financial Adviser and Staff in the field, suggested, 6041, 6215.
Supply accounting, 6000, 6191, 6203.
In case of ordnance supplies, 6006.
Intelligence Department, reports by, 6112.
Pay system, 5999, 6013.
Operations of the peace system under war conditions, 6039, 6158, 6163.
Preparations for the war in South Africa, 6112.

Railways :

Arrangements with Cape and Natal Railways, and reduction of rates, 5996, 6143, 6250.
Suggestions as to dealing with railways in the event of future campaigns, 5996, 6145.

War Office Organisation :

Army Board, 6065, 6067, 6069, 6102, 6222.
Army Clothing Department, changes in position of, 6276.
Clerks, military, substitution for civil, suggested, 6053, 6176, 6207.
Commander-in-Chief, position of, 6082.
Commander-in-Chief's Committee in 1899, 6067.
Executive Committee of War Office, 6068.
Mobilisation Committee in 1899, 6067.
War Office Council, 6069, 6090.

WILSON, SURGEON-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM, M.B., R.C.M.G. (See Questions 3589-3899.)

Principal Medical Officer in South Africa, 3589 ; when directed to go out, 3832.

Ambulance :

Boer ambulance, 3883.
Colonial, 3889.
St. John's, 3617.
Wagons, 3660, 3663, 3666.

Army Service Corps, food supplies for hospitals, 3630, 3677.

Civilian surgeons, *see sub-heading* Personnel.

Clothing, pyjamas, 3650, 3724, 3758.

Enteric, 3679, 3787, 3840.

Equipment, medical, 3605.

Beds, 3647, 3820, 3822.

Department responsible for, 3631, 3882.

Drugs, 3625, 3703, 3808, 3859.

Instruments, 3711.

Regulations as to supply, 3696, 3702.

Supply of, deficiency in, and steps taken to obtain further supplies, 3605, 3641, 3654.

Transport of, 3611, 3640, 3734, 3804.

Suggestions as to, 3697, 3751, 3879.

Establishment, general observations as to, 3600-3605, 3696, 3775.

Personnel Medical, 3593.

Bearer Companies, 3596, 3604, 3613, 3697.

Civilian Surgeons, 3615, 3623, 3685, 3710-3756, 3802.

Nurses, 3685.

Officers, Medical :

Quality of, 3616, 3623.

Supply of, 3595, 3683.

Training, 3865.

Orderlies :

Quality, training, and duties of, 3617, 3688-3691, 3768.

Supply of, 3595, 3693.

Sanitary officer, appointment of, views as to, 3618, 3727, 3893.

Strength of :

Before the war, 3776.

Numbers serving during the war, and numbers necessary for adequate supply, 3596, 3781, 3854.

Numbers required for three Army Corps, 3778.

Sanitation :

Board, sanitary, distinct suggested, 3618, 3737.

Camps, 3679.

Water, 3680, 3790, 3846, 3850.

Sick and wounded, percentage of, 3671.

Supplies, for hospitals, 3610, 3703, 3810.

Kimberley and Ladysmith, 3625.

Quality, 3633, 3810, 3859.

Transport for medical purposes, 3596.

Ambulance wagons, 3660, 3663, 3666, 3315.

Colonial troops, 3745, 3753, 3824, 3889.

Delay in, 3596, 3607, 3640.

Horses and drivers, provision of, 3827, 3879.

Hospital trains, 3668, 3762.

Open trucks, 3670, 3796.

Suggestions for improvement of, 3700, 3750-3879, 3887.

War Office Organisation, changes in position of the Medical Department, 3870.

WOLSELEY, FIELD-MARSHAL THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT, K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.M.G. (See Questions 8695-9375.)

Commander-in-Chief, from 1895 to end of 1900-8696.

Ammunition :

Change from Mark IV. bullet, before the war, 9315.

Army Organisation :

Army Corps, scheme of 1888, 8945, 9197.

Army Corps, scheme of 1901, 9198.

Certificate, annual, by Commander-in-Chief as to adequate equipment, suggestion of, 8948, 9196, 9359.

Compulsory service for home defence, views as to, 9204.

Wolseley, Lord—continued.

Army Organisation—continued.

Expeditionary forces, organisation of, 9217, 9253.

Linked battalions, system of, 8735.

Mobility, necessity to increase, by mounted infantry, 9124.

Stores, reserves of, 8945.

Artillery:

Arrangements with manufacturers, 9281.

Boer purchases, 9263.

Classes of guns, 9268.

Purchases:

Abroad, during the war, 8709.

In England, during the war, 8812.

Boers, preparation by, for war, 8701.

City Imperial Volunteers, quality of, 9138.

Clothing, 8789.

Defence Committee of the Cabinet, 9032, 9058.

Documents:

Minutes by Lord Wolseley in June, 1888; 8703.

Reply by Mr. Stanhope, 8704.

Minute by Lord Wolseley of 14th February, 1896, 8714.

Minute by Lord Wolseley of 3rd November, 1897, 8728.

Minute by Lord Wolseley of 20th April, 1898, 8744.

Horses, scarcity of, at beginning of war, 8845.

Imperial Yeomanry, 9147.

India, despatch of troops from, in September, 1899; 8923.

Intelligence Department, information collected by, 8701.

Ladysmith:

Selection of, 8882, 9291.

Supplies in, 8902, 9303.

White, Sir George, decision to stay in, question as to, 8903, 9298, 9308.

Medical service, 9187.

Men:

Quality of, 9111.

Entrenchments and cover, quality as to, 9122.

Intelligence, 9113.

Recruiting, 9120.

Military operations:

Buller, Sir R., decision to operate in Natal instead of to advance on Bloemfontein, views of witness as to, 9099, 9369.

Glencoe, question as to holding, 8862.

Roberts', Lord, advance on Bloemfontein, views of witness as to route chosen, 9105.

Militia:

Quality of, 9135, 9318.

Training, 9321.

Value of, 9140, 9322.

Mobilisation:

1st Army Corps in 1899, and despatch of, to South Africa, 8801, 8830, 8862.

Method of mobilisation, 9255.

Officers:

Militia officers, 9135, 9318.

Quality of, 9111, 9178.

Staff officers, mode of selection, 9186.

Training, 9182.

Preparations for the war:

Army Corps, date at which despatch was contemplated, 8794.

Force in South Africa before the war, 8830.

Defence of colonies, adequacy for, question as to, 9227.

Proposals by Lord Wolseley in 1896 to strengthen force in South Africa, 8717.

Proposals for increase of strength of the Army, 8727.

Proposals in 1898 by Lord Wolseley to increase stores and transport in South Africa, 8745.

Proposals to increase Field Artillery, 8749.

Proposals on 8th June 1899, for mobilisation of an Army Corps on Salisbury Plain, 8778, 8801.

Proposals made by witness to spend money in preparations, 8787.

Schemes of defence before the war, 8854, 8873, 8912, 9313.

Steps taken June to October 1899, 8786.

Wolseley, Lord—continued.

Supplies:

Mowatt Committee Report, 8813.

Stores in hand at beginning of the war, 8704, 8810, 8828, 9260.

Surrenders, 9326.

Transport (land):

Provision for, in South Africa, before the war, 8786, 8828.

Regimental and general transport, question of, 9189.

Volunteers, quality of, 9135, 9337.

City Imperial Volunteers, 9138.

War Office Organisation:

Army Board, 8762.

Collective opinion of, value of, 9065.

Commander-in-Chief:

Cabinet, position with regard to:

Suggestion that either the Commander-in-Chief should be *ex officio* a member of the Cabinet, or that there should be no Commander-in-Chief, but a Military Secretary of State for War, 9035, 9051.

Want of touch of Commander-in-Chief with Cabinet in 1899; 9029.

Certificate, annual, as to equipment and fitness for war of the Army, proposed 8948, 9359.

Form of certificate suggested, 9196.

Control of all military departments by Commander-in-Chief, want of, detrimental at time of the war, 9082, 9330.

Duties of Commander-in-Chief in connection with the war, 9082, 9366.

Memorandum on position of Commander-in-Chief, written by Witness in 1900 at desire of Queen Victoria, 9083.

Confidential Mobilisation Committee in 1899, 8799.

Intelligence Department, work of, 8911.

German General Staff, comparison with, 8916.

Yeomanry, Home, 9132, 9141.

WOOD, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ELLIOTT, K.C.B. (See Questions 1835, 2129-2341.)

Commanding Royal Engineers, Aldershot, from 1st April 1899; duties in South Africa during war, 2129.

Engineer services, expenditure upon, 2301.

Equipment, Engineer:

Motor cars for searchlights, 2160, 2217, 2226, 2264, 2325.

Pontoons, 2173, 2268.

Purchase of, 2151, 2264.

Horses, importance of providing sappers, 2166.

Officers, Engineer, position as to General Staff, 2138, 2237, 2295, 2301, 2332.

Personnel, Engineer:

Militia Engineers, 2247.

Pontoon troop, 2319.

Telegraphs, 2179.

Volunteer, 2250.

Railway plant, 2254, 2278.

Railways, service, 2186, 2275.

Telegraphs, 2179.

Wireless, 2221.

Traction engines, 2212.

WOOD, GENERAL SIR H. EVELYN, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G. (See Questions, 4069-4388.)

Adjutant-General from 1st October, 1897, to 1st October, 1901, afterwards General Officer Commanding Second Army Corps, 4069.

Army Organisation:

Battalions:

Linked battalions, system of, 4133.

Number of battalions, 4133, 4241.

Efficiency and numbers of the Army, 4203, 4338.

(See also Preparations for the War.)

Artillery, field firing at home, 4342, 4356.

Clothing, 4253.

Wood, General Sir H. E.—continued.

Equipment, 4250.

Men:

Artillery, drivers in, shortage of, 4157, 4330.
 Ceremonial parade, 4182, 4214.
 Employment in civilian duties, effect of, on training, 4106, 4175.
 Entrenching, 4162.
 Marching, 4160, 4162.
 Night marches, 4213, 4366.
 Recruiting and desertions, 4204, 4261, 4377.
 Riding and horsemastership, 4161.
 Shooting capacity and training, 4158, 4266, 4356.
 Supply of men, 4157, 4203, 4241, 4377.

Officers:

Appointment of, 4152, 4171, 4296.
 Artillery, 4129.
 Expenses, 4287.
 Numbers, insufficiency in, 4093, 4125, 4317.
 Promotion of officers, 4166, 4180, 4245, 4269, 4292, 4300, 4332, 4340, 4348.
 Quality of, 4163, 4168, 4174.
 Reserve of, 4147, 4327, 4347.

Staff Officers:

Appointment, method of, 4094, 4140, 4171, 4178, 4225.
 In war, 4098, 4152, 4296.
 Training, Staff College system, 4176, 4232, 4310, 4335, 4341.

Wood, General Sir H. E.—continued.

Officers—continued.

Training generally, 4130, 4176, 4214, 4302, 4341, 4351.
 German Army, 4341, 4355.
 Pay system, 4125, 4259.
 Preparations for the war, 4093, 4132.
 Actual force ready in October 1899, 4133.
 Estimates as to numbers necessary for South Africa, 4191, 4280, 4338.
 Expenditure, 4274.
 Force constituted before the war for service abroad, 4133.
 Non-effectives, 4135, 4203.
 Rifle, quality of, 4249.
 Sanitation, 4258.
 Supplies, food, 4257.
 War Office Organisation:
 Adjutant-General's Department, position of, 4072, 4079, 4085, 4110, 4120, 4196, 4315.
 Army Board, 4113, 4140, 4170, 4226, 4273.
 Commander-in-Chief, position of, 4076, 4202, 4315.
 Commander-in-Chief's Committee, 4143.
 Director-General of Military Intelligence:
 Appointment of, 4084.
 Increase of department, need of, 4283.
 Memoranda by, 4087.
 Position of, 4196, 4287.
 Promotions, system with regard to, 4292, 4332.
 Treasury, relations of War Office with, 4118.
 War Office Council, 4073, 4090, 4112.

